



Exploring the Factors Affecting Sports Tourism Destination Image

Asma Emami¹, Majid Javid^{2*}, Mehrdad Moharamzadeh³, Masoud Imanzadeh⁴

¹MSc in Sport Management, Department of Sport Management, Islamic Azad University of Ardabil Branch, Iran.

²PhD in Sport Management, Department of Physical Education and Sport science, Faculty of Sport Management, University of Tehran, Iran.

³Professor of Sport management, University of Mohaghegh Ardabili, Ardebil, Iran.

⁴Assistant Professor, Department of Sport Management, Islamic Azad University of Ardabil Branch, Iran.

ABSTRACT

Purpose: Destination image marketing is a crucial starting point for successful tourism marketing, as visitors' images and expectations of their travel experiences can significantly shape their attitudes towards a particular destination. This study aimed to identify the influential factors forming the sports tourism destination image in Ardabil Province.

Methodology: The study is an applied and descriptive research. The Statistical population of this study consisted of sport management experts, tourism managers and experts of cultural heritage and tourism departments, managers and experts of Sport & youth, tourism agency managers, and visitors of sport tourism. The research questionnaire was a researcher-made that was used after confirmation of its validity and reliability ($\alpha:0.81$). Data from 362 questionnaires were analyzed by SPSS V.26 and Amos V.24 software. Also, the Bartlett test, KMO index, Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA), and Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) were used.

Findings: The results showed that eight latent factors, including tourism and public infrastructure, local customs and traditions, local attractions, service quality, entertainment and sports events, natural and environmental factors, information and advertising, and social and security factors, are the influenced factors.

Originality: Destination image is one of the most essential variables influencing a tourist's decision to choose a destination. By identifying the factors that affect the formation of the image of sports tourism destinations and using these factors to present a positive image, tourism destination managers and officials can attract more sports tourists and develop their goals.

Keywords

Advertising
Destination Tourism
Marketing
Entertainment
Service Quality
Sports Events
Sports Tourism

Article type

Original Article

Received: 2023/05/16

Accepted: 2023/08/04

How to cite this article:

Emami, A., Javid, M., Moharamzadeh, M., & Imanzadeh, M. (2023). Exploring the Factors Affecting Sports Tourism Destination Image. *Sports Business Journal*, 3(3), 67-88. <https://doi.org/10.22051/sbj.2023.43801.1096>



1. Introduction

In recent years, tourism has emerged as one of the most significant and rapidly expanding economic sectors globally (Naghizadeh-Baghi et al., 2023). Many countries have looked to tourism as a means of earning export revenue, creating jobs, promoting economic diversification, and enhancing the performance of the service sector (Ravinthirakumaran et al., 2019), economic growth (Haini et al., 2023), GDP growth, increasing job opportunities, income and improving standards of living (Ma et al., 2019), facilitates cultural exchange (Chen & Yang, 2022), environmental sustainability (Baloch et al., 2023), Community Development (Brooks et al., 2023; Fazaeil et al., 2020). Also, preservation of cultural heritage (Qu et al., 2023), dealing with problems such as unemployment, limited foreign exchange resources, and monoculture economy (Naghizadeh-Baghi et al., 2023), employment-generating, income-earning and influential industry (Moradi Doliskani & Atghia, 2021) are the further effects.

Most aspects of tourism occur in tourism destinations. Because of this, the World Tourism Organization has suggested that the destination be used as "the fundamental units of analysis in tourism" (Martins et al., 2021; Ranacher-Lackner & Zehrer, 2022). Tourism destinations are a multifaceted combination of various tourism and services (Hanna et al., 2018). These products and services are utilized under the brand name of destinations, offering tourists a complete and fulfilling experience (Shapoval et al., 2017). Tourism destinations refer to a place where tourists tend to spend their time away from home. This geographical unit tourists visit can be an independent center such as a beach resort or a ski slope, a village or a city, a region or an island, or even a country (Javid et al., 2021). It includes accommodation, access, infrastructure and superstructure, tourist attractions, and various facilities. Due to the diverse and numerous components, a destination requires an efficient and effective system to achieve coordinated and integrated performance, meet its goals, and increase the satisfaction of tourists (Juvan & Rok, 2008).

Due to the increasing importance of tourism in today's world and the competitiveness of the worldwide tourism market, tourist destinations are competing intensely to attract tourists. Expanding the tourism industry in any part of the world requires special conditions and facilities such as weather, historical sites, natural attractions, customs and traditions, infrastructure, and facilities and equipment (Ghaffari & Mamramezani, 2019). Therefore, tourism destinations should strive to increase their market share and revenue in the industry. However, in today's fiercely competitive world, the success of a tourism destination is not solely dependent on attracting first-time visitors but rather on repeat visits and effective promotion to potential tourists to ensure long-term success. As a result, effective destination management has become vital for officials and those involved in the tourism industry, focusing on enhancing quality, efficiency, and, most importantly, tourists' satisfaction to create a desirable and memorable image. Achieving this goal requires implementing various tools and strategies, with offering a positive perception of tourism destinations being one of the crucial factors that significantly impact the development of destinations.

Ardabil province, situated amidst mountains and at high altitudes, is a popular destination for tourism and sports tourism in Iran. Its favorable climate, abundant

potential, and various capacities make it an ideal location for different types of sports tourism, including hosting national and international events, winter sports tourism, adventure tourism, hunting tourism, indigenous and local sports tourism, tourism tours, sports camps, ecotourism, and nature tourism. Despite having rich potential and unique natural gifts for tourism, Ardabil has not yet fully utilized these capacities to attract sports tourists. Studies and expert opinions highlight the need to improve the tourism system in each destination through effective marketing, especially during tourism downturns. In this regard, identifying components and factors that influence the formation of the destination image is considered an influential factor in achieving success in destination management. With such components, key strategies can be developed to attract tourists, maintain their loyalty, satisfy them, ensure sustainable development, and gain a strong position in the tourism market. Despite the importance of the destination image in attracting tourists and developing destinations, only a limited number of studies have focused on this topic, and these have primarily investigated it in a general sense. Therefore, this research aims to identify the most important components influencing the formation of the destination image and provide an effective model for improving the sports tourism destination image of Ardabil province by considering all relevant aspects.

2. Theoretical background

2. Destination image

The destination image is a critical element of tourism management and is defined as the sum of beliefs, opinions, and impressions that a tourist retains in their mind about a tourist destination (Bahrainzadeh & Busheri Sangizad, 2019; Gričar et al., 2021; Haller et al., 2021). Zouni et al. (2020) defined the destination image as ‘the sum of cognitive beliefs and ideas and impressions a person has of a destination (Zouni et al., 2020). Gil Arroyo et al. (2023) described the destination image as the sum of tourists' thoughts and feelings about the characteristics of a destination, and stated that the mental image of a tourist destination refers to all the beliefs and perceptions of an individual about a tourist destination. If a tourist destination has a desirable mental image among tourists, the likelihood of traveling to that destination will increase (Mansuri Moayed & Soleymani, 2012). The destination image is one of the main factors in choosing a tourist destination, the decision-making process, and the selection of favorite tourist activities at the destination and recommending the destination (Zhang et al., 2014). An important point to consider about the mental image is that the mental image of a tourist destination (as a complex product) is a multidimensional concept (Ghaffari & Mamramezani, 2019). Tourists shape their mental image of a tourist destination by being exposed to information sources. Word-of-mouth advertising is one of the most influential and prominent information sources concerning the development of the mental image of a tourist destination (Ghaffari & Mamramezani, 2019). In this regard, Li et al. (2023) stated that aligning the presented destination image in information channels with the reality experienced by tourists increases their satisfaction with their experience, which, in turn,

