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The relationships between marketing variables and their effects on each other

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Abstract

The objective of this study is to evaluate the relationships between the marketing variables and their effects on each other. This study has been conducted by the use of the descriptive-survey method, and it is an applied study. The results show that the studied elements (physical proofs, mental images, expectations, perception, satisfaction, branding, packing, workplace, positioning, positioning the product, and loyalty) have positive and significant effects on each other. In conclusion, all of the concepts defined in this article have strong conceptual relationships with each other and have decisive roles in the customers' satisfaction with the destination.

Keywords: Mental Image, Perception, Expectations, Satisfaction.

Las relaciones entre las variables de marketing y sus efectos entre sí

Resumen

El objetivo de este estudio es evaluar las relaciones entre las variables de marketing y sus efectos entre sí. Este estudio se realizó mediante el uso del método de encuesta descriptiva, y es un estudio aplicado. Los resultados muestran que los elementos estudiados (pruebas físicas, imágenes mentales, expectativas, percepción, satisfacción, marca, empaque, lugar de trabajo, posicionamiento, posicionamiento del producto y lealtad) tienen efectos positivos y significativos entre sí. En conclusión, todos los conceptos definidos en este artículo tienen fuertes relaciones conceptuales entre sí y tienen roles decisivos en la satisfacción de los clientes con el destino.

Palabras clave: Imagen mental, Percepción, Expectativas, Satisfacción.

1. INTRODUCTION

Since the second half of the twentieth century, factors such as globalization, expansion of capitalization, development of transportation as well as the progress of technical and technological communication have all led to the development of tourism. Today, tourism as the third economic industry in the world Almuala (2012) has turned into an economic activity with a huge capacity. Tourism is one of the most dynamic economic activities in the contemporary era. It plays an important role in local sustainable development. By

combining and making simultaneous use of internal and external resources, this industry produces a lot of social, economic, environmental as well as cultural benefits. Nowadays, in many countries, tourism is considered as the main leading force of economic development and progress; and by creating a strategic opportunity, it diversifies the local economy, increases entrepreneurship, creates incomes, and causes an increase of imported sources to the local community. Therefore, the development of tourism is the first option in the development of every region. Nowadays, tourism has become so important in the economic-social development of countries that the economists have called it the invisible export and believe that it is the main pillar of sustainable development. Therefore, to be successful in this field, in addition to the inclusion of the required conditions and tourist attractions, there should be good planning to attract tourists and to introduce the facilities and conditions more efficiently to the tourist markets.

Considering the amazing effect of tourism in the economic, social and cultural fields in the contemporary societies, appropriate efforts should be made with a high vision, knowledge-based management, and with correct planning in order to expand tourism and minimize its negative effects. Therefore, one of the methods for measurement of the efficiency of existing services and facilities in a region is an evaluation of the opinions of users of these services. In fact, regarding their direct contact with the provided services and different needs of people for the services and facilities available in the cities and regions, the users can play efficient roles in measuring

efficiency or shortages of available services. Nowadays, we witness a lot of changes in values and cultures among the consumers. In the past, the users were mostly loyal to specific brands or trademarks and used them to fulfill their requirements, and they changed them only when they were dissatisfied with the products. Also, the entertainment and amusement aspects, as well as enjoyable values, were not so important when they were using the products. However, in the contemporary competitive world, these values and expectations have changed. Enjoyable values, tourists' perspectives, expectations, perceptions, satisfaction, branding of the products and received services by the tourists, the types and methods of providing the services for the tourists, the service environments, location of the products, and users' satisfaction and loyalty in buying the products have all become significantly important. These values have effectively influenced the behavior of consumers, their choices of products, destinations, as well as the names and symbols of attractions that are selected by them.

Selecting a behavioral attitude in order to analyze the demands of the tourists is important because travel products are complicated, and the requirements and familiarity of tourists with these products are various and diverse. Therefore, in order to create an appropriate behavioral model and a way of performance for the demand of tourism, paying attention to the motivations of tourists and getting to know their mental maps in the selection of destinations are specifically important. Behavioral geography in tourism tries to discover the mental maps of people and discover their deep perceptions of places. Behavioral geography suggests that in order to understand spatial structures, a

better understanding and knowledge of decisions and behaviors dominating the system and order of the phenomena is required so that more emphasis could be laid on the subjectivism of these phenomena.

Therefore, it can be stated that understanding the role of perceived quality from the services and the mental image are important factors in the process of the tourist's decision-making which needs to be considered in more details. This is because the mental map of the tourist destination is a factor that lots of tourists pay attention to while selecting a destination. The mental image refers to the collection of beliefs, opinions, and ideas that an individual has about a destination. Therefore, it is quite reasonable to suppose that the mental image influences the decisions that the tourists make. This image could be an unreal or conceptual image of the tourist destination, but this very mental image of the tourists' affects their selection. Also, the mental image of the tourists is influential on their level of perceived value about the destinations and services. The way individuals interpret their stimulants is, in fact, their understanding of the reality based on opinions, requirements, attitudes, events, individuals, behaviors and actions which are effective. About branding, perception can be effective on decisions made for buying (Swystun, 2015). Tourists interpret reality based on the requirements, stimulants and the cases that were mentioned; and they decide to pay the cost of enjoying the tourist attraction. In addition to that, the quality of products and services provided for the tourists and the comparison they make between the quality of these products and services, the branding level, packaging, service environment, positioning the product, and level as

