

Tourism Business: A Novel Model Based on Personal Values of Tourists

Abstract

The purpose of the current study was to devise a tourism business model based on the personal values of tourists. This research is an applied study that employs a descriptive-survey research design. As such, library archives and field surveys were used to collect the required data. Furthermore, the authors used questionnaires designed to evaluate the research subjects, which also boasted optimal validity and reliability. The comments and opinions of the experts were inquired to confirm the validity of the questionnaires for the research, while confirmatory factor analysis was used for construct validity. Furthermore, Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability coefficients were used to examine and confirm their reliability. The statistical population of this research included all managers and employees of Toranj Hotel. As such, using simple random sampling, 120 questionnaires were distributed and collected among managers and employees of the hotel above. SPSS and SMART PLS were used to examine and test the hypotheses. The results showed that the personal values of tourists significantly impact the overall image of coastal tourism destinations. Openness to change, self-enhancement, conservatism, and transcendence significantly impact the overall image of coastal tourism destinations.

Keywords: *Tourism, Personal values of tourists, Coastal tourism destinations, The overall image of coastal tourism destinations*

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Introduction

For many countries of the modern era, tourism is the pivot on which the economy is established, greatly assisting the country in indices of employment and economic development. The noteworthy growth of tourism during the last fifty years is highly indicative of its great economic and social prominence. Sustainable tourism can only be achieved through sustainable development. Given the high potential of tourism in the economic prosperity of countries like Iran, addressing the requirements of promoting tourism is one of the necessities of sustainable tourism in the country. That is, the limit and finite nature of resources like oil, gas, and minerals have led governments to be more thorough in search of more sustainable resources such as their cultural and natural heritage and hence seek to turn their attractiveness into sources of economic income. As such, numerous countries have sought to implement measures to provide the services perceived to be desirable for tourists, many to great success (Darvishi et al., 2017). In the meantime, the body of academic literature on "tourism" has developed proportional to the significance of tourism in local and national economies and its significant socio-cultural effects (Güzeller and Celiker, 2018).

Today, coastal and marine tourism is developing as one of the most important and diversifying tourism classes, reporting an annual growth of 8% worldwide. Although the history of exhibiting coastal destinations for leisure time is not exactly clear, general evidence suggests that in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, European aristocrats, British gentry, and, gradually, wealthy Americans took leisurely "grand tours" of the Continent's natural and cultural features, including the Swiss Alps and the coasts of Italy, France and Spain (Honey

and Krantz, 2007). Nevertheless, coastal tourism has been especially noticed at the end of the 19th century, and since then, the number of tourists to coastal destinations has constantly been increasing (Davenport and Davenport, 2006), such that the number of beach resorts has increased since World War II, (Jennings, 2004). One of the major challenges facing the coastal tourism of Iran leading to its evidenced lack of success is the lack of local or foreign investments and the inconsistency between the corresponding authority and the perceived lack of cooperation therein (Shahpuri et al., 2018). On the other hand, one factor contributing to the success of tourist attractions is the personal values of the tourists. Values are deep-rooted beliefs that social groups visit and follow when coming across questions about good and evil. Value refers to a matter, state, or something deemed significant by society members. The value system is a set of interrelated values that regulates the individual's behavior and actions and is often formed without one's knowledge or consciousness (Valikhani et al., 2013). Values are thoughts and feelings assigned more significance, importance, and desirability (Hosseinpour et al., 2020). The personal values of each person form the basis of understanding the attitudes and motivation of people, based on which people's perception is formed. They play an important role in the formation and preservation of a person's personality and are pivotal to the needs of individuals and the manners through which they are fulfilled. Humans' value structure determines their individual and social behaviors (Beiginia et al., 2013). The values of each person are held in high regard by him/her and greatly influence his/her behavior. Values are also proven predictors of talents, attitudes, and productivity in the workplace. Therefore, managers and executives have long

placed great emphasis on personal values. Values form a distinct framework for people in society to introduce behaviors deemed graceful for any situation. Researchers further argue that values are the set of judgments of a social group that divides the world into desirable and undesirable categories and is often considered a fundamental part of cultural order (Valikhani et al., 2012).

Therefore, as one of the most inherently desirable tourism destinations, beaches, and coastal destinations have been of interest to tourists for centuries, and coastal and marine tourism is often cited as one of the fastest growing sub-sectors of the global tourism industry (Hall, 2011). Nonetheless, owing to its wealth of resources, beaches are both of interest to the tourism industry and the tourists and paramount to countries' economic growth. Therefore, it would be highly irrational to develop coastal tourism without bearing in mind the other benefits of beaches; In this case, this development may be inefficient and lead to failure in many cases (Antara, 2016). In this regard, the Toranj Hotel has garnered the interest of researchers, managers, investors, and tourists in the country in recent years. Considering the discussion above, the purpose of this research was to devise a tourism business model emphasizing the personal values of tourists.