improves the destination image (Li et al., 2023). The results of Gavurova et al. (2023) research indicated that concerns about the safety of the tourist environment could be associated with a negative destination image; thus, during the COVID-19 pandemic, tourists were looking for destinations with better safety conditions (Gavurova et al., 2023). Gorji et al. (2023)'s research on the tourists' perceived destination image and behavioral intentions towards a sanctioned destination showed that visitors generally have a more positive image of the destination than non-visitors, and their motivation for revisiting is also higher (Gorji et al., 2023). Use of culture and identity of the city to increase athletic motivation in sport tourism (Nazari, 2021). This means that direct experience of a destination can change its negative image in the minds of tourists and influence their behavioral intentions (Gorji et al., 2023). Zhang et al. (2018) showed that the destination image significantly impacts tourist loyalty and choice (Zhang et al., 2018). Shirkhodaie et al. (2016) stated that creating a good image of the destination increases tourists' satisfaction, which in turn leads to positive behavioral intentions, increasing future visits and recommending the destination to others (Shirkhodaie et al., 2016). Rajesh (2013), in his article titled "The Impact of tourist perceptions, Destination Image, and Travel Satisfaction on destination loyalty," demonstrated that tourist perception, destination image, and satisfaction all influence destination loyalty (Rajesh, 2013).

3. Methodology

The present study aimed to find solutions to existing problems through descriptive survey research using a questionnaire to gather individuals' views and ideas. The statistical sample consisted of tourism and sports management experts, managers and experts of cultural heritage and tourism departments, experts and managers of sports and youth general office, managers of travel agents, and tourists visiting tourist destinations in Ardabil province. The population was sampled using the random sampling method, and 384 people were selected as the statistical sample using Cochran Formula with an acceptable sampling error of 0.05 for unknown and infinite population sizes due to the lack of accurate information about the statistical sample. Among the distributed questionnaires, 362 were evaluated as suitable and used in the analysis after removing incomplete and distorted ones.

A researcher-made questionnaire was used as the research tool because of the lack of access to a standard questionnaire related to the research topic. To prepare and formulate the questionnaire questions, the researcher first identified the factors and influential factors on the image of a sports tourism destination by referring to relevant books, articles, and research. Then, based on the research topic, the factors and components involved in the image of sports tourism destinations in Ardabil province were extracted. After preparing the questionnaire questions, the questionnaire was given to 10 sports management and tourism experts to determine its content validity, and they were asked to provide their opinions and suggestions regarding the questionnaire. After receiving the views of the professors and experts, their thoughts and suggestions were incorporated into the preliminary questionnaire. Then, the final questionnaire for the research project was prepared with the approval of the supervisor and advisor. The reliability of the

questionnaire was estimated through Cronbach's alpha coefficient ($\alpha: .81$), which was deemed acceptable in a preliminary study involving 30 respondents. To analyze the data, Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was first applied to estimate the main components and identify latent factors, followed by Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) to assess the importance and factorial load of elements, determine the most critical indices, verify the structure of the tools used, and offer a model. SPSS V.26 and Amos V.24 were used to analyze the data. Table 1 presents the demographic status of the research samples.

Table 1. Description of the demographic characteristics of the research samples.

Demographic variables of the research		Frequency	Relative Frequency Percentage
Gender	Men	202	55.8
	Women	134	37.0
	Missing	26	7.2
	Total	362	100.0
Age	Up to 30 years	150	41.4
	30 to 40 years	102	28.2
	Over 51 years old	76	21.0
	Missing	34	9.4
Total	362	100.0	
Marital Status	Single	148	40.9
	Married	166	45.9
	Missing	48	13.3
	Total	362	100.0
Education	Diploma	63	17.4
	Bachelor's degree and undergraduate student	180	49.7
	Master's degree and Ph.D.	82	22.7
	Missing	37	10.2
Total	362	100.0	

4. Results

The KMO index is 0.83, which indicates that the sampling data is sufficient for factor analysis since the number is more significant than 0.6. Bartlett's significance number is less than 0.05. Therefore, the obtained value is suitable. Furthermore, the significance of Bartlett's test at a 99% confidence level indicates the presence of a correlation between the desired variables for conducting factor analysis. Due to the suitability of the data for identifying and categorizing factors, an exploratory factor analysis with the varimax rotation method was employed.

Table 2. KMO index and Bartlett's test for research components.

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.836
	Approx. Chi-Square	6628.812
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	df	820
	Sig.	.000

The results indicate that all the items have a suitable status. Therefore, at this stage, there is no requirement to eliminate variables based on their lower factor loading to improve the cumulative percentage of explained variance. To determine the appropriate number of factors for this dataset in the analysis, the Kaiser Criterion was utilized initially. According to this criterion, only factors possessing an eigenvalue of 1 or greater are potential data variation sources. Table 3 shows the extracted factors and their percentage of variance explained. This table indicates that the eigenvalue of Factor 9 was more significant than 1, and collectively, these factors explain 62.125% of the variance in the data. The scree plot determines the number of factors to retain in an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) or principal components to keep in a principal component analysis (PCA). In the Scree Plot, the breaking point occurs at Point 10, where the value is greater than 1, and this factor is an extraction factor. Therefore, nine factors need to be extracted. The rotated factor matrix for the variables is shown in Table 4, which illustrates the relationship between the extracted factors.

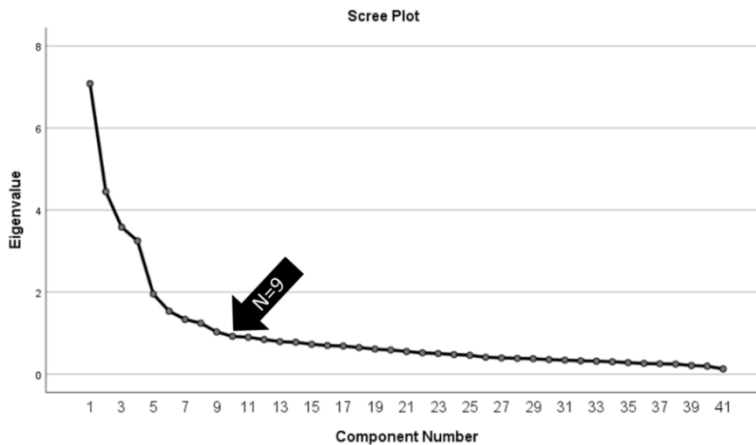


Figure 1. Scree plot to determine the number of factors.

Table 3. The extracted factors affect the formation of sport tourism destination image and their explanation percentage.