well as the amount of the fulfilled expectations all play key roles in the satisfaction and loyalty of the tourists. In the tourist industry, too, loyalty to a specific destination is a key factor in the management of tourism, because the tourists' revisit of the destination shows that the destination is an appropriate business opportunity. Also, different studies show that in tourism, loyalty leads to decreased costs of attracting tourists and sensitivity of tourists to the expenses. Because of this, the concept of loyalty has been formally recognized as one of the main driving forces and one of the important indexes of success in marketing and tourist resources. Therefore, an appropriate evaluation of effective factors on the loyalty of tourists is required for the identification of effective factors on a revisit of a tourist to the required destination. Also, a comprehensive study, identification and analysis of effective factors on the satisfaction and loyalty of tourists can vastly reveal the obstacles and threatening elements in the tourism industry. By controlling, improving, or removing these elements, tourists' satisfaction can be improved and elevated. Therefore, research findings about the loyalty of tourists help to get a better understanding of the behavioral mechanisms and the factors that show the appropriate basis for further maintenance of tourists in the level of individual providers and also generally in the level of destinations.

Intense competition between the countries to attract tourists is one of the challenging issues that the world of tourism is facing nowadays. Eventually, a country will win the competition that can attract more tourists to itself and can get more income from it. Some ways of attracting more tourists are branding techniques, positioning of

products, providing appropriate images of the tourist destinations, and fulfilling the requirements of the tourists. Hence, considering the imagery of the destination anatomy and the attitude they have to the destination, the tourists select a special destination to visit. The image of the destination is the collection of beliefs, feelings, and expectations the individuals have as a mental framework or as an understandable source of data which makes them visit that special destination. Tourists and passengers have different goals, but it is not easy to answer why they behave in certain ways. Does the choice the tourists make represent the mental images and the perceived values they have about the destination? Do the tourists compare their own mental expectations with the fulfilled expectations in the destination? Are the physical factors and elements in the tourist escapes effective on the attraction of the tourists? What is the effect of branding, quality and also the way of presenting services on the attraction of tourists? How should the consumer behavior patterns be designed in tourism so that it finally leads to visitors' satisfaction and loyalty? Therefore, from this point of view, this study is remarkably important. Regarding the fact that the loyalty of the tourists leads to their intention to return and continue to visit the destination, recommend the destination to others, and encourage friends and relatives to visit the tourist destination, appropriate evaluation of the effective factors on the satisfaction and loyalty of tourists is specifically important for maintenance of the tourists, development of marketing strategies in tourism and consequently on sustainable development of tourism. This development, in turn, can lead to economic development of the tourist destination. In our country, Iran, compared to other countries, few

studies have been conducted by the use of satisfaction and loyalty as the approved measurement models. It means that these factors and stimulants need to be evaluated and identified in different studies, as it is done in this survey. Finding answers to these questions can help us elevate the tourism industry in Iran.

2. RESEARCH THEORETICAL PRINCIPLES

2.1. Physical evidence

Physical evidence consists of tangible factors which include service quality Zeithaml (1988) as well as all internal and external aspects of plantations and physical facilities where the users' behaviors occur. Physical evidence helps the customers to evaluate the services before, after and during the usage. Providing access to distinguished environments and conditions at the hotels has improved among hotel owners and researchers; this is because, in the hoteling industry, the environment and atmosphere of the hotels are popular as two of the influential factors on customers' satisfaction. Strategies of physical evidence have to be applied and the used products and initiatives at the hotels should increase tourists' satisfaction Zeithaml (1988) and loyalty. Physical evidence is decisive factors in the tourists' interest in a place Waxman (2006), Brocato (2006) and formation of behavioral attitudes in the users (Ariffin & Aziz, 2012).

2.2. Mental image

The mental image can be defined as the mental situation whose result is apparent explanations in the verbal or behavioral forms. What is to be considered here is that some of the mental images are collective and are shared by a group. The image includes words, symbols, colors and excellent services which altogether present a coordinated and wholesome message, not just representing a name. The mental image is part of an immediate experience that the customers form in their minds about the service providers because of their connection to or making use of their services. The mental image about a destination can be explained as the perceptions about the place, as they are reflected in the form of remained memories in the minds of the tourists. According to Zeithaml (1988), the mental image about the destination consists of "the collection of beliefs and feelings people have about a place. These beliefs are products of minds and are selected out of a wide range of data for the processing of the required information" (Lovelock & Wright, 2003: 12). Also, the mental image of the tourist attraction has been defined as the potential perceptions that visitors will have about a tourist destination. The mental image of the destination includes psychic concept or personal or collective cognition about a destination. Therefore, the mental image of the tourist destination is a factor that many tourists pay attention to when selecting a destination. The mental image about the destination leads to the current behaviors of the tourist and formation of new attitudes and behaviors. The image of destination plays two important roles in the behavior of the tourists; and according to some researchers, this image

is effective on the decision to buy; and some others believe that the mental image is the means of conditionalizing the behavior after the purchase. These behaviors include challenging of experience, evaluation (satisfaction) and behavioral intentions (the intention to revisit and recommend to others.