Theoretical foundations of research

Tourism

Tourism destinations essentially refer to the places where the tourism experience is generated, which also rely on the synergetic interaction of various organizations. Conventional tourist destinations are often made up of complex and interconnected elements and offer a variety of products and services within a limited geographical area. The success of a destination hinges on optimal organizational communication, cooperation, attractions, and effective elements in tourism, all of which are perceived to be closely affiliated with tourism destination management (Fathizadeh, 2014). Tourism is a cultural function with economic benefits, which, given its nature and inherent features, provides proper opportunities for engaging in the international trade fields, regardless of the level of development of the countries, all of which have contributed to turning this function into a fully-fledged industry. Tourism is often considered a service-based industry and is ranked as the third industry in the world after oil and vehicle manufacturing (Ghaffari, 2019). Tourism is one of the major factors that is of paramount significance to the public order in today's societies. The growth and development of tourism can cause deep changes in many objective and subjective indicators and the destination communities' macroeconomic, social, cultural, and environmental characteristics. As a growing economic sector, tourism takes different forms depending on the type of place and tourism

region. Each region, place, or destination has distinct features; hence, different strategies should be developed and employed correspondingly (Duman et al., 2018). Considering the increasing significance of tourism in the modern world and the worldwide competitiveness of the tourism market, tourist destinations are increasingly competing to attract tourists (Ghaffari, 2019). Expanding the tourism industry in any part of the world requires desirable attributes and facilities such as being in a proper climate, having ancient monuments and natural attractions, customs and traditions, infrastructure, premises, and devices (Pour Ahmed et al., 2013).

Personal values of tourists

The feeling of personal value is derived from the value a person attributes to him/herself or is otherwise defined as the amount of value that a person presumes others have for him/her as a person (Naimi, 2016). Pant and Ojha (2017) argue that values are abstract ideals that act as important guiding principles for human actions, further stating that managerial values are, again, those abstract ideals that serve as guiding principles in the management of an organization or a group. Milton Rokeach, the renowned Polish-American social psychologist, believes values are basic states of individual beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors, reflecting how a person should or should not behave (Levy, 2006). Although it is not possible to directly see and hear people's values, they are often manifested in their views, attitudes, preferences, concerns, decisions, and actions, thereby serving as important qualities and standards that have a certain weight in choosing an action, such as priority in decision-making and common moral standards. As such, values are perceived to be broader and more general than norms (Van der Wal and Huberts, 2008).

The values of public service are rules and criteria for the actions of government employees and managers. These values are the applicable guidelines that establish how government employees and managers must interact with society (Waldo, 1984). Values are latent and silent forces for understanding organizational and interpersonal life (Molina and McKeon, 2012). Pant and Ojha (2017) believe that values are abstract ideals that act as important guiding principles for human actions. Values are the chosen patterns of individuals or groups that guide them towards satisfaction and fulfillment. Values are an important and fundamental factor determining human behavior (Choudhury and Choudhury, 2019).

Research suggests that experiential values consist of four distinct dimensions: cognitive value, hedonic value, social value, and moral value (Varshneya and Das, 2017). The current research also employs the same dimensions of experiential values

Cognitive values encompass service quality, time, effort, and convenience. As such, they are effective in creating the attitude of tourists and can guide the choice of tourist places during

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travel. Hedonic values include senses of pleasure, happiness, isolation, and oblivion (Varshneya and Das, 2017). Hedonic values in the tourism and hospitality industry are the values of interactions that are heavily featured in customer decision-making (Kirillova et al., 2014). Mathwick et al. (2001) state that this value is created through the perceived experience of customers and the five senses, in that the type of experience is effective in creating positive value such as satisfaction and graceful. Social values include admiration, respect, and social recognition, while moral values are perceived to pertain to trust and privacy (Varshneya and Das, 2017). Li and his colleagues found two categories of tourists' values: perceived usefulness and ease of use. Perceived usefulness is the degree to which a person believes that using a particular system enhanced his/her job performance (Taylor and Todd, 1995). Perceived ease of use is the degree to which a person believes using a particular system, product, or service would be free of effort (Davis et al., 1989).