Component	Total Variance Explained					
	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	7.084	17.277	17.277	7.084	17.277	17.277
2	4.450	10.854	28.132	4.450	10.854	28.132
3	3.585	8.744	36.875	3.585	8.744	36.875
4	3.250	7.926	44.801	3.250	7.926	44.801
5	1.954	4.765	49.567	1.954	4.765	49.567
6	1.537	3.748	53.314	1.537	3.748	53.314
7	1.337	3.261	56.576	1.337	3.261	56.576
8	1.245	3.036	59.612	1.245	3.036	59.612
9	1.030	2.513	62.125	1.030	2.513	62.125
10	.922	2.250	64.374			
11	.901	2.197	66.571			
12	.846	2.063	68.634			
13	.794	1.936	70.570			

Component	Total Variance Explained					
	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
14	.779	1.899	72.469			
15	.730	1.781	74.250			
16	.698	1.703	75.953			
17	.687	1.675	77.629			
18	.650	1.585	79.214			
19	.612	1.492	80.706			
20	.590	1.438	82.145			
21	.553	1.350	83.495			
22	.521	1.270	84.765			
23	.504	1.229	85.994			
24	.478	1.167	87.161			
25	.461	1.125	88.285			
26	.415	1.011	89.297			
27	.397	.968	90.265			
28	.387	.943	91.209			
29	.378	.922	92.130			
30	.355	.867	92.997			
31	.344	.838	93.835			
32	.327	.798	94.633			
33	.317	.774	95.407			
34	.303	.740	96.147			
35	.282	.688	96.835			
36	.263	.641	97.475			
37	.253	.617	98.093			
38	.245	.598	98.691			
39	.212	.517	99.208			
40	.196	.479	99.687			
41	.128	.313	100.000			

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Table 5 shows that the ninth factor is excluded from the analysis due to being univariate, and the remaining 40 items are categorized into eight factors.

Table 4. Rotated factor matrix of factors affecting the formation of sport tourism destination image.

	Rotated Component Matrix								
	Component								
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Q13	.776	.053	.002	.114	-.055	.152	.009	-.080	.183
Q25	.722	.048	.179	.080	-.092	.113	-.095	.013	-.168
Q19	.717	.030	.179	.090	.062	.254	-.048	-.025	.028
Q18	.717	-.018	.137	.026	-.055	.245	-.061	.158	-.046
Q17	.701	.082	-.001	.080	-.022	.044	-.003	.101	.154
Q16	.676	.076	.073	.100	.103	.121	.022	.042	-.030
Q12	.676	.029	.013	.002	.026	.269	.013	-.047	.081
Q26	.658	.098	.028	.165	-.091	.016	-.065	-.015	-.396
Q22	.623	-.020	.005	-.039	.143	.124	-.073	.011	.104
Q14	.001	.819	-.032	.022	.022	.038	.028	-.003	-.022
Q36	.023	.785	.005	.026	-.029	.156	.038	-.041	-.059
Q4	.084	.774	.005	-.013	-.011	.048	.072	.007	.060
Q32	-.020	.759	.022	.078	.034	.048	-.031	.034	-.126
Q40	.080	.750	.005	-.052	-.043	-.072	-.047	.054	.119

	Rotated Component Matrix								
	Component								
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Q37	.119	.692	-.016	.026	-.002	-.106	-.046	.098	.108
Q24	.126	-.007	.841	.178	.088	.009	.001	-.108	-.065
Q38	.071	.023	.837	.136	.071	-.031	.002	-.017	-.057
Q34	.106	-.053	.789	.257	.068	-.079	.004	-.070	-.208
Q41	.098	.021	.745	.254	-.010	.100	.012	.091	.247
Q33	.122	-.008	.732	.339	.035	.023	.016	.087	.212
Q27	.156	-.039	.213	.803	-.062	-.078	-.001	.042	-.069
Q10	.094	.086	.095	.765	-.055	-.043	.014	-.003	-.149
Q29	.139	-.022	.266	.759	-.052	-.050	-.001	.109	-.032
Q20	.021	.041	.150	.752	.069	-.025	-.037	-.007	.158
Q23	.014	-.017	.017	-.030	.880	.017	-.146	-.063	-.009
Q35	.065	-.021	.063	.071	.838	-.016	-.070	.034	.016
Q39	-.012	.043	.041	-.069	.771	-.046	-.067	-.067	.029
Q8	-.009	-.038	.084	-.036	.708	.087	-.240	-.008	-.043
Q7	.297	.009	.015	-.023	-.049	.680	-.105	.025	.146
Q9	.258	.027	-.034	-.028	.053	.650	.104	-.023	.092
Q6	.176	.111	-.065	-.007	.107	.637	-.080	.167	-.306
Q11	.307	.005	-.016	-.019	-.073	.618	-.102	-.144	.075
Q5	.404	-.015	.124	-.080	.021	.565	-.044	-.067	-.051
Q28	-.057	-.044	-.063	.006	-.153	-.041	.802	-.098	.040
Q30	-.015	.025	.013	-.136	-.041	-.026	.758	.093	-.055
Q1	.014	-.049	-.064	.078	-.191	-.076	.743	-.021	.122
Q31	-.148	.076	.139	.011	-.122	-.004	.627	-.024	-.115
Q2	.026	.096	-.035	.028	-.013	.069	-.011	.793	.127
Q3	.055	.029	.000	.056	-.081	-.111	-.025	.731	-.153
Q15	.019	.016	.267	-.020	.009	.068	-.029	.668	.102
Q21	.438	.194	.064	.069	-.017	.126	-.062	-.044	.565

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
 Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.
 a. Rotation converged in 7 iterations.

In this study, considering that most of the first factor's variables were concerned with Public and tourism infrastructure, they were named the "Public and Tourism Infrastructure" factor. The second factor, which mainly consisted of questions about the customs and traditions of the province, was called the "Provincial Customs and Traditions" factor. The third factor was "Local Attractions," the fourth factor was "Service Quality," the fifth factor was "Entertainment and Sports Events," the sixth factor was named "Natural and Environmental Factors," and the seventh factor was "Information and Advertising." Finally, the eighth factor was called the "Social-Security" factor. After identifying and classifying the factors using exploratory factor analysis, confirmatory factor analysis was used to confirm the structural validity and identify the most critical factors affecting the formation of the destination image.

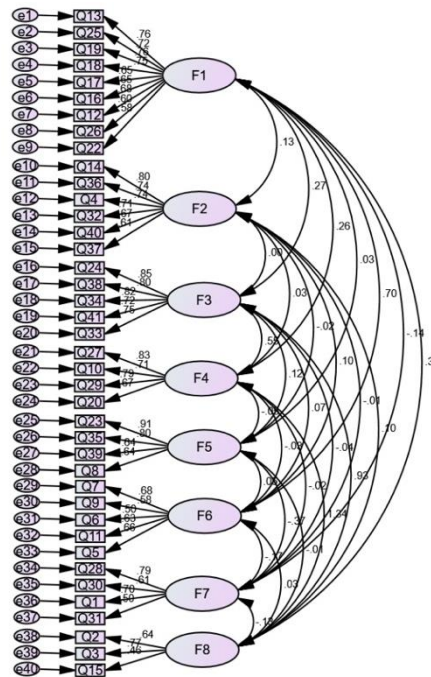


Figure 2. Confirmatory factor analysis representing the initial measurement model of sport tourism destination image.

The results of the first-order factor analysis are presented in [Figure 2](#). The initial model shows that the factor loadings of all items are acceptable and high. However, when examining the model fit indices, it became clear that some were not confirmed. Therefore, items with excessive skewness and kurtosis should first be removed to access an optimal model with standardized factor loadings. The reason for removing these items is to simplify and adjust the model for final fitting. In this model, items 40, 41, 4, 14, 18, 36, 6, and 11 had the highest skewness and kurtosis. Thus, they were set aside for model fitting. Since some fit indices were still not ideal, the relationships between some variables that significantly impacted the model fit were drawn. Although the correct method of drawing correlations is only the relationship between two variables in one factor, it became clear when examining the nature of the two variables that this correlation was logical and interpretable.

The final model obtained from the Amos software after modification was presented as a [Figure 3](#) report. The modified model shows that the questions have a good explanatory power. The fit indices obtained from the model and their strength are also listed in [Table 6](#).