So, it is very reasonable to suppose that the mental image affects the tourists' decision-making. This image can be an unreal or ideal image of the tourist destination, but these images of the tourists influence their selection. To be successful in the target markets, the destination should be differently more desirable than its rivals (other places) or should have a positive prestige in the minds of the customers. A key part of this positioning process is the building and management of a distinguished and attractive concept or image about the destination. According to this, the mental image about the destination is one of the most important discussible issues in the marketing studies about the tourism industry, so much so that a lot of countries make use of elevating and global marketing tools to support their images and compete with other destinations. This concept is very important in the field of tourism because it affects both the behavior and decision of tourists and also greatly affects their level of satisfaction with the trip. Different surveys about tourism in the past two decades have shown that the image of the destination is a valuable and important concept in the study of the process of selecting a destination and has helped us to have a better understanding of the tourists' behavior. Marketing researchers and administrators have

widely accepted that the images of the tourist attraction play an important role in the decision-making about the trip.

2.3. Expectations

Expectations are beliefs about standard presented services against the service performance perception Zeithaml (1988); and in other words, expectations help the customers to predict what should happen instead of what might happen. Expectations are affected by personal requirements, service instability accelerators (like temporary and individual needs related to service), clear-cut service commitments (personnel, advertisement and writings of other writers), required service commitments (price and tangible things related to service), face-to-face relationship with the customers, friends and experts, and also by the previous experiences of service. Generally, the customers' expectations include the things that they want and are desirable for them. Also, their understanding is something they receive. It must be considered that the customers' expectation and desires form when they face the organization or the agency and are related to the data they have collected from other places; but their concept of the services form at the moment they receive the services, and they analyze this concept later (Feizi & Tatari, 2004). Customers' expectations are dynamic and can be different according to the customer, according to the conditions, or even the type of services. Usually, verbal communications, past personal experiences, personal needs and faith in the possible things are important in the formation of people's expectations (Lovelock &

Wright, 2003). Individuals can have different expectations from the concerned organizations according to their intentions of doing the visit. Then, these expectations expansively change through a specific inclination to a specific level of services or quality presented by the product or the tourist destination. The subject of expectations is specifically important in the service-providing organizations because, in these organizations, quality means the level of providing customers' expectations by means of the provided services (Feizi & Tatari, 2004). In the tourist organizations, identification of the tourists' expectations will lead to the provision of services with better qualities to the customers and will lead to their satisfaction; and this satisfaction, in turn, will cause loyalty of the customers to the organization and eventually, it will bring further profits for the organization.

2.4. Perception

The customers' perception is based on their mental evaluation of experiencing the services they have paid for after they use them (cash payment and the spent time). An individual's perception of an experience is affected by many factors. These factors can be divided into two groups, namely internal and external factors. Internal factors include the individual's mental condition, feelings and the type of his personality. External conditions are related to the atmosphere and environmental elements such as climate and time limitations. On the issue of the customer's perception, we face two types of perception, the perceived value and the perceived quality (Zeithaml, 1998). The

perceived value is the users' general evaluation of the desirability of a product on the basis of perceptions they have from what they pay and what they receive. This definition of the customers' perceived value is considered to be the most accepted definition in the world. The perceived value is the interaction between the received advantages and the paid costs. The perceived value is defined as the general evaluation of the user about using a product or a service on the basis of what they have received or what has been spent, or by putting the profits and expenses against each other. Marketing activities are generally based on the value of the customer. The perceived value in marketing is defined as the customer's evaluation of expenses and profits received from the purchase of a product or a service. The results of previous surveys show that the perceived value increases customer satisfaction and future purchases (Jenkins, 2010). In the literature of tourism, the perceived value is the general evaluation of the visitors' about the net value of the trip on the basis of their evaluation on what they have received (profits) and what they have spent (expenses). Therefore, the perceived value of the service quality is the first step in order to influence the perceived image of the visitors about the destination; and it can be considered as the pre-factor of behavioral reactions in the course of time. About tourism, a positive relationship has been reported between the perceived value and loyalty to the destination by (Bianchi et al., 2014).

Another one of the effective variables on satisfaction is the perceived quality. It has generally and formally been recognized that the quality of the services directly influences satisfaction. Hence, if the

quality of services improves, satisfaction will improve as well. The perceived quality is the customer's general evaluation of the product quality or the presented service of the organization in their latest experience of the usage. This factor has a direct and positive effect on the customer's satisfaction. The perceived value: is the perceived level of product quality compared to the price that has been paid to buy that product. The perceived quality is a competitive requirement; and nowadays, most companies are concerned with customer-centered quality as a strategic weapon. Like the mental image, the perceived quality also provides a value for the customers so that by distinguishing the rivals, they can have a reason for their purchase.

2.5. Satisfaction

Satisfaction usually is measured by the level of a customer's satisfaction with their previous purchases of a product or a service. Satisfaction is a performance evaluation of the services given to customers by a company. Satisfaction can be defined as the user's reaction to the evaluation of perception differences between their previous expectations and the current performance of the product which is perceived after using that product. The tourists' satisfaction: is a behavioral phenomenon which is formed through emotional and cognitive dimensions of tourists' activities and evaluation of different elements and types of destination. The tourist's general satisfaction is created through getting their evaluation of different features of the destination on the basis of expectations, and one of the most important

features in tourists' revisit to a destination depends on their satisfaction with their previous accommodation. Finding out the feelings of the tourists about a place is a direct reference to the features of a destination in different levels (Alegre & Jaume, 2010). Zangeneh & Shamsullahzadeh (2012) defines the satisfaction achieved from tourism as a level of fulfilling the tourist's expectations when facing the realities and nature according to their definitions. Undoubtedly, tourist satisfaction has been recognized as a key factor in tourism. Therefore, the tourist's satisfaction is one of the most important factors and best indexes to guarantee the growth of recent profits.