Coastal tourism destinations

Tourism is the whole sphere from the interaction between tourists, capital, host governments and societies, universities, and non-governmental organizations for attracting, transporting, hosting, and managing tourists and other visitors (Shahpuri et al., 2018). Coastal and marine tourism are among the oldest and largest tourism industry segments (Honey and Krantz, 2007). The coastal tourism destinations enable the in-depth tourism study from economic, social, and environmental perspectives. This approach leads to a better understanding of the current situation in the tourism industry and provides methodologies for tourism management with a competitive, intelligent, and sustainable approach (Gretzel et al., 2015). Tourism destinations are areas or regions that generate significant income through tourism, often involving a complex network of several actors, products, and services. There are two main features through which a tourist destination exhibits attractiveness to tourists, namely, the primary and secondary sources. Primary sources include climate-related attributes, ecology, cultural traditions, architecture, and traditional landscapes, and secondary sources include service-oriented features that provide joy and convenience for tourists, including accommodation and transportation, dining options, transportation, and hospitality, among others (Gunn, 1994).

In recent decades, coastal tourism has grown significantly and brought many economic benefits to its host communities. Owing to the proximity to the population centers, suitable climate, and easy access, the beaches attract many tourists during the holidays, especially in the summer season in the north and northwest regions and in the winter season in the south and southeast regions of Iran. Considering the qualitative diversity of social classes in this tourism class and preparing the ground for related recreational activities can help develop

the sustainable exploitation of coastal resources (Papoli Yazdi, 2017). Beaches and sea-related areas are the main attractions in many parts of the world for sunbathing, swimming, boating, surfing, water skiing, scuba diving, fishing, and other recreational water activities. These attractions can drive in both general tourists seeking leisure and recreation and enthusiastic tourists participating in activities such as scuba-diving and fishing (Zargham Borojni, 2010).

On the one hand, the significant growth of coastal tourism and other economic activities benefiting from coastal lands and resources highlights the necessity of employing a thoughtful and thorough approach to coastal tourism management (Ghaderi et al., 2018). Understanding the contribution of coastal tourism to the global economy, its effects on coastal communities, and its physical, socio-economic, and cultural environment has led to sustainable tourism (Spenceley, 2008). Coastal cities can play an effective role in developing these areas and, as a result, the national economy with proper and principled planning and identification of strengths and capabilities in coastal tourism (Barghi et al., 2013).

Today, tourism destinations, like other businesses, strive to differentiate themselves from competitors and provide a unique experience for customers, further fueled by the economic potential of tourism and the prevalence of heavy competition between tourism companies and destinations. Tourism destinations have difficulty obtaining a competitive advantage and maintaining and strengthening their foothold in the global markets. Paying attention to the growing competition between companies and tourism destinations is pivotal, as the capacity to recognize and face global changes is key to the success of any destination (Farzin et al., 2017).

The conceptual model and framework of this research were developed based on De Lima Pereira et al. (2021), which was achieved by explaining the basic variables of the research topic

and establishing a relationship between them based on the theoretical and experimental background. The conceptual model of this research is presented in figure 1.

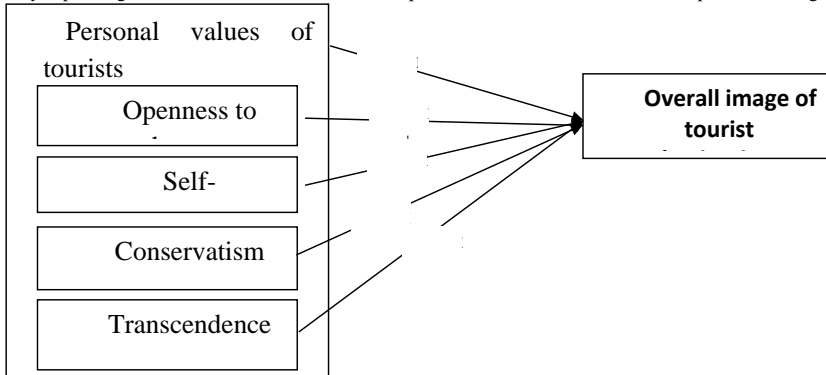


Figure 1: Conceptual research model adapted from De Lima Pereira et al. (2021)

Research Method

The current research is an applied study that employs a descriptive survey design. Organizations of all sorts can use the implications of this research in terms of execution. The statistical population of this research includes the managers and employees of Kish Toranj Hotel, amassing a total of 175 individuals. Using the Cochran formula for determining the sample size from a small research population, 120 managers and employees were selected as the research sample.

