

## Full Length Article

# The Relationship between Factors in the Development of the Tourism industry with emphasis on the factors affecting the Satisfaction of Tourists and the Citizens' satisfaction with regard to mediator

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### ABSTRACT

*The present study aimed to determine the relationship among attributes of tourism development with emphasis on effective factors on tourist satisfaction and by considering the intermediate variable, i.e. citizen satisfaction, in Gorgan, Iran. The study population was all tourists visiting Gorgan. The study sample was decided to be 400 people via Morgan's table. Data collection was performed through Citizen Satisfaction Questionnaire, Tourism Development Questionnaire, and Tourist Satisfaction Questionnaire. Validity and reliability of the questionnaires were evaluated using experts' opinions and Cronbach's  $\alpha$  coefficient, respectively. The results obtained from Pearson's correlation coefficient in SPSS and structural equation model (SEM) in AMOS revealed that there are positive and significant correlations between principle needs, performance needs, and motivational needs and tourism development ( $p < 0.05$ ). Also, there is a positive and significant correlation between tourist satisfaction and tourism development in Gorgan ( $p < 0.05$ ). Moreover, there are positive and significant correlations between attributes of tourism development with emphasis on tourist satisfaction and by considering the intermediate factor, i.e. citizen satisfaction in Gorgan ( $p < 0.05$ ).*

**Keywords:** tourists' satisfaction, citizens' satisfaction, basic needs, functional needs, motivational needs, tourism industry.

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### INTRODUCTION

Economic development in every country needs investment in different economic sectors. Without investment, it cannot be expected to enjoy the benefits of employment, production, and economic welfare. In this regards, many countries have inclined toward attraction of foreign investments [1].

Tourism has turned into one of the most profitable industries in the current century and there is a tight competition among many countries in the world to attract tourists. As a dynamic industry with unique characteristics, tourism has formed a big part of economic activities in developed and developing countries [2]. Development of tourism has a profound influence on strengthening economic foundations in societies. Tourism also plays role in employment, making revenue, collecting tax, attracting currencies, and empowering social infrastructures [3]. Nowadays, organizational societies have found out that tourism process may lead to many potential economic, social, political, environmental, and technological advantages [4].

Iran is one of the most attractive countries in the world and it is among the top ten countries in terms of cultural and civilization attractions, the top five countries in terms of natural diversity, and the top three countries in terms of diversity of handicrafts [5]. Golestan Province is a spot with old history and various environmental attractions. It can be known as a brand province in Iran due to its specific climate and high potential of tourism.

Tourist attraction is one of the most important issues required for persistent tourist arrivals. Satisfaction is known as an emotional component and it mediates the effect of quality of services on behavioral intentions [6]. Satisfaction and dissatisfaction are emotional responses given to goods or services. Satisfaction is the evaluation of customers of the provided good or service. Failure in satisfying the needs and expectations of customers will lead to dissatisfaction of customers with the good or service [7]. Satisfaction has become a common goal for companies by enhancing the quality of their goods and services [8].

Taken together, the present study aimed at determination of the relationship between attributes of tourism development with emphasis on tourist satisfaction and with regard to the intermediate variable, i.e. the effective factors on citizen satisfaction in Gorgan, Iran. The study aimed to examine the main hypotheses and following sub-hypotheses.

Main hypothesis: There are significant relationships among attributes of tourism development with emphasis on effective factors on tourist attraction and with regard to the intermediate variable, i.e. effective factors on citizen satisfaction, in Gorgan, Iran.

Sub-hypotheses:

- (1) There is a significant correlation between principle needs and tourist satisfaction in Gorgan.
- (2) There is a significant correlation between performance needs and tourist satisfaction in Gorgan.
- (3) There is a significant correlation between motivational needs and tourist satisfaction in Gorgan.
- (4) There is a significant correlation between citizen satisfaction and tourist satisfaction in Gorgan.
- (5) There is a significant correlation between citizen satisfaction and attributes of tourism development in Gorgan.

## METHODOLOGY

The present study was an applied and correlation research. The study sample was first decided to be 384 persons according to Morgan's table and then increased to 400 for attaining higher confidence in results. Data collection was performed through Citizen Satisfaction Questionnaire, Tourism Development Questionnaire, and Tourist Satisfaction Questionnaire. Validity and reliability of the questionnaires were evaluated using experts' opinions and Cronbach's  $\alpha$  coefficient, respectively.

In order to confirm the validity of the questionnaire, the tools were given to professor and experts and then their ideas were collected. Afterwards, the questionnaires were corrected and redesigned based upon the experts' viewpoints. For reliability, the questionnaires were first given to 30 respondents for determination of Cronbach's  $\alpha$  coefficient. Since the Cronbach's  $\alpha$  coefficients were  $>0.7$  for all the questionnaires (0.785, 0.884, and 0.768 for Citizen Satisfaction Questionnaire, Tourist Satisfaction Questionnaire, and Tourism Development Questionnaire, respectively), all the questionnaires were considered reliable for the present study.