Zeithaml (1988) have stated that tourist's satisfaction is related to the comparison between a tourist's experience of visiting a destination and the expectation they had about that destination. Guaranteeing customer satisfaction has been identified as one of the most important elements of success in the tourism industry. Good quality services, customer satisfaction and loyalty to a destination are closely related to each other (Hui & Wan, 2007). Customer satisfaction has a key role in the success of business strategy and is one of the most important factors of loyalty; and according to the conducted surveys, it has the most influence on the customers' loyalty. On this basis, the relationship between satisfaction and customer loyalty has received a lot of attention in the marketing context. At the moment, there is a considerable evidence that shows a higher satisfaction level leads to further intention to buy. In addition to that, research on the loyalty to destination shows that one of the decisive factors in most visits by the

tourists is their satisfaction with their previous accommodation (Alegre & Garau, 2009).

2.6. Branding

American Marketing Association (AMA): is a name, term, phrase, symbol, sign, design or a compound of these things which introduces goods and products of one or a group of producers or sellers which distinguishes those goods and services from goods or services of other producers. Cotler & Armstrong (2013): it is a name, term, sign, symbol, design or a compound of them whose goal is to introduce a type of goods or service that a seller or a group of sellers present, and in this way, they distinguish it from the products of other rival producers.

Brand is a mentality or a special image and a unique service which creates the relationship between consumer and presenter (Brickmarketin.com). Brand is defined as a name, sign, symbol, design or a compound of them which distinguishes the goods or services. Brand is one of the important features in the marketing of the business, location, and products, although it can lead to confusion because there are different meanings of the word brand. Brand in tourism has a considerable role in the decision-making process. In fact, brand in tourism previously offers some information to the tourists so that they can get to know and identify the destination, distinguish it from its rivals and form expectations of the tourists before their visit

(Shirkhodaee et al., 2015). Brand is a collection of marketing activities that supports the formation of a name, symbol, mark, sign and distinguishing. Also by transferring expectations of the tourists, a memorable experience of the visit is formed, service quality improves, emotional connection between the tourist and the destination increases and strengthens, and eventually, the tourists' expenditure on research and evaluation decreases. Altogether, these activities create an image of the destination and its quality which positively affects the selection of the destination by the tourist. In addition to that, the special value of the destination brand reflects the specific received value through the significance of the brand, its image and also its quality; and shows that one of the achievements and the results of the received specific value is loyalty to destination brand. In fact, most of the organizations that create satisfaction in the target customers increase loyalty to the destination brand. Therefore, the attraction of further customers in the future happens through the increase in shopping destinations. Branding is a conscious strategy in the selection of some features of the product as the main values and introducing them to the users so that in this way, the users can confidently do the identification of the product value and like it. Loyalty to brand has become one of the most critical elements in marketing strategy which is related to organizational performance and the destination popularity in many countries and tourist attractions.

2.7. Packaging

Packaging refers to all activities and issues related to the design and production of cover or container of the product to present it to the

public. In addition to protecting the product, packaging gives the consumers important information about the product and helps to advertise and sell what it contains. In tourism, packaging includes combining features of the target product and their advantages in a market package, because it must fulfill the requirements and desires of lots of tourists. This is like the creation of a collection of the products which is popular in many retail sellers. A tourist package is a collection of tourist goods and services presented as a single product with a single price. This price includes the costs of all factors of the product which are not separately identifiable. Holiday packages are a considerable part of the tour sales. One of the main reasons of the consumers' interest in packages is the wholesome nature (inclusion of all details) of these packages which make it easy for customers to buy. Sellers of packages make the purchase easier by collecting package components. Packaging makes it possible for selling organizations (like transportation, food, entertainment, accommodation and retails) to benefit from simultaneous economic advantages; it is the result of selling to more groups and tourists. For example, collective tour packages are mostly sold in bulks in the organizations that have targeted the popular seasons. In the stagnation seasons, in order to fill the capacities, the selling organizations cooperate with each other by lowering the prices. This lower rate is because of the provided number of tourists who make the visit in sometime.

2.8. Positioning

It is a distinction that a trademark applies in a competitive environment to guarantee its recognition by the consumers of the other

trademarks in the target market. Stabilization of the positioning requires precise controlling of every component of the marketing compound; and it describes the type of the target audience for the trademark and the reason for the belief of the main target groups in the message on the basis of that attraction. Positioning is the basis for product management. The aim of positioning is to find a place in the minds of potential customers. Positioning in the field of tourism must remind the tourists of the images of a product, a destination or a tourist attraction. Images that should distinguish the product from its rivals and conveys this message to the customers that this product can fulfill their requirements and wishes.

2.8.1. Objective positioning

Objective positioning refers to the tangible, real or physical features which are offered to the customers by the hotels or restaurants; features such as the room size in a hotel, bathroom facilities in a luxurious hotel and the existing items in the menu of the fast food restaurant are objective items.