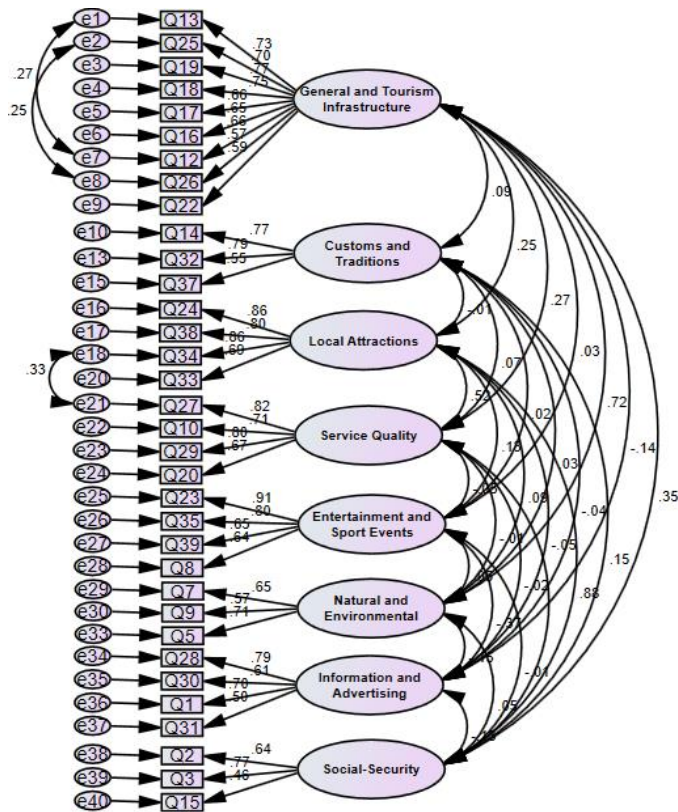


Figure 3. The final model of standard estimation of sport tourism destination image.

Table 5. Factor loading and coefficient of determination.

Factor	Item	Estimate	Coefficient of determination	Rank
Tourism and public infrastructure	Availability and ease of access to suitable accommodation and guesthouses	.73	.53	2
	Exciting routes for travel	.71	.51	3
	Attractiveness of tourist destinations and communication routes	.77	.59	1
	Availability of communication tools such as cable cars and ski lifts	.65	.43	5
	Availability of sports and adventure tourism sites and camps	.66	.44	4
	Easy access to various attractions and destinations	.65	.42	6
	Availability of suitable camping sites and numerous camps	.57	.32	8
	Availability of traditional accommodation based on the province's culture	.58	.34	7
Customs and traditions	Local indigenous and cultural traditions of the province	.77	.59	2
	Hospitality and proper behavior of the host community towards tourists	.79	.63	1

Factor	Item	Estimate	Coefficient of determination	Rank
Local attractions	Pleasant experience from previous travels	.55	.30	3
	Presence of exciting sports and adventure tourism activities and attractions	.86	.74	1
	Good opportunities for mountain climbing and cycling	.80	.64	3
	A wide variety of spa complexes	.86	.73	2
	Numerous visual beauties and attractions	.69	.48	4
Service quality	High-quality local restaurants and food at reasonable prices	.82	.67	1
	Variety of activities and products in sports tourism destinations	.70	.50	3
	Affordable prices for accommodation and recreational facilities	.80	.63	2
	Provision of satisfactory services on tourism websites, accommodations, restaurants, and other tourism facilities	.67	.45	4
Entertainment and sports events	Holding adventurous and exciting events and sports	.91	.83	1
	Food festivals (with attractive entertainment and leisure activities)	.80	.64	2
	Indigenous and local sports festivals	.65	.42	3
	Holding cultural festivals and handicrafts events	.64	.40	4
Natural and environmental	Mountainous terrain and high mountains	.65	.42	2
	Beautiful landscapes and natural scenery	.57	.33	3
	Very favorable weather conditions in the province	.71	.50	1
Information and promotion	Providing a positive image of sports tourism destinations in various media	.79	.62	1
	Provision of electronic tourism services (virtual tours, hotel reservations, ticket purchases, etc.)	.61	.37	3
	Availability of comprehensive information databases and websites for sports tourism attractions and events	.70	.49	2
	Word of mouth and oral advertising	.50	.35	4
Social security factor	Individual and social safety in sports tourism destinations	.64	.40	2
	Suitable social and cultural environment in Ardabil Province for families	.77	.59	1
	The feeling of security in transactions and exchanges in sports tourism destinations.	.46	.21	3

Table 5 shows that, "the attractiveness of routes and communication paths to tourist destinations" with a factor loading of .77 in the public and tourism infrastructure factor, "the spirit of hospitality and appropriate behavior of the host community towards tourists" with a factor loading of .79 in the customs and traditions factor of the province, "the existence of exciting and adventurous sports tourism attractions and activities" with a factor loading of .86 in the local attractions factor, "the presence of high-quality local restaurants and affordable prices" with a factor loading of .82 in the service quality factor,

the "holding of adventurous and exciting sports events and activities" with a factor loading of .91 in the entertainment and sports events factor, "very favorable weather conditions in the province" with a factor loading of .71 in the natural and environmental factor, "presenting a positive image of sports tourism destinations in various media" with a factor loading of .61 in the information and advertising factor, and "suitable social and cultural environment of Ardabil province for families" with a factor loading of .77 in the social and security factor were the most essential variables in each of the factors under study.

The reliability of the measurement model was assessed through confirmatory factor analysis using Amos V.24 software. Multiple tests were employed to evaluate how much the model represents the relationship between measurable variables. Different fit indices were used as diagnostic criteria, including GFI, X²(df), RMSEA, AGFI, and CFI (refer to Table 5). A CFI index value greater than .90 indicates an excellent fit of the model, which was observed at the level of .94, signifying excellent quality. The GFI index, which evaluates the relative values of variances and covariances through the model, ranged from zero to one and was acceptable at the level of .89. The chi-square test was equal to 1.573 degrees of freedom, which is one of the permissible values for the perfect fit. Another absolute fit index, RMSEA, which adjusts the model's simplicity, yields zero values for the ideal fit. In practice, a value less than .08 is considered adequate, and in this study, it was observed at the level of 0.04, indicating excellent quality. Other indicators and their numerical values are presented in Table 6. Based on the results obtained, the overall assessment of the model fit confirms its use. All profiles met the acceptable level, confirming the model's suitability through the fit test.

Table 6. The fit indices of the research model.

Index or Indicator	obtained value	Accepted fit	Fit
Chi-Square/degree of freedom (CMIN/DF)	1.573	≤ 3	acceptable
Goodness of Fit Index (GFI)	.89	≥ 0.9	reasonable
Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index (AGFI)	.87	≥ 0.9	reasonable
Normed Fit Index (NFI)	.85	≥ 0.9	reasonable
Comparative Fit Index (CFI)	.94	≥ 0.9	excellent
Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA)	.04	≤ 0.05	reasonable

5. Managerial implications

Based on the results obtained, to increase the attractiveness of sports tourism destinations and form a positive image, destination managers and officials must use the identified factors in this study and present a positive image of the sports tourism destinations to attract more sports tourists to the destinations.

6. Discussion and conclusion

Destination image is an essential topic in marketing research and the tourism industry. Many countries utilize promotional and global marketing tools to support their image and

compete with other destinations. The importance of this issue in tourism is so high that it affects tourists' behavior and decision-making, their satisfaction level during the trip, and it plays a crucial role in the destination positioning process, creating and managing a distinctive and attractive image of the destination. Successful marketing is necessary to attract tourists and maintain a competitive advantage in tourism (Mousavi et al., 2018). Sarlab et al. (2022) stated that to improve the development of sport industry, it is necessary to make fundamental changes to the marketing plans (Sarlab et al., 2022).