Normal distribution of the collected data was evaluated through Kolmogorov-Smirnov test in SPSS. Inferential analysis was carried out via Pearson's Correlation Coefficient. Moreover, due to having an intermediate variable, Structural Equation Model (SEM) was adopted in AMOS to examine the main hypothesis of the study.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 shows the results obtained from Kolmogorov-Smirnov test in order to test normal distribution of the collected data. As it can be seen from this table, the sig values for all the attributes and variables are over 0.05 and therefore, it can be claimed the collected data have normal distribution. Considering the normality of the data, parametric tests can be adopted for statistical analysis and consequently, Pearson's Correlation Coefficient was used in this study to analyze the correlations.

Table 1: Kolmogorov-Smirnov test results for data normality

Variables	Sig
Principle needs	0.083
Performance needs	0.057
Motivational needs	0.129
Citizen satisfaction	0.067
Tourist satisfaction	0.241

Table 2 presents the results of Pearson's correlation test in order to answer the sub-hypotheses of the study. According to the table, there are positive and significant correlations between tourist satisfaction

and principle needs, performance needs, motivational needs, citizen satisfaction, and tourism development ( $p < 0.05$ ).

Table 2: The results of Pearson’s correlation test to evaluate the sub-hypotheses

Variables		r	Sig	Result
<b>Sub-hypothesis 1</b>	Tourist satisfaction	0.815	0.000	Hypothesis accepted
	Principle needs			
<b>Sub-hypothesis 2</b>	Tourist satisfaction	0.826	0.000	Hypothesis accepted
	Performance needs			
<b>Sub-hypothesis 3</b>	Tourist satisfaction	0.790	0.000	Hypothesis accepted
	Motivational needs			
<b>Sub-hypothesis 4</b>	Tourist satisfaction	0.397	0.000	Hypothesis accepted
	Citizen satisfaction			
<b>Sub-hypothesis 5</b>	Tourist satisfaction	0.486	0.000	Hypothesis accepted
	Tourism development			

Table 3 depicts the results obtained from the evaluation of model fit by using SEM in AMOS. As it can be seen from this table, the model is fit; in other words, the model in this study suitably conforms to the reality.

Table 3: Evaluation of the model of the study

	df	X2	p-value	X2/df	GFI	RMSEA
<b>Acceptable value</b>	-	-	<0.05	1-3	>0.9	<0.08
<b>Calculated value</b>	12	21.40	0.007	1.45	0.97	0.06

Table 4 shows the results of regression coefficient test and critical values of the variables in the main hypothesis of the study. According to the fitted model and p-values, the main hypothesis of the study is accepted. The final model of the research is shown in Fig. 1.

Table 4: The results of hypothesis test in AMOS

	Variables			Regression coefficient	Critical value	p-value
	Independent	Intermediate	Dependent			
<b>The main hypothesis</b>	Tourist satisfaction	Citizen satisfaction	Tourism development	0.52	3.071	0.009

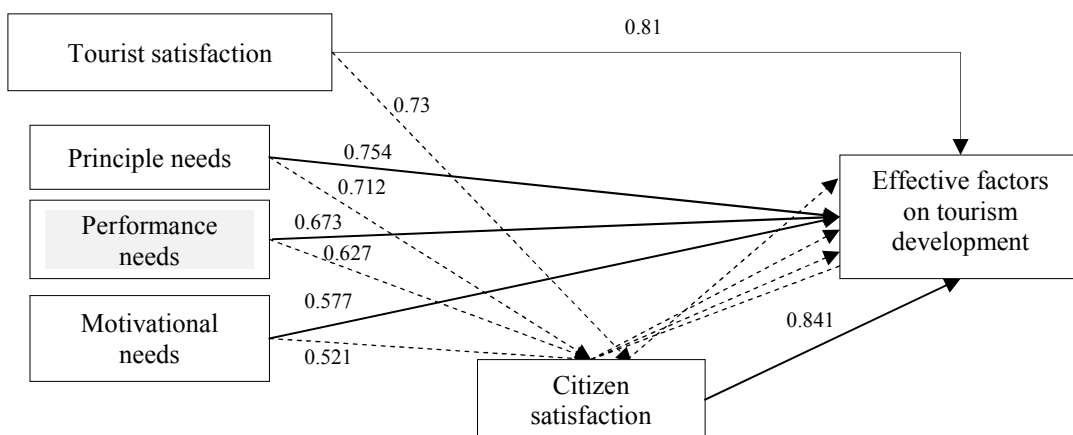


Figure 1: The conceptual model of the study with the derived coefficients

**CONCLUSION**

The present study was an attempt in order to evaluate the relationship between factors in the development of the tourism industry with emphasis on the factors affecting the satisfaction of tourists

and the citizens' satisfaction with regard to mediator. The results of the study showed that there are positive and significant relationship between tourist satisfaction and tourism development with regard to the intermediate factor. The model proposed according to the results of the study can be considered for all responsible authorities in tourism industry.

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