2.8.2. Subjective positioning

Subjective positioning focuses on the intangible aspects of an experience. The perceived image of a guest house company does not necessarily reflect the conditions of the offered services. It is the perception of the consumer that is important. If the customer believes

that the products that the company suggests have the best quality, this will lead to the progress of the company.

2.8.3. Product positioning

The position or the status of the product is determined in the light of a complicated collection of feelings, emotions, conceptions or impressions that the consumer has about the product and about other products. The position or situation of the product in the mind of the consumer is determined with the help or without the help of marketer, but the marketer does not want to leave the consumer alone so that they determine the position of the product in their mind themselves (Cotler & Armstrong, 2013). Some researchers believe that marketing is the ability of managers to win the interest in a product and to distinguish it (its position) from other similar products. Some others, however, believe that positioning is not what is done for the goods, but it is what you do for the mind of the potential customer. Žabkar et al. (2010) have discussed that there are three types of positioning: product leadership, performance superiority, and the establishment of a close relationship with the customer. This division is based on the view that every market includes three types of customers. A group of customers intends to make use of technology (product leadership), another group care about trustable performance (performance superiority) and the third group cares about specific accountability against their individual needs.

Positioning of the product requires different strategies such as pricing, advertisement, distribution, packaging, and competition, along with a selection of one type of marketing for the trademark, product or service; and its goal is the creation of a unique image in the minds of the customers, so much that the customer selects a specific and appropriate item with the producer's trademark which is quite different from other products in the market. Product positioning has got a quite acceptable share of theoretical discussions in marketing. However, unfortunately in the Persian and English applied surveys, little attention has been paid to it. According to Shaw (1992), the price can be used as one of the compound factors of marketing and pricing as a tool of positioning. Dev et al (1995) believe that food quality, physical appearance, room facilities, kind and helpful workers, non-entertainment meeting facilities, total value of money, general ranking, entertainment meeting facilities, easiness of setting individual trips, easiness of setting group trips, timely payment of commission, offering regular activities to the passengers, and company discount programs are effective in positioning. Carneiro & Costa (2001) believe that the renewal and reconstruction of the assessments as a strategic marketing tool play positive roles in the positioning of the product.

2.9. Loyalty

Customer's loyalty is an unclear idea and therefore, it is difficult to define it. This is because of the fact that loyalty is intangible. Customer's loyalty can refer to all feelings and ideas that lead a

customer to repurchase the product or service or visit a specific business, shop or a destination. From this point of view, loyalty has two aspects. Loyalty has been identified as one of the most important effective factors on the success of marketing activities and especially tourist marketing. Loyalty to an organization means the level of commitment a customer has to that organization and tries to show their loyalty by frequently buying from that organization. A loyal customer is defined as a person who has a positive attitude towards the presenter of the services, introduces him to other customers and rebuys from him. The customer's loyalty is also defined as a deeply shaped commitment to rebuy or re-encourage to buy the product or services preferred frequently in the future. The results of different studies conducted on loyalty show that loyalty can have valuable results such as decrease of the costs of attracting new customers, a decrease of the customer's sensitivity to the product prices, and a decrease of the costs of presenting services to customers. Zamanian (2005) divides customer satisfaction into two parts: a) behavioral loyalty, b) attitudinal loyalty

In the literature of this subject, customer loyalty conceptually has three aspects, namely behavioral, attitudinal and compound aspects. The behavioral aspect focuses on the customer's behavior to repurchase; the attitudinal aspect deals with the level of good and appropriate inclination towards the presenter of services; eventually, the compound view of loyalty includes both the behavioral as well as the attitudinal dimensions of loyalty. The nature of tourism industry causes more complications because of every effort to understand (deduct) customer loyalty and as a result, development of customer-

centered strategies and plans. Unlike the customer's loyalty to a product or brand, the customer loyalty in tourism is observed in the tourism industry in different levels that reflect the identity of the destinations and compound elements of the destination (compound destination). Two important dimensions have to be considered: loyalty to specific destinations (like the place we prefer to go on holidays); it means selecting one destination instead of other rival destinations. Due to some reasons (the reasons are complicated and reflect demography, cycle process, family life, useable income levels, quality perception (understanding) and the level of satisfaction with the experience), loyalty to the manager or the presenter of the product or services characterizes important elements combined of destination combination (compound destination) such as transportation, entertainment, attractions, and hospitality services come to the mind. Despite the existence of alternatives, some customers might remain loyal to specific organizers and presenters. Therefore, appropriate evaluation of the effective factors on the loyalty of tourists in maintaining them as well as the development of marketing strategies in tourism and following that, sustainable development of tourism have specific effects which can lead to economic development of the tourist destination.

2.10. Servicescape of the tourism industry

Tourism and entertainment products can be imagined as a collection of complicated factors and activities which are for the

fulfillment of the needs, desires, and demands of tourists or the customers. The important point is that packaging is a subcategory of service escape, or in other words, the packaging is a small part of service escape. The service escape has a deep and undeniable effect on the tourists in the long-term. Because of this, the chairs in the hotel lobby should be comfortable, and the rooms should be spacy and comfortable. Because the service escape value is objective and is defined according to the perception of the tourists. Physical evidence is presented in an escape; they make the relationship between the consumer and the product very deep. In the tourism products, physical stability is closely linked to locational dependence; it means that the product, by itself, is not very much capable of transferring an experience and can definitely play roles in its own place and become a tourism product. In the field of tourism, the effect of the physical environment on customers is different. In the conducted studies, the effect of physical elements on customers has been identified in three main parts:

- The effect of the physical environment on the level of awareness (the way of dealing, changes of thoughts and the type of behavior)

- The effect of the physical environment on feelings (farness from the dirty, noisy and odorous environment, and feelings like satisfaction, emotion, comfort, and trust).