This study aimed to identify the factors influencing the formation of sports tourism destinations. The results of the exploratory factor analysis showed that eight latent factors, including public and tourism infrastructure, local customs and traditions, local attractions, service quality, sports entertainment and events, natural and environmental aspects, information dissemination and advertising, and social and security factors, influence the formation of the sports tourism destination image in Ardabil. Although researchers have examined various factors affecting the appearance of destination images, these findings are consistent with some researchers' results. In this regard, Rajesh (2013) pointed to factors such as security and cleanliness, price, attractions, infrastructure and facilities, renovation, friendly behavior of the local community, and a calm atmosphere (Rajesh, 2013). Chi and Qu (2008) mentioned factors such as travel environment, natural attractions, entertainment and events, historical attractions, infrastructure, accessibility, tranquility, price, and value as the components of destination image formation (Chi & Qu, 2008).

Another challenge for tourism destinations is the negative image potential tourists, especially those abroad, have about the internal situation and security in Iran. About 60% of foreign tourists said they traveled to Iran with significant risk acceptance. The negative image created in people's minds is one factor that negatively affects tourists' travel (Mohseni, 2010). The image tourists have of a destination significantly influences their travel decisions. In this regard, Chen et al. (2013) examined the relationship between travel constraints and the destination image of young outbound tourists. The results showed that travel constraints affect the formation of destination images in the early stages of the decision-making process (Chen et al., 2013).

Public and tourism infrastructure was one identified factor in this study that formed the destination image. Tourism infrastructure refers to the factors developed to provide services and benefits to tourists and travelers (Boers & Cottrell, 2007). According to the definition of the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), the essential tourism infrastructure includes accommodation facilities such as hotels and hostels, roadside rest areas and restaurants, travel services offices, cultural and artistic exhibitions, public parks, the number of public vehicles, investment opportunities, and tourist sample areas (Ferguson, 2007). Infrastructure and infrastructural support in a tourist destination significantly impact the image created in the tourist's mind, ultimately leading to their destination choice and future behaviors. The results of this section of the study are consistent with the studies conducted by Madden et al. (2016), who have referred to tourism infrastructure as a crucial factor in tourists' decision-making.

The following identified factor in the Formation of a destination image is its culture and customs. Tourism experience goes far beyond a one-night stay in a hotel or apartment. This experience starts from the moment of arrival at the destination. The behavior of passport control or customs officials, as well as the mindset of taxi drivers towards tourists, all contribute to the overall tourist experience. Other essential factors at the destination include the quality of food, the behavior of police personnel, the number of beggars on the streets, dirty streets, inappropriate behavior towards tourists in coastal areas or restaurants, and many other factors that can affect the quality of the travel experience. As [Sung Moon et al. \(2011\)](#) showed, local culture and environment can create a unique image of the destination. Although potential tourists consider various features of a goal when choosing a travel destination, this study revealed that the unique customs, traditions, and culture of sports tourism destinations can shape the destination's image ([Sung Moon et al., 2011](#)). Iran's cultural attractions include educational, cultural, pilgrimage tours, performing arts, festivals and events, historical sites, nature, and popular culture ([Aghili et al., 2023](#)). In this regard, [Gorji et al. \(2023\)](#) stated that a destination depicted as attractive and culturally rich can attract visitors and tourists, even if they do not have prior knowledge about it ([Gorji et al., 2023](#)).

One of the most essential factors in shaping the image of a destination in this study was security and safety, which has also been examined in numerous other studies. The sense of security among most tourists and visitors to tourist destinations, and in the tourism industry as a whole, is a significant factor that can affect the image of the destination and the decision-making of visitors to tourist destinations ([Gavurova et al., 2023](#)). If tourists feel uncertain or threatened during their vacation at the destination, it can create a negative image and, in the long run, may lead to a decrease in tourism in the area. If tourists feel threatened or unsafe, they will likely not return to the destination and will not recommend it to others. In this regard, [Gavurova et al. \(2023\)](#) stated that reducing safety concerns related to facilities and services can be associated with a positive image of the destination.

On the other hand, the results showed that reducing health and safety concerns would be accompanied by a positive increase in all aspects of the destination's image ([Gavurova et al., 2023](#)). A destination depicted in the media as dangerous and unstable may create doubt among potential visitors, even if they do not have prior experience with the destination ([Gorji et al., 2023](#)). The results of the [Gavurova et al. \(2023\)](#) study indicate that safety concerns in the tourism environment can be associated with a negative image of the destination; therefore, during the Covid-19 pandemic, tourists were more interested in destinations with better safety conditions ([Gavurova et al., 2023](#)). [Wan et al. \(2022\)](#) developed an active approach to assess tourists' safety attitudes based on health issues, personal safety, travel safety information, police safety, and vulnerability to crime. They focused on safety principles, management, activities and equipment, resources, infrastructure and environment, travel safety risks, and tourist-resident interactions ([Wan et al., 2022](#)).

Information and advertising are one of the practical factors in shaping the image of a tourism destination. Tourists' potential familiarity with the destination is the basis for the perceived image of the destination and the beginning of decision-making to travel to the

destination. The images and content of advertisements presented through information channels and social media play a significant role in shaping the idea of the destination and creating expectations that tourists have before visiting it (Kaosiri et al., 2017; Li et al., 2023). Therefore, if a tourist destination intends to develop or strengthen its image, it is necessary to ensure that tourists perceive it as more familiar than other destinations. Increasing familiarity can help establish an emotional connection between tourists and the destination. Main stakeholders in the sports tourism sector should employ the necessary methods to make a particular destination well-known, which undoubtedly helps increase tourists' familiarity with it. Tourism is an information-based industry, and information technology plays a crucial role in the tourism industry (Shafiee et al., 2018). One of the reasons that compels travelers to visit a specific destination is advertisements.

Moreover, only a place that is known and tourists are aware of its unique features, attractions, type of facilities and amenities available, and assurance of meeting their welfare needs throughout the trip can attract tourists. In fact, without advertising and awareness through media, even if tourist attractions are attractive and worthy of tourism, due to the lack of awareness among travelers and tourists, they will not be successful in this industry, and there will not be much popularity in this area (Javid & Asadi, 2018). Another essential factor is producing trailers and clips in different languages to introduce the tourism capabilities of destinations. Videos convey significant information quickly and are suitable for introducing tourist activities. Making trailers and clips in other languages to introduce the tourism capabilities of destinations can act as an information guide for the desired region and provide brief information about the destination to the audience. However, an essential point that destination management should consider is incorrect information. Misleading advertising information about tourist destinations may lead to negative evaluations by tourists (Li et al., 2023). The tourism industry must accurately and honestly present the destinations to tourists so unreasonable expectations are not created because incorrect advertising information about tourist destinations can lead to negative evaluations by tourists.

An identified factor affecting the image of tourism destinations in local attractions was researched. Living in a self-made environment, urban dwellers have lost opportunities to spend leisure time and travel in nature, limited by distance and time constraints. This issue is more critical in cities, particularly larger ones, where natural tourist and leisure spaces have become subject to competition from various economic groups, creating many constraints in this field. Ardabil province is ideal for sports tourists due to its location, high altitude, and suitable climate. In addition, the presence of numerous tourist attractions in this province, such as suspension bridges, Sabalan Mountain, hot mineral waters, historical attractions, etc., can significantly influence the formation of the image of sports tourism destinations.

