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Factors influencing the development of ecotourism in tourist towns in Kermanshah Province, Iran

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ABSTRACT

This study was carried out to explain the development of ecotourism in the tourist villages of the Kermanshah province, using a quantitative-qualitative method. Qualitative data analysis was performed using the maxqda12 software. The statistical sample in the qualitative section was snowball and 20 experts. In the quantitative section, the stratified random sampling method with the Morgan ratio was used. The research tool was an interview with a questionnaire prepared by an investigator derived from the qualitative phase of the research and the background. Data analysis with SPSS24 and PLS2 software indicated that the study model was adequate. On the other hand, it was discovered that all the dimensions of the conceptual research model were extracted from the qualitative and literary studies of the research literature to measure the factors and had a good function in the measurement of these concepts. The multivariate determination coefficient for the main structural equation was 85.5%, indicating that the independent variables of the study included economic, social, and cultural factors, participation, attractions, management, policy formulation, and infrastructure factors. Economic, social and cultural factors, attractions, ecotourism, participatory management and policy-making infrastructures have priorities, second to seventh, respectively. The first priority focuses on anticipating changes in the development of ecotourism

KEY WORDS: Ecotourism development; Ecotourism; Tourism; Kermanshah.

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Factores que influyen en el desarrollo del ecoturismo en pueblos turísticos de la Provincia de Kermanshah, Irán

RESUMEN

Este estudio se realizó para explicar el desarrollo del ecoturismo en las aldeas turísticas de la provincia de Kermanshah, utilizando un método cuantitativo-cualitativo. El análisis de datos cualitativos se realizó utilizando el software maxqda2. La muestra estadística en la sección cualitativa fue bola de nieve y 20 expertos. En la sección cuantitativa, se empleó el método de muestreo aleatorio estratificado con proporción de Morgan. La herramienta de investigación fue una entrevista con cuestionario elaborado por un investigador derivado de la fase cualitativa de la investigación y los antecedentes. El análisis de datos con el software SPSS24 y PLS2 indicó que el modelo en estudio era adecuado. Por otro lado, se descubrió que todas las dimensiones del modelo conceptual de la investigación se extrajeron de los estudios cualitativos y literarios de la literatura de investigación para medir los factores y tuvieron una buena función en la medición de estos conceptos. El coeficiente de determinación multivariante para la ecuación estructural principal fue del 85,5%, lo que indica que las variables independientes del estudio incluyeron factores económicos, sociales y culturales, participación, atracciones, gestión, formulación de políticas y factores de infraestructura. Los factores económicos, sociales y culturales, las atracciones, el ecoturismo, las infraestructuras participativas de gestión y de formulación de políticas tienen las prioridades, segunda a séptima, respectivamente. La primera prioridad se centra en anticiparse a los cambios en el desarrollo del ecoturismo

PALABRAS CLAVE: Desarrollo del ecoturismo; Ecoturismo; Turismo; Kermanshah.

Introduction

Tourism as one of the largest and most prosperous industries in the world has received increasing attention from governments, and in many countries tourism policies have been regarded as the design and formulation of large-scale national programs and policies and as an effective tool for following the development process (Faraji et al, 2017). One of the models that some countries have been focusing on for the development of sustainable tourism in the last two decades has been the discussion of the identity and indigenous structures in tourism that have shaped the phenomenon of ecotourism (Husseini, 2014). Ecotourism is a responsible environmental travel and visit of the early natural areas to understand its benefits and related

cultural features (Ehsani, 2016). Ecotourism is a sustainable strategy to monetize and conserve natural resources (Davoodi, 2015). Therefore, ecotourism should be considered not as a program but as a major and macro strategy. Many countries with the potential to develop ecotourism have devised and implemented ecotourism development and investment plans to create the infrastructure needed to attract ecotourism visitors. In fact, ecotourism is a sustainable strategy for earning money while maintaining natural resources (Davoodi, 2015; Abbas et al., 2019).

Due to the potential of Iran in tourism attractions and unique climate diversity in the world, this industry occupies a valuable place in the world and is in the 64th place among 150 member countries of the World Tourism Organization (Manochehri, 2015). Also in 2017 it is ranked 93 out of 136 tourism countries in the world, which has the potential to achieve better rankings. The worst ranking among the components of the Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Index in 2017 was related to environmental sustainability, followed by the prioritization of travel and tourism and tourism services infrastructure (Tehran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture, 2018).