- The effect of the physical environment on mental reactions (observable signs, signs related to sound, odor, taste and tactile).

2.11. Marketing

Marketing is a process that offers goods and services to the market through planning, pricing, coordination, elevation of distribution, and ideas. Marketing is the process of identification and achieving access to certain parts of the population to sell products/goods to them. It also includes the formation of demand through the use of advertisement, propagation, elevation, and pricing. Marketing is the defined organizational duty to value customers and manage customer relationships in a way that the organization and its beneficiaries benefit from it. Tourism marketing is for identification and prediction of tourist requirements, provision of facilities to fulfill their requirements, to inform them, and to encourage them to revisit. This would lead to tourist satisfaction and fulfillment of organizational goals. The goal of tourists by traveling to different parts of the world is to benefit from the attractions that exist in tourist destinations. In other words, it is the existence of attractions in the destinations that attracts people to visit those destinations. Considering special features of tourism products, the role of marketing in this industry, compared to other industries, is specifically important, and the effective use of tourism marketing tools is essential for a country or a region, because by marketing, the potential tourists can be informed about what the

destination can offer and they can be encouraged to visit the destination.

2.12. A conceptual model of the survey

The mental image of the tourist destination affects the tourists' choice of a destination and their later intentions. The mental image of the tourist destination affects the tourist's satisfaction and their intention to revisit the destination. A positive image originates from the positive experiences of a visit that leads to the positive evaluation of the destination. If the mental image of the tourist destination directly affects the behavioral intentions because of quality, value and the perceived satisfaction, the tourist's loyalty improves; which, in turn, affects their behavioral intentions. In other words, better images would lead to a higher possibility of revisiting the same destination. Therefore, service evaluation variables (for example, quality of services and products, physical factors effective on the offering of products and services, the positioning of the products, a brand of the products and services, and the perceived value) are some of the effective factors on satisfaction and loyalty to destination among the tourists. Considering the objective of this study and on the basis of mentioned theoretical principles, the conceptual model of the survey is presented in figure 1 and also in the hypotheses of the study.
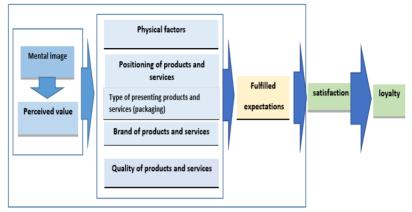
Figure 1. Conceptual model of the survey

2.13. Survey hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: the mental image of the tourist destinations is effective on tourist satisfaction.

Hypothesis 2: perceived value is effective on tourist satisfaction.

Hypothesis 3: the mental image of the tourist destination is effective on tourist satisfaction.

Hypothesis 4: perceived value about the tourist destination is effective on loyalty to the tourist destination.

Hypothesis 5: customer satisfaction is effective on tourist satisfaction.

Hypothesis 6: the presented physical factors in the visits modify the relationship between perceived value and tourists' satisfaction.

Hypothesis 7: the product positioning and the presented services in the visits modify the relationship between perceived value and tourists' satisfaction.

Hypothesis 8: the way of presenting products and services (packaging) in the visits modify the relationship between perceived value and tourists' satisfaction.

Hypothesis 9: the brand of presented products and services in the visits modify the relationship between perceived value and tourists' satisfaction.

Hypothesis 10: the quality of the presented products and services in the visits modify the relationship between perceived value and tourists' satisfaction.

3. METHODOLOGY

In terms of objective, this survey is applied; and because it deals with the description of the situation of effective factors on tourist satisfaction through field study, it is categorized as a descriptive-survey study. The questionnaire was used as a research tool for data collection and measurement of different aspects of the model. The statistical population of the study includes personnel of Tehran Province Culture and

Heritage Organization, executive managers of tourism, and university teachers (tourism, marketing, and urban construction teachers). Regarding the statistical population, by the use of Morgan and Adonoski table, 98 individuals were selected as the sample size through stratified random sampling. In order to study the validity of the questionnaire constructs, approval factor analysis was conducted; and then in order to measure the hypotheses, structural equations software was used. Considering the subject and the objective that this survey tries to achieve, the fuzzy hierarchical analysis is the most appropriate method for data analysis.

3.1. Reliability evaluation of the items and research constructs

In order to measure the reliability of the research constructs, compound reliability method and Cronbach's alpha were used. According to Yavari et al. (2011), the minimum acceptable value for compound reliability is 0.707 and the minimum acceptable value for Cronbach's alpha is 0.65. In this study, Cronbach's alpha coefficient for the construct exponents of the study is higher than 0.707. Therefore, these constructs have the required reliability. These constructs have been used in the final model analysis of the study. In addition to this, Yavari et al. (2011) state that the extracted variance mean value index is an appropriate index for determining the convergent validity of the research constructs. The minimum acceptable value for this coefficient according to the author is 0.5. Study of this index out of the constructs of this study shows that the score of all constructs of this coefficient is higher than the mentioned threshold. Therefore, from the convergent validity point of view, these constructs are at an acceptable level (table, 1).