Questionnaires were used to collect data for further analysis, and the content validity was confirmed by inquiring about the opinions of the supervisor, advisor, specialist, and experts familiar with the research subject. On the other hand, the construct validity was also tested by confirmatory factor analysis. Cronbach's alpha coefficients are presented in Table 1, while composite reliability values are provided in Table 2.

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Table 1: Cronbach's alpha coefficients

Variables	Cronbach's alpha coefficient
Personal values	0.969
Openness to change	0.893
Self-enhancement	0.925
Conservatism	0.959
Transcendence	0.958
The overall image of coastal tourism destination	0.972

Table 2: Composite reliability

Variables	Composite reliability
Personal values	0.979692
Openness to change	0.949479
Self-enhancement	0.972853
Conservatism	0.979255
Transcendence	0.979269
The overall image of coastal tourism destinations	0.981972

CR > 0.7 is perceived as the optimal reference range. Therefore, all research constructs have proper reliability. Thus,

a structural equation model is proposed for data analysis. Other statistical tests were also used when required by the research. SPSS and SMART PLS were used for data processing.

Findings

The results showed that 81 of the respondents were male, and 39 of them were female. The age range group with the highest frequency, i.e., 56 people, was that of the 30-35 years. The educational status group with the highest frequency was those having master’s degrees, with 44 individuals.

Table 3: Normal distribution of variables

Research variables	Kolmogorov-Smirnov	Sig. level
Personal values of tourists	1.233	0.003
The overall image of coastal tourism destinations	2.083	0.000

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Since the research coefficients are less than 0.05, the distribution data is not normal.

Table 4: Reliability statistics of research variables

Research variables	Sampling adequacy index	Sig. coefficient
Personal values of tourists	0.782	0.000
The overall image of coastal tourism destinations	0.852	0.000

The results from Table 4 indicate that the value of the sampling adequacy index for each of the variables is above 0.6, while the findings from Table 5 show that the KMO value of the overall

model is above 0.6. Also, since the significance level of Bartlett's test of the model is lower than the research error value (0.05), the sampling adequacy is confirmed.

Table 5: The results of Bartlett's Test of Sphericity

Sampling quality index		0.625
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Chi-square	317.976
	DOF	1
	Sig. level	0.000

Table 6: Matrix of correlation coefficients of latent variables

Variables	Personal values of tourists	Openness to change	Self-enhancement	Conservatism	Transcendence	The overall image of coastal tourism destinations
Personal values of tourists	1					
Openness to change	0.456963	1				
Self-enhancement	0.456963	0.656460	1			
Conservatism	0.725652	0.595930	0.719513	1		
Transcendence	0.718657	0.459884	0.725652	0.795930	1	
The overall image of coastal tourism destinations	0.898095	0.889476	0.670937	0.881657	0.860875	1

According to the results from the table, the correlational effect between research variables was confirmed.

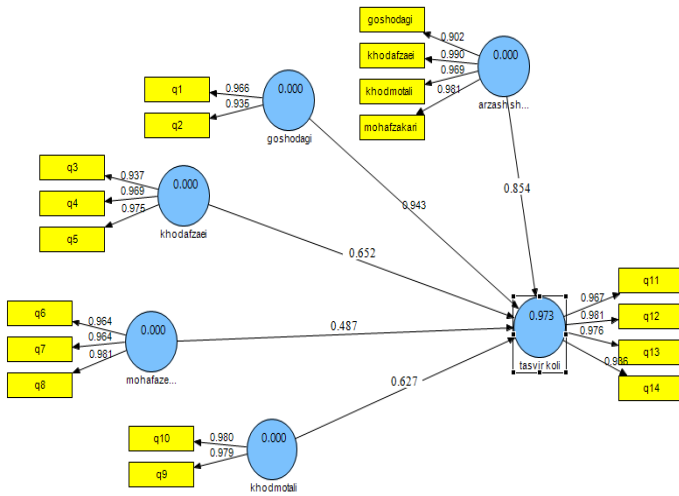


Figure 2: A path analysis of the research conceptual model using standard estimation

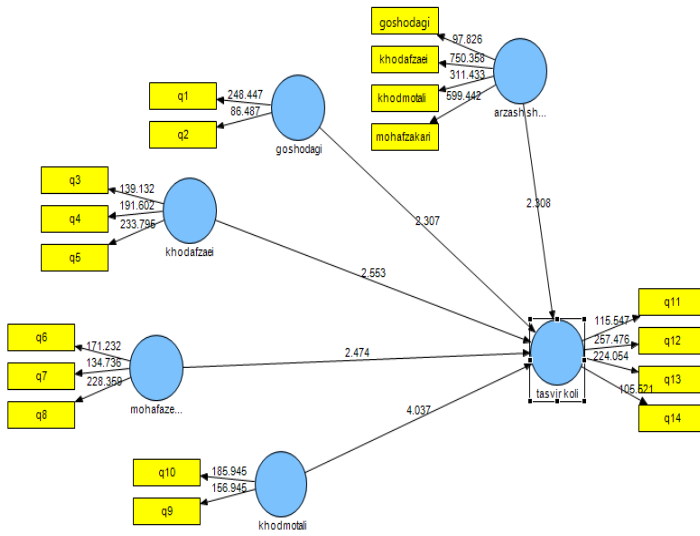


Figure 3: Figure 2: A path analysis of the research conceptual model using significance value