The economy of Kermanshah province is mainly agricultural and is the agricultural center of Iran. But the weakening of agricultural potentials, mainly dry farmland and the intensification of successive droughts have led to rural migration (BigMohamadi and Hatemi, 2010). It has also caused extreme unemployment in the province, with the province having the highest unemployment rate with 26.6% and since this province is one of the most important and richest provinces of the country in the field of tourism and is among the top 5 provinces for the number of tourists, the total number of tourists in different seasons is 1003940 people (Iran Statistical Center, 2015), And about half of the tourists visit the target villages of tourism (Vermaghan, CharmalehOlia, Fash, Hajij, Shamshir, Khanghah, Piran, SarabHarasam, SorkhehDeizeh, Harir, Shalan, Kandouleh, Galin, Nojiyeran (Nojobaran)). But in terms of ecotourism development indicators, there is a huge difference between different regions of the province. This and other issues such as: creating employment, increasing income, reducing immigration it has led to the development of tourism in villages that have the potential to develop ecotourism.

In addition, Kermanshah province has high potential in the field of ecotourism industry depending on the conditions of the country, including: pristine nature, jungle highlands and

mountains, rivers, mineral waters, forests, ancient history, sights, old markets, Diverse architectural styles, diverse climates and, most importantly, a variety of different cultures, thus necessitating the use of these resources in order to develop ecotourism and the province's development with proper management and planning. Some villages in the province have been providing tourism services in recent years, but the benefits of this type of tourism in the development as well as the development of ecotourism development strategies have not been considered by agricultural and rural development planners and policy makers, and have not considered ecotourism as a means of direction. Resolving the problems of rural people with unused environmental protection, not even enough research has been done, so it is necessary to plan for the development of ecotourism as a result of rural development and development with regard to the characteristics and capabilities of the villages. Since these villages have been registered with the Cultural Heritage Organization and are part of our cultural heritage, they need to be given a great deal of attention so that by planning properly they can improve their ecotourism and help reduce problems. And this research seeks to answer the question of what factors are effective in the development of ecotourism in tourism target villages of Kermanshah province?

1. Theoretical Foundations

Ecotourism is nature-based tourism and involves understanding the natural environment that contributes to ecological sustainability. In other words, ecotourism is a type of natural and sustainable tourism that is made possible by indigenous stakeholders and utilizing the natural potentials of tourism (Mersangar, 2006). And ecotourism is a tourism that considers itself responsible for the totality of plant and animal species, land, and ecosystems of an area alongside local communities with all their cultural needs and characteristics (Gigović et al, 2016). Tourism has a history dating back to human activities. And in ancient times the different classes of societies traveling on different ends had in effect some kind of tourism activity. Famous explorers, adventurers, and tourists such as Marcopolo, Magellan, Vasco da Gama, and Christopher Columbus have somehow embarked on tourism trips to a society shaped by Hegel's interpretation of modernism (MacCannel, 1976). In the 19th century, the expansion of railways

provided access to rural areas for many, and the development of the tourism industry expanded eco-tourism, and in the twentieth century not only did the demand for ecotourism grow rapidly, but its scope also varied. A brief look at the tourism situation in Iran and Turkey, which has perhaps undergone a growing trend in the last 30 years or so, has even overtaken Iran in some cases, according to the World Tourism and Tourism Council (WTTC). Turkey's 2015 share of direct participation in the travel and tourism sector in GDP reached \$ 32 billion in 2015 and is projected to reach \$ 48 billion in 2026 if the index reaches 2015 in Iran. It reached \$ 7 billion and is projected to reach \$ 14 billion by 2026 (Heidari, 2009). It should be noted, however, that the nascent industrial ecotourism industry has been introduced into the scientific and academic literature of our country since the early 1980s and has not yet received sufficient attention at the planning and executive levels of the country (Razvani & Bayat, 2013). And in Kermanshah province, there is also a new category that requires the active participation of people, policymakers, planners and researchers.

1.1. Research Background

The role of ecotourism development in the local economy is widely known, but what is remotely plausible is the people's role in the development of this industry also consider ecotourism (Daniel, 2013). Garcia (2017) unpleasant driving situation can create a high level of dissatisfaction and affect the subsequent behavior of tourists towards the destination. From the perspective of Blancas et. al, (2015). The most important indicators of ecotourism development include: the number of crimes registered by the police at the destination per 1000 persons, the cost of government to restore order and public safety, the ratio of tourists to the population, the percentage of employment created in the tourism sector, the ratio To other jobs.