Table 1. Reliability indexes of research constructs

Construct	Cronbach's alpha	Compound reliability	Variance-mean value	AVE
Mental image	0.721	0.821	0.589	0.614
Mental conceptions	0.736	0.798	0.607	0.598
Physical factors	0.851	0.431	0.554	0.623
The positioning of products and services	0.719	0.817	0.511	0.508
The way of presenting products and services (packaging)	0.765	0.756	0.523	0.632
Brand of the products and services	0.714	0.729	0.601	0.589
Quality of products and services	0.768	0.874	0.618	0.534
Fulfilled expectations	0.689	0.716	0.533	0.624
Satisfaction	0.723	0.701	0.512	0.532
Loyalty	0.728	0.722	0.612	0.501

3.2. Testing research hypotheses and structural model

The hypotheses of this study were analyzed on the basis of the collected data by the use of structural equations modeling method with the help of PLS software. Considering the interpretative pattern in the modeling of the structural equations, if the absolute value of the item t (t-value) achieved for every path is higher than 1.96, it can be claimed that the path is 95% significant and the hypothesis related to that path is approved. On the other hand, the value of the path coefficient shows the level of intensity and direction of the relationship. The higher this value is, the stronger the relationship will be. The negative symbol represents an

inverse relationship. Then, every one of the hypotheses is evaluated by the use of the mentioned two items (table 2).

Table 2. Reliability indexes of the research constructs

Factor	Factor bar	Item T	sig	Result
Mental image	0.653	4.47	<0.05	Significant in the confidence level of 95%
Mental conceptions	0.814	13.14	<0.05	Significant in the confidence level of 95%
Physical factors	0.873	11.21	<0.05	Significant in the confidence level of 95%
The positioning of products and services	0.617	4.19	<0.05	Significant in the confidence level of 95%
The way of presenting products and services (packaging)	0.705	9.32	<0.05	Significant in the confidence level of 95%
Brand of the products and services	0.698	8.31	<0.05	Significant in the confidence level of 95%
Quality of products and services	0.756	9.81	<0.05	Significant in the confidence level of 95%
Fulfilled expectations	0.714	7.22	<0.05	Significant in the confidence level of 95%
Satisfaction	0.678	6.78	<0.05	Significant in the confidence level of 95%
Loyalty	0.619	6.9	<0.05	Significant in the confidence level of 95%

The results of the research hypotheses evaluation showed that; in the first hypothesis, the significant coefficient is equal to 4.47 which shows the significance of the relationship in the confidence level of 95%. Considering the path coefficient i.e. 0.653, it can be stated that the mental image of the tourists has a positive and significant effect on the satisfaction of the tourists. In the second hypothesis, the significant

coefficient is 13.14 which shows that the relationship is significant, considering the fact that the path coefficient has been achieved as 0.814, it can be stated that the level of effect of the perceived value on the tourist satisfaction has been positive. In the third hypothesis, the significance coefficient is 11.21 which shows that the relationship is significant. Considering the achieved path coefficient, it can be stated that the level of the effect of the mental image on the tourist's perceived image is 0.874 and positive. In the fourth hypothesis, the significance coefficient is 4.19 which shows that the relationship is significant. Considering the achieved path coefficient, it can be stated that the level of the effect of perceived value on tourist loyalty is 0.617 and positive. In the fifth hypothesis, the significance coefficient is 5.53 which shows that the relationship is significant. Therefore, the relationship between satisfaction and loyalty is significant and this hypothesis is approved. In the sixth hypothesis, the significance coefficient is 4.23 which shows that the relationship is significant. Considering the path coefficient achieved as 0.654, it can be stated that the physical factors mentioned in tourism modify the relationship between the perceived value and the tourists' satisfaction. In the seventh hypothesis, the significance coefficient is 3.66 which shows that the relationship is significant. Considering the achieved path coefficient i.e. 0.619, it can be stated that the positioning of the presented products and services in tourism modifies the relationship between the perceived value and the tourists' satisfaction. In the eighth hypothesis, significance coefficient is 7.54 which shows that the relationship is significant. Considering the path coefficient achieved as 0.724, it can be stated that the positioning of products and services in tourism modifies the relationship between perceived value and the tourists' satisfaction. In the ninth hypothesis, the significance coefficient is 6.83 which shows that the

relationship is significant. Considering the achieved path coefficient i.e. 0.782, it can be stated that the brand of the presented products and services in tourism modifies the relationship between perceived value and the tourists' satisfaction. In the tenth hypothesis, the significance coefficient is 9.11 which shows that the relationship is significant. Considering the achieved path coefficient for this path, i.e. 0.723, it can be stated that the quality of the presented products and services in tourism modify the relationship of the perceived value and the tourists' satisfaction (table, 3).