The quality of services and products at the destination was another factor in shaping the image of the destination. Positive experiences of tourists with services and products can lead to repeat trips, and satisfied tourists can recommend their travel experiences to friends and family, potentially attracting more tourists. Previous tourist recommendations can also be a more credible source of information for potential tourists (Chi & Qu, 2008).

Customers evaluate the quality of services by comparing them with their expectations, and understanding customer expectations is necessary to provide top-quality services. Tourists compare actual service performance with their expectations; satisfaction is achieved when their expectations are met or exceeded (Cossío-Silva et al., 2019). A tourist destination should offer quality goods and services, which is itself a guarantee of maintaining customer satisfaction. The more diverse and high-quality the supply, the higher the income will be from tourism, assuming demand. Offering a variety of high-quality products increases the expenses of each tourist in the destination, attracting tourists with higher financial ability and looking for high-quality services (Caber & Albayrak, 2018). A review of new concepts related to quality shows that good quality means achieving customer needs and desires. In other words, a product is of good quality when it meets the needs and desires of the customer (Saberifar, 2018).

Another identified factor that impacts shaping the image of a sports tourism destination is entertainment and sports events. When an event is held in a city, a vast number of people get to witness the team, players, and beautiful moments of the sport from up close. All these factors lead people toward their desired sports disciplines. Moreover, when events are held in a city, the facilities and equipment used for the event remain, making it easy for everyone to access high-quality sports venues and facilities. Even small-scale tourism events can create a cognitive and emotional brand image of the destination, attracting visitors from outside the region. Holding events leads to the development of tourism destinations from various aspects. A cultural event is not limited to a specific location, so if planned and marketed correctly, it can help create a positive image of the tourism destination and lead to its development. This is one of the methods of attracting tourists in the modern world, holding various tourism, cultural, sports, and social events. In this regard, Carrascal Incera and Fernández (2015) found that infrastructure, urban events, cultural heritage, and tourist attractions positively and significantly impact shaping the image (Carrascal Incera & Fernández, 2015). Shirkhodaie et al. (2016) concluded that events contribute to a good image of the destination, satisfaction of tourists, and positive behavioral intentions (Shirkhodaie et al., 2016). Getz and Page (2016) also reported in a study that hosting sports events can be helpful for tourism destinations by exposing them and developing their image (Getz & Page, 2016).

Finally, according to the results of this study, one of the crucial factors in shaping the image of tourism destinations is information dissemination and advertising of the potential of sports tourism destinations. In today's world, the media, particularly social media, can rapidly transmit news, information, videos, and photos to a global audience in seconds. This unparalleled power has revolutionized how we consume and share information, enabling us to stay informed and connected like never before. Therefore, using the media's potential can be suitable for presenting a positive image of sports tourism destinations in the province. On the other hand, due to the popularity of social media and the use of the internet by most people in trip planning, it is recommended to prepare suitable and attractive teasers and clips in different languages to introduce the capabilities of sports tourism destinations and share them on websites, social networks, and virtual spaces. It is also recommended to properly introduce the local customs and traditions of sports tourism destinations during events and to promote the attractions, local foods, natural and cultural

features of the region, as well as the tourist destination's attractions consciously and unconsciously during tourism tours to improve the cognitive image of the destinations and consequently enhance the sports tourism destination brand.

Furthermore, the quality of services was identified as a crucial factor in shaping the sports tourism destination's image. Specifically, high-quality local restaurants offering affordable prices were the most significant aspect. To enhance the branding of sports tourism destinations, it is recommended that responsible organizations take on the role of destination brand managers. This can be achieved by organizing unique festivals celebrating local and national cuisine and promoting these events through tourism exhibitions focusing on traditional cuisine. By doing so, these organizations can help to improve the image of sports tourism destinations and strengthen their brand identity. Since the consistency between a tourist's expectations of a destination and their experience of that destination significantly impacts their overall travel experience evaluation, sports tourism destination management must accurately and honestly demonstrate the destinations to tourists to avoid creating unrealistic expectations. Misleading advertising information about destinations can lead to unfulfilled expectations of tourists and negative evaluations of the destination, which may result in a lack of return visits or negative feedback to others.

Additionally, since one of the influential factors in the formation of sports tourism destinations in Ardabil province is security-related factors and negative perceptions of security by tourists can also affect the overall image of the destination, managers and policymakers of sports tourism destinations must identify the factors that lead to safety and security concerns and address them to avoid negative experiences by tourists and unfavorable future behavior, such as not choosing the destination or harmful recommendations. In this regard, government organizations such as cultural heritage, tourism, and handicrafts can collaborate with other responsible tourism organizations and use the media to produce films or reports that depict the pleasant experiences of tourists in destinations and fully describe their experiences. To visualize the presence of safety and security and provide a positive image of sports tourism destinations, travel agencies should film and photograph sports trips of tourists and make them available in their travel programs, brochures, advertisements on their agency's website, and tourism exhibitions outside the province. On the other hand, destination management organizations and other responsible sports tourism organizations should showcase clips or photos of their tours on their websites and activate the section for traveler reviews. This allows tourists to contact them via email and address their questions and concerns.

Disclosure statement and funding

The authors declare no potential conflicts of interest. The present study received no financial support from any organization or institution.

Acknowledgment

We would like to give special thanks to all the participants in this study.

References

- Aghili, A., Arofzad, S., & Nazari, R. (2023). Sustainable Development According to Sport Tourism Business in Iran. *Sports Business Journal*, 3(1), 101-117. <https://doi.org/10.22051/sbj.2023.42311.1065>
- Bahrainizadeh, M., & Busheri Sangizad, B. (2019). Providing a Local Model of Tourism Destination Loyalty Based on Grounded Theory Approach: Boushehr Port as a Tourism Destination. *Tourism Management Studies*, 14(45), 193-220. <https://doi.org/10.22054/tms.2019.23042.1654>
- Baloch, Q. B., Shah, S. N., Iqbal, N., Sheeraz, M., Asadullah, M., Mahar, S., & Khan, A. U. (2023). Impact of tourism development upon environmental sustainability: a suggested framework for sustainable ecotourism. *Environmental Science and Pollution Research*, 30(3), 5917-5930. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11356-022-22496-w>
- Boers, B., & Cottrell, S. (2007). Sustainable Tourism Infrastructure Planning: A GIS-Supported Approach. *Tourism Geographies*, 9(1), 1-21. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14616680601092824>
- Brooks, C., Waterton, E., Saul, H., & Renzaho, A. (2023). Exploring the relationships between heritage tourism, sustainable community development and host communities' health and wellbeing: A systematic review. *PLOS ONE*, 18(3), e0282319. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0282319>
- Caber, M., & Albayrak, T. (2018). Assessing daily tour service quality: A proposal for a DAILYSERV scale. *Journal of Destination Marketing & Management*, 7, 18-25. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jdmm.2016.06.007>
- Carrascal Incera, A., & Fernández, M. F. (2015). Tourism and income distribution: Evidence from a developed regional economy. *Tourism Management*, 48, 11-20. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2014.10.016>
- Chen, H.-J., Chen, P.-J., & Okumus, F. (2013). The relationship between travel constraints and destination image: A case study of Brunei. *Tourism Management*, 35, 198-208. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2012.07.004>
- Chen, Z., & Yang, J. (2022). Different social representations of the same belief in urban tourism cities in Southeast Asia and China. *International Journal of Tourism Cities*, 8(1), 70-87. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJTC-04-2021-0069>
- Chi, C. G.-Q., & Qu, H. (2008). Examining the structural relationships of destination image, tourist satisfaction and destination loyalty: An integrated approach. *Tourism Management*, 29(4), 624-636. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2007.06.007>
- Cossío-Silva, F.-J., Revilla-Camacho, M.-Á., & Vega-Vázquez, M. (2019). The tourist loyalty index: A new indicator for measuring tourist destination loyalty? *Journal of Innovation & Knowledge*, 4(2), 71-77. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jik.2017.10.003>
- Fazaeil, J., Ghafouri, F., Javid, M., & Goodarzi, S. (2020). Sports Tourism and Sustainable Development of Host Cities (A Case Study: Sarein Winter Sports Festival). *Strategic Studies On Youth and Sports*, 19(48), 197-218. https://fasname.msy.gov.ir/article_382.html?lang=en
- Ferguson, L. (2007). The United Nations World Tourism Organisation. *New Political Economy*, 12(4), 557-568. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13563460701661587>