Sepahvand et al. (2018) examined the views of three groups of people, officials, and tourists on the formulation of specific laws and regulations, optimal use of attractions and, in a study entitled, Strategic Planning for the Development of Rural Ecotourism (Case Study: Village of Bisheh Station). Preventing demolition, and creating tourism fairs to showcase different types of cultural geography such as crafts, art, local cover, food, music, customs and local rural celebrations can lead to the development of ecotourism in the village of Bisheh Station. Khosravi

(2007) in his thesis entitled Strategic Analysis of Ecotourism Development in Galiksh City Using SWOT model, concluded that diversification of services, accommodation, recreation and health services in order to satisfy tourists and subsequently increase tourists in order to create tourism. New activities for residents of the study area, training crisis management to local forces to increase safety and formulate special laws and regulations to optimally and efficiently use the region's natural attractions and prevent damage to forest lands, farms and water, soil and air pollution the development of eco-tourism is effective.

The results of Salici (2018) research on local partnerships and ecotourism development (case study of JannatRoodbar village) conducted through field and citation method showed that financial support for rural infrastructures; construction of council office and village assistance; Good hygiene, support for agriculture and animal husbandry, assistance to repair the roof of old and traditional buildings, continue the implementation of the conductor plan and pavement of rural areas in the development of suitable ecotourism. In a study on the impact of ecotourism on the development of rural tourism, Baghani (2017) considers the development of educational programs, development and support of ecotourism as effective in the development of rural tourism and ecotourism.

Shatari et al. (2017) in article titled Prioritization of Factors Influencing the Development of Rural Nature in the Village of BarzakKashan by Combining ANP and DEMATEL Techniques, Organizing the development of the area's nature tourism, organizing tours of the area and developing intermediaries (advertising and information offices, etc.) and improving the way tourists are treated, are effective in promoting ecotourism. Omid Najafabadi et al., (2016), education, holding conferences, festivals and exhibitions, creating information websites, and distributing booklets and brochures consider ecotourism effective. Karami (2017) Lack of publicity about tourism and ecotourism attractions in the region, low number of regional resorts and amenities and lack of proper monitoring system, poor transportation, lack of proper planning and facilities, lack of access to the development of ecotourism is effective. Birendra and Suman (2018) Residents' participation in the ecotourism development program, visitor satisfaction, local support for ecotourism development, periodic evaluation of policy makers and tourism planners involved with the project on the importance of ecotourism can be helpful in

ecotourism development. The success indicators of the Ecotourism Development Project include environmental protection, economic prosperity, promotion of local arts and culture, local participation and a fair share of resources. Funda (2018) concluded in a study entitled Ecotourism of the World and Turkey on Socio-Cultural and Economic Dimensions, that in areas where there is potential for ecotourism, planning for the development of ecotourism should be undertaken. The hotel or dormitory should be built, the awareness of the people of the area should be increased and the economic priorities should be given to the local people. Erkara et al., (2017) believes that the level of social welfare and the level of community preparedness to participate in environmental protection are effective on the development of ecotourism.

1.2. Conceptual model and research hypotheses

An examination of the background studies and causal conditions affecting the central issue (development of ecotourism) in field interviews reveals the various factors influencing ecotourism development such as economic, social and administrative factors, governance, infrastructure, and infrastructure. They have a direct and indirect impact on the development of ecotourism. In reviewing the research background, some of these factors have been used to design the conceptual model of ecotourism development, and based on the conceptual model presented in Figure 1, the following seven basic hypotheses are discussed (Tab 1):

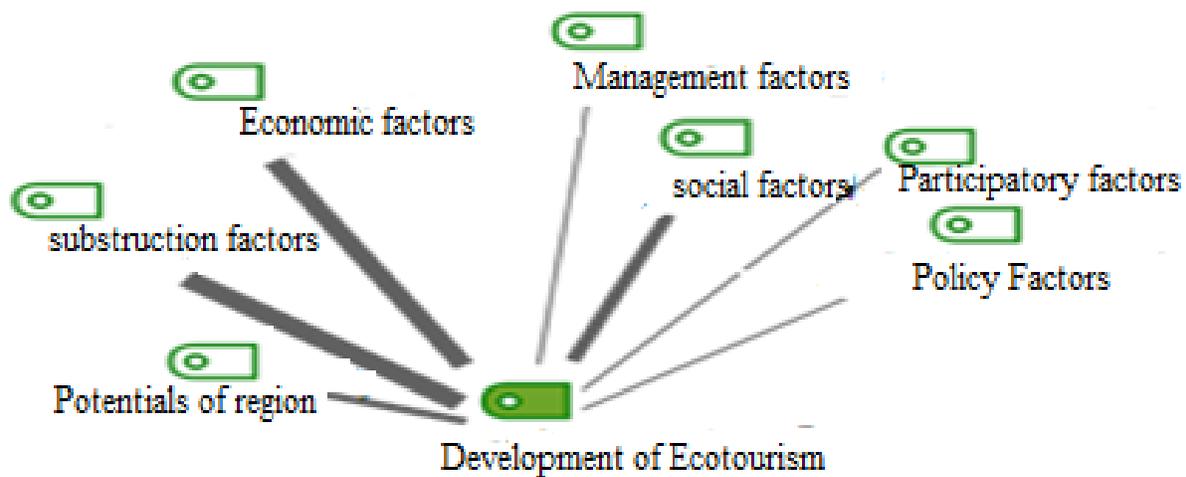


Figure 1.