Table 3. The results of testing the hypotheses

Hypothesis	Relationship		Path coefficient	$t-$ value
1	Mental image	satisfaction	0.653	4.47
2	Perceived value	satisfaction	0.814	13.14
3	Mental image	loyalty	0.873	11.21
4	Perceived value	loyalty	0.617	4.19
5	Satisfaction	loyalty	0.841	5.53
6	Physical elements	modifying the relationship between perceived value and satisfaction	0.645	4.23
7	Positioning products and services	modifying the relationship between perceived value and satisfaction	0.619	3.66
8	Presenting products and services	modifying the relationship between perceived value and satisfaction	0.724	7.54
9	Brand of the products and services	modifying the relationship between perceived value and satisfaction	0.782	6.83
10	Quality of the products and services	modifying the relationship between perceived value and satisfaction	0.723	9.11

3.3. Measurement of the model's goodness of fit (GOF) index in the partial least squares (PLS)

In the partial least squares (PLS) approach, quality and fitness of the model are measured by the use of differential validity index, and standardized residuals of the squares mean root R. The differential validity is one of the model fitness tests and also one of the indexes of model validity measuring indexes. The evaluation of differential validity shows that if this number is positive, the construct is unique. It shows the appropriate fitness of the model and the existence of appropriate validity. The SRMR index is one of the absolute fitness indexes of the model. The acceptable number is lower than 0.1 and the appropriate number is lower than 0.05. The square of R or R^2 is also one of the quality and model fitness indexes. This coefficient evaluates the predictability of the dependent variable by the independent variable. The above values and the 0.8 limits are appropriate and in the smaller models, the limits of 0.5 are also acceptable. In this study, the value of multiple determination coefficient is 0.831. On this basis, the variable of mental image and the perceived value along with the mediators (physical factors, quality of the presented products and services, the way of offering products and services, brand of the products and services and positioning of the products and services) have been able to be effective on prediction of the satisfaction variable. The achieved values for these indexes have been shown in table 4. Also, the path of the structural model along with the path coefficients have been shown in figure 2.

Table 2. The values of indexes SRMR and CV for variables of the
research model

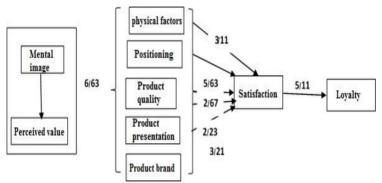| Variable	CV	R^2	SRMR
Tourist loyalty	0.108	0.831	0.066

Figure 2: the research conceptual model in the general standard form
and significance of the coefficients

4. CONCLUSION

This study has been conducted with the objective of studying
the relationships between marketing variables and their effects on each
other. In this survey, 10 hypotheses of the modeling method of
structural equations were tested. The results achieved from testing the
hypotheses are mentioned below:

In the first hypothesis of the study, it had been claimed that the
mental image of the tourist destination is effective on the tourists'
satisfaction. The significance coefficient is 4.47 which shows that the

relationship is significant with the confidence level of 95%. Considering the path coefficient i.e. 0.653, it can be stated that the tourists' mental image has a positive and significant effect on tourists' satisfaction. In the second hypothesis, it had been claimed that the perceived value has a significant effect on the tourists' satisfaction. The significance coefficient is 13.14 which shows that there is a significant relationship. Considering the achieved path coefficient i.e. 0.814, it can be stated that the level of the effect of perceived value on the tourists' satisfaction is positive. In the third hypothesis of the study, it had been claimed that the mental image of the tourist destination is effective on loyalty to the tourist destination. The significance coefficient is 11.21 which shows that there is a significant relationship. In the fourth hypothesis of the study, it had been claimed that the significant coefficient was 4.19 which showed the existence of a significant relationship. Considering the achieved path coefficient, it can be stated that the level of the effect of the perceived value on the tourists' loyalty is 0.617 and positive.

In the fifth hypothesis, it had been claimed that the presented physical factors in tourism modify the relationship between the perceived value and the tourists' satisfaction. The coefficient significance is 4.23 which shows that there is a significant relationship. Considering the achieved path coefficient i.e. 0.645, it can be stated that the physical factors presented in tourism modify the relationship between the perceived value and the tourists' satisfaction. In the seventh hypothesis of the study, it had been claimed that the positioning of the presented products and services in tourism modifies

the relationship between perceived value and the tourists' satisfaction. The significance coefficient is equal to 3.66 which shows that the relationship is significant. Considering the achieved value of path coefficient i.e. 0.619, it can be stated that the positioning of the presented products and services in tourism modify the relationship between the perceived value and the tourists' satisfaction.

In the eight hypothesis of the study, it had been claimed that the way of presenting the products and services in tourism modifies the relationship between the perceived value and the tourists' satisfaction. The significance coefficient is 7.54 which shows that the relationship is significant. Considering the path coefficient achieved as 0.724, it can be stated that the positioning of the presented products and services in tourism modifies the relationship between the perceived value and the tourists' satisfaction. In the ninth hypothesis, it had been claimed that the brand of the presented products and services in tourism modifies the relationship between the perceived value and the tourists' satisfaction. The significance coefficient is 6.83 which shows that the relationship is significant. Considering the achieved path coefficient as 0.782, it can be stated that the brand of the presented products and services in tourism modifies the relationship between the perceived value and the tourists' satisfaction. In the tenth hypothesis, it had been claimed that the quality of the presented products and services in tourism modifies the relationship between the perceived value and the tourists' satisfaction. The significance coefficient is 9.11 which shows that the relationship is significant. Considering the achieved coefficient for this path, i.e. 0.723, it can be stated that: the quality of the

presented products and services in tourism modifies the relationship between the perceived value and the tourists' satisfaction. According to the findings of this survey, all of the concepts defined in this article have strong conceptual relationships with each other and have decisive roles in the customers' satisfaction with the destination.

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