- Gavurova, B., Skare, M., Belas, J., Rigelsky, M., & Ivankova, V. (2023). The relationship between destination image and destination safety during technological and social changes COVID-19 pandemic. *Technological forecasting and social change*, 191, 122488. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.techfore.2023.122488>
- Getz, D., & Page, S. J. (2016). Progress and prospects for event tourism research. *Tourism Management*, 52, 593-631. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2015.03.007>
- Ghaffari, M., & Mamramezani, K. (2019). A Model for Investigating the Effect of Online Word-of-Mouth Communications on Travel Intention for Tourism Destination. *Social Studies in Tourism*(1), 101-124. <http://journalitor.ir/en/Article/13980402190348>
- Gil Arroyo, C., Barbieri, C., Knollenberg, W., & Kline, C. (2023). Can craft beverages shape a destination's image? A cognitive intervention to measure pisco-related resources on conative image. *Tourism Management*, 95, 104677. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2022.104677>
- Gorji, A. S., Garcia, F. A., & Mercadé-Melé, P. (2023). Tourists' perceived destination image and behavioral intentions towards a sanctioned destination: Comparing visitors and non-visitors. *Tourism Management Perspectives*, 45, 101062. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tmp.2022.101062>
- Gričar, S., Bojnec, Š., Karadžić, V., & Backović Vulić, T. (2021). Tourism-led economic growth in Montenegro and Slovenia. *Economic Research-Ekonomska Istraživanja*, 34(1), 3401-3420. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1331677X.2021.1875858>
- Haini, H., Wei Loon, P., Yong, S. K., & Husseini, S. (2023). Does Social Globalization Affect the Relationship Between International Tourism and Economic Growth? *Journal of Travel Research*, 00472875221146779. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00472875221146779>
- Haller, A.-P., Butnaru, G. I., Hârșan, G.-D. T., & Ștefănică, M. (2021). The relationship between tourism and economic growth in the EU-28. Is there a tendency towards convergence? *Economic Research-Ekonomska Istraživanja*, 34(1), 1121-1145. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1331677X.2020.1819852>
- Hanna, P., Font, X., Scarles, C., Weeden, C., & Harrison, C. (2018). Tourist destination marketing: From sustainability myopia to memorable experiences. *Journal of Destination Marketing & Management*, 9, 36-43. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jdmm.2017.10.002>
- Javid, M., & Asadi, H. (2018). The Role of Mass Media in Sports Tourism Development. *Sport Physiology & Management Investigations*, 9(4), 29-42. https://www.sportrc.ir/article_60142.html?lang=en
- Javid, M., Bagheri, G., Moghadamzadeh, A., Assadi, H., & Almasi, H. (2021). Determining Effective Indicators on Seasonal Pattern of Sport Tourism Destinations Case Study, Ardabil Province. *Sport Management Journal*, 13(2), 539-546. <https://doi.org/10.22059/jsm.2020.293457.2369>
- Juvan, E., & Rok, O. (2008). Integration as a Tool of Destination Management - The Case of Rural and Rural Fringe Areas. *Organizacija*, 41(1), 31-40. <https://doi.org/10.2478/v10051-008-0004-8>
- Kaosiri, Y., Callarisa Fiol, L., Moliner, M., Rodríguez-Artola, R., & Sánchez-García, J. (2017). User-Generated Content Sources in Social Media: A New Approach to Explore Tourist Satisfaction. *Journal of Travel Research*, 58(3), 004728751774601. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0047287517746014>
- Li, Y., He, Z., Li, Y., Huang, T., & Liu, Z. (2023). Keep it real: Assessing destination image congruence and its impact on tourist experience evaluations. *Tourism Management*, 97, 104736. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2023.104736>

- Ma, X., Wang, Y., Song, H., & Han, L. (2019). Time-varying mechanisms between foreign direct investment and tourism development under the new normal in China. *Tourism Economics*, 26(4), 135481661987094. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1354816619870948>
- Madden, K., Rashid, B., & Zainol, N. (2016). Beyond the Motivation Theory of Destination Image. *Tourism and Hospitality Management*, 22(2), 247-264. <https://doi.org/10.20867/thm.22.2.1>
- Mansuri Moayed, F., & Soleymani, S. (2012). Marketing Tools and Tourists` Destination Image. *Tourism Management Studies*, 7(18), 93-110. https://tms.atu.ac.ir/article_5107.html?lang=en
- Martins, H., Carvalho, P., & Almeida, N. (2021). Destination Brand Experience: A Study Case in Touristic Context of the Peneda-Gerês National Park. *Sustainability*, 13(21), 11569. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su132111569>
- Mohseni, R. A. (2010). Sustainable tourism in Iran: Functions, challenges and solutions. *Geographic Space*, 9(28), 149-171. <https://www.sid.ir/paper/91381/en>
- Moradi Doliskani, N., & Atghia, N. (2021). The Role of Social Marketing in Sports Tourism Development in Tehran Province. *Sports Business Journal*, 1(1), 45-59. <https://doi.org/10.22051/sbj.2021.36529.1003>
- Mousavi, S. M., Shafeie, R., Lotfi, N., & Mohamadi, H. (2018). The impact marketing communications media of on the image of the destination tourists (Case Study of Kermanshah Bistoon tourist region). *Tourism and Leisure Time*, 5(10), 92-106. https://tlj.usc.ac.ir/article_129973.html?lang=en
- Naghizadeh-Baghi, A., Javid, M., Heidari, M., & Goodarzi, S. (2023). Designing A System Dynamics Pattern of Marketing in Sport Tourism Destinations; A Qualitative Research. *Research in Sport Management and Marketing*, 4(3), 1-16. <https://doi.org/10.22098/rsmm.2022.1665>
- Nazari, R. (2021). The Analysis of Strategic Ecology of Sports Tourism. *Sports Business Journal*, 1(1), 149-158. <https://doi.org/10.22051/sbj.2021.36941.1009>
- Qu, C., Zhang, C., Shen, S., & Olsen, D. H. (2023). Heritage conservation and communities' sense of deprivation in tourism: the case of the Hani community in Yunnan, China. *Tourism Geographies*, 25(2-3), 881-898. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14616688.2021.2016936>
- Rajesh, R. (2013). Impact of Tourist Perceptions, Destination Image and Tourist Satisfaction on Destination Loyalty: A Conceptual Model. *Revista de Turismo y Patrimonio Cultural*, 11(3), 67-78. <https://doi.org/10.25145/j.pasos.2013.11.039>
- Ranacher-Lackner, V., & Zehrer, A. (2022). Die Wahrnehmung von Resilienz in Krisenzeiten auf Destinations- und Branchenebene aus Sicht von Unternehmer/innen. In H. Pechlaner, D. Zacher, & E. Störmann (Eds.), *Resilienz als Strategie in Region, Destination und Unternehmen: Eine raumbezogene Perspektive* (pp. 309-333). Springer Fachmedien Wiesbaden. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-658-37296-5_11
- Ravinthirakumaran, K., Selvanathan, E., Selvanathan, S., & Singh, T. (2019). Tourism and foreign direct investment inflows in Sri Lanka. *South Asia Economic Journal*, 20(2), 248-273. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1391561419858475>
- Saberifar, R. (2018). Prioritizing the Needs and Expectations of Urban Tourists (Case Study, Mashhad City). *The Journal of Spatial Planning*, 22(2), 75-93. <http://hsm.sp.modares.ac.ir/article-21-13749-en.html>
- Sarlab, R., Alipour Nadinluoi, Z., & Mahmoudi, N. (2022). Study on the Marketing Mix of the Iranian Football Industry. *Sports Business Journal*, 2(1), 13-25. <https://doi.org/10.22051/sbj.2022.39725.1026>