Tab 1: Conceptual research model with maxqda2 software

Research hypothesis	Assumption test
1. Policy factors are effective in the development of ecotourism	$H_0: \beta=0$ $H_1: \beta \neq 0$
2. Social and cultural factors contribute to the development of ecotourism.	$H_0: \beta=0$ $H_1: \beta \neq 0$
3. Participatory factors are effective in the development of ecotourism.	$H_0: \beta=0$ $H_1: \beta \neq 0$
4. Economic factors contribute to the development of ecotourism	$H_0: \beta=0$ $H_1: \beta \neq 0$
5. Gravity factors and potentials of the region are effective in the development of ecotourism	$H_0: \beta=0$ $H_1: \beta \neq 0$
6. Management factors influence ecotourism development.	$H_0: \beta=0$ $H_1: \beta \neq 0$
7. Infrastructure factors, ecotourism services and facilities are effective in developing ecotourism	$H_0: \beta=0$ $H_1: \beta \neq 0$

2. Research Methods

The research method used in this study can be investigated from different aspects. From a research perspective or paradigm, this research is considered a mixed (quantitative - qualitative) type. In terms of purpose, the present study is an applied one; it is a descriptive-analytical one. And in terms of time, it is retrospective. The statistical population of this study consists of two groups.

The first group, which are experts and experts in the field of tourism, whose views have been used to extract factors that influence the ecotourism development of tourism target villages in Kermanshah province.

The second group is the head of the households of the beneficiary villages (2678 family) and ecologists and tourists, which according to statistics of Kermanshah province Cultural Heritage Office in 2017 was about 530 thousand. The sample size in the qualitative section was purposive

sampling of snowball, which included 20 experts and professors, cultural heritage tourism experts, city tourism managers from whom information was collected through open interviews.

The sampling method in the quantitative section was stratified random sampling with proportional allocation using Morgan table. Only 203 questionnaires from tourists and 236 questionnaires from heads of households in the target tourism villages were returned or analyzed. In this study, three main methods of interviewing experts, documentary and field studies were used to collect data. Face-to-face interviews with open-ended and semi-structured questions were used for the qualitative research method and a small part of the closed-ended questionnaire was used for data collection. To determine the validity of the questionnaire, a panel of experts was used. To check the validity of the questionnaire, 30 villagers and tourists (out of the study area) were selected by a completely random method and the research questionnaire (108 questions) was completed by them.

The variables were then refined using Cronbach's alphas method. After collecting and sorting quantitative data, descriptive and analytical statistical methods were used for data analysis. All calculations were performed using SPSS24 and pls2 software.

2.1. Qualitative Research Findings

1-Open coding

Open coding includes key interviews, concepts, and the main category described in Tab 2.

2-Axial coding

This coding is shown in Figure 2

3. Selective coding

According to the results and the final model of the research findings indicate causal conditions affect the central issue and lead to local community participation in conservation, management and decision making, participation in ecotourism sector investment, empowerment (people, investors and other organizations). Gaining economic benefits for

stakeholders, preserving local cultures and making optimal use of cultural heritage and ultimately indigenous people and ecotourism development, and promoting ecotourism with factors such as stakeholder participation and ecotourism education And intervention factors such as financial management of ecotourism (financing of ecotourism costs) And investing in ecotourism), policymaking (social security, formulation of ecotourism laws and the application of new technologies in ecotourism), a sense of belonging and good management of ecotourism (ecotourism privatization, ecotourism security and good management) combined and leading to strategies Management (energy management, benefits management and waste management), advertising marketing such as setting up information centers, creating traditional exhibitions, festivals and rituals, and ultimately educational and promotional strategies such as ecotourism education, environmental protection and cultural heritage, and How to deal with tourists and promote ecotourism are coming back.

Finally, applying these strategies can have both positive and negative consequences, including: positive economic outcomes such as reduced unemployment, a new local product market, the development of handicrafts, improved service quality, the creation of new infrastructure and increased levels. The prosperity and quality of life of local people will have negative consequences, such as a shift in interest income, economic imbalances, and the shifting of the workforce from agriculture to tourism. It also has positive environmental consequences such as reduced environmental degradation, gasification to the villages, protection of cultural heritage and biodiversity benefits, and negative consequences such as increased traffic and noise and increased pollution of climate and soil. Applying these strategies to the development