Table 7: Average extracted variance of research variables

Variables	AVE	Root Square of Ave	Composite reliability
Personal values of tourists	0.923525	0.961002	0.979692
Openness to change	0.903840	0.950705	0.949479
Self-enhancement	0.922775	0.960612	0.972853

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Conservatism	0.940249	0.969664	0.979255
Transcendence	0.959363	0.979471	0.979269
The overall image of coastal tourism destinations	0.931611	0.9652	0.981972

The AVE index represents the average variance shared between each construct with its indicators; the higher the correlation, the better the fit. It was introduced to measure discriminant validity, and a value above 0.5 indicates acceptable discriminant validity (Fornell and Larcker, 1981). Since the average variance extracted for the research variables is above 0.5, there is an acceptable discriminant validity.

The R² coefficient was measured to check the fit of the structural model, the Q² index was calculated to determine the predictive capacity of the model, and the GOF criterion was used to measure the overall model, the results of which are shown in Table 8.

Table 8: R² coefficient, Q² index, and GOF of the main research variable

Variable	R ² coefficient			Q ² criterion			GOF		
	0.19: weak	0.33: Moderate	0.67: Strong	0.02: Weak	0.15: Moderate	0.35: Strong	0.01: Weak	0.25: Moderate	0.36: Strong
The overall image of coastal tourism destinations	0.972781			0.894642			0.951266		

Conclusion

The main goal of this research was to propose a tourism business model with an emphasis on the personal values of tourists. The significance coefficient for the effect of tourists' values on the overall image of coastal tourism destinations was calculated to be 2.308, while the standard coefficient for the corresponding relationship was 0.854, confirming the correlation. Also, the significance coefficient for the effect of openness to change on the overall image of coastal tourism destinations was 2.307, and the standard coefficient for the relationship between openness to change and the overall image of coastal tourism destinations is 0.943. As such, the corresponding correlation is confirmed. On the other hand, the findings showed that the significance coefficient for the effect of self-enhancement on the overall image of coastal tourism destinations was 2.553, and the standard coefficient for the same relationship was 0.652, confirming the corresponding correlation yet again. Moreover, the significance coefficient for the effect of conservatism on the overall image of coastal tourism destinations was determined to be 2.474, and the standard coefficient for the relationship between conservatism and the overall image of coastal tourism destinations is 0.487. Therefore, the correlation between the variables is confirmed. The significance coefficient for the effect of transcendence on the overall image of coastal tourism destinations is equal to 4.037, and the standard coefficient for the relationship above

was determined to be 0.627. Therefore, the correlation between the variables is confirmed.

The findings of De Lima Pereira et al. (2021) are in line with those of the current research in that the overall image of the destination is influenced by the personal values of the respondents. The findings also show that personal values and their corresponding effects change according to the overall image of coastal tourism destinations. Data analysis showed that personal values directly affect the overall image. One of the limitations of the current research is that its participants belonged to a certain social class, which hinders the generalization of the results to other occupations and social classes. That is, it should be assumed that individuals' emotional and cognitive ties to a certain place are formed over time. People fashioning a certain association with a destination through human-environment interaction will feel emotionally attached to that destination. Furthermore, tourist attractions, transportation facilities, institutional elements, tourist facilities, infrastructure facilities, and accommodation centers, among others, are of functional significance, as the realm of tourism is heavily driven by the interaction between elements of tourism demand (i.e., motivation of tourists), intermediary elements (i.e., travel and marketing mediums) and tourism supply in the destination (i.e., services, facilities, and infrastructures). Moreover, the ever-intensifying global competition in the tourism industry has driven the managers of tourism destinations to be constantly on the lookout for more efficient marketing strategies. To achieve successful

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marketing, tourism planners should examine the relationship between the application of marketing tools and the process of destination image formation to convey a positive image to the target market and attract tourists to travel to a specific destination. Developing strategic marketing plans to effectively help reach the desired goals is recommended.

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