- Shafiee, S., Rajabzadeh Ghatari, A., Hasanzadeh, A., & Jahanyan, S. (2018). Studying the Effect of IT on Sustainable Development of Tourism Destinations toward Developing Smart Tourism Destinations (Based on the Meta Synthesize Approach). *New Marketing Research Journal*, 7(4), 95-116. <https://doi.org/10.22108/nmrj.2017.103939.1247>
- Shapoval, V., Wang, M., Hara, T., & Shioya, H. (2017). Data Mining in Tourism Data Analysis: Inbound Visitors to Japan. *Journal of Travel Research*, 57(2), 004728751769696. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0047287517696960>
- Shirkhodaie, M., Alizadeh Sani, M., & Amoli Diva, F. (2016). Examining the Effect of Destination Image on Satisfaction and Behavioral Intentions in Health Tourism (Case Study: Lavij Spa). *Tourism Planning and Development*, 5(17), 128-145. https://tourismpld.journals.umz.ac.ir/article_1281.html?lang=en
- Sung Moon, K., Kim, M., Jae Ko, Y., Connaughton, D. P., & Hak Lee, J. (2011). The influence of consumer's event quality perception on destination image. *Managing service quality: an international journal*, 21(3), 287-303. <https://doi.org/10.1108/09604521111127974>
- Wan, Z., Huang, S., & Choi, H. C. (2022). Modification and validation of the travel safety attitude scale (TSAS) in international tourism: a reflective-formative approach. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Insights*, 5(5), 1002-1021. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JHTI-01-2021-0012>
- Zhang, H., Fu, X., Cai, L. A., & Lu, L. (2014). Destination image and tourist loyalty: A meta-analysis. *Tourism Management*, 40, 213-223. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2013.06.006>
- Zhang, J., Wu, B., Morrison, A. M., Tseng, C., & Chen, Y.-c. (2018). How country image affects tourists' destination evaluations: A moderated mediation approach. *Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Research*, 42(6), 904-930. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1096348016640584>
- Zouni, G., Markogiannaki, P., & Georgaki, I. (2020). A strategic tourism marketing framework for sports mega events: The case of Athens Classic (Authentic) Marathon. *Tourism Economics*, 27(1), 135481661989807. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1354816619898074>



نشریه کسب‌وکار در ورزش

آدرس نشریه: <https://sbj.alzahra.ac.ir/>

تابستان ۱۴۰۲، دوره ۳، شماره ۳، ص ۶۷-۸۸

شناسه دیجیتال: 10.22051/SBJ.2023.43801.1096



بازشناسی عوامل موثر بر شکل‌گیری تصویر مقاصد گردشگری ورزشی

اسما امامی^۱، مجید جاوید^{۲*}، مهرداد محرم‌زاده^۳، مسعود ایمان‌زاده^۴

^۱ کارشناسی ارشد مدیریت ورزشی، گروه مدیریت ورزشی، دانشگاه آزاد اسلامی واحد اردبیل، ایران.

^۲ دکتری مدیریت ورزشی، دانشکده مدیریت ورزشی، گروه علوم ورزشی و تربیت بدنی، دانشگاه تهران، تهران، ایران.

^۳ استاد مدیریت و ورزشی، دانشگاه محقق اردبیلی، اردبیل، ایران.

^۴ استادیار، گروه مدیریت ورزشی، دانشگاه آزاد اسلامی واحد اردبیل، ایران.

کلیدواژه

بازاریابی مقاصد گردشگری

تبلیغات

سرگرمی

کیفیت خدمات

رویداد ورزشی

گردشگری ورزشی

نوع مقاله

پژوهشی اصلی

چکیده

هدف: بازاریابی تصویر مقصد، نقطه‌ی شروع یک بازاریابی گردشگری موفق است، زیرا تصویر و انتظارات از تجربیات سفر که بازدیدکنندگان در آینده خواهند داشت، افکار آنها را به یک مقصد خاص مربوط می‌کند. هدف از انجام پژوهش حاضر، بازشناسی عوامل موثر بر شکل‌گیری تصویر مقاصد گردشگری ورزشی استان اردبیل بود.

روش: روش انجام تحقیق حاضر، کاربردی- توصیفی و از نوع پیمایشی است. جامعه آماری پژوهش حاضر را متخصصان مدیریت ورزشی و گردشگری، مدیران و کارشناسان ادارات میراث فرهنگی و گردشگری، مدیران و کارشناسان اداره کل ورزش و جوانان و مدیران آژانس‌های گردشگری و گردشگران بازدیدکننده از مقاصد گردشگری در استان اردبیل تشکیل می‌دادند. ابزار پژوهش پرسشنامه‌ی محقق ساخته بود که پس از تایید روایی و پایایی استفاده شد (۸۱٪). در تجزیه و تحلیل داده‌ها و برای برآورد مولفه‌های اصلی و شناسایی عامل‌های پنهان از تحلیل عاملی اکتشافی استفاده شد. سپس به منظور برآورد اهمیت، بارعاملی عناصر، تعیین مهم‌ترین شاخص‌ها، تایید ساختار ابزار مورد استفاده و ارائه مدل تحلیل عاملی تاییدی مورد استفاده قرار گرفت.

یافته‌ها: نتایج تحلیل عاملی اکتشافی نشان داد که هشت عامل پنهان به نام‌های زیرساخت‌های عمومی و گردشگری، آداب و رسوم استان، جاذبه‌های محلی، کیفیت خدمات، سرگرمی‌ها و رویدادها ورزشی، عوامل طبیعی و زیست محیطی، اطلاع‌رسانی و تبلیغات و عامل اجتماعی و امنیتی در شکل‌گیری تصویر مقاصد گردشگری ورزشی تاثیرگذار هستند.

اصالت و ابتکار مقاله: تصویر مقصد یکی از مهم‌ترین متغیرهای است که می‌تواند، تصمیم گردشگر برای انتخاب یک مقصد را تحت تاثیر قرار دهد. با شناسایی عوامل موثر بر شکل‌گیری تصویر مقاصد گردشگری ورزشی و به کارگیری این عوامل و ارائه تصویر مثبت از مقاصد گردشگری ورزشی، مدیران و مسئولان مقاصد گردشگری می‌توانند گردشگران ورزشی بیشتری را جذب مقاصد گردشگری ورزشی نموده و مقصد خود را توسعه دهند.

تاریخ دریافت: ۱۴۰۲/۰۲/۲۶

تاریخ پذیرش: ۱۴۰۲/۰۵/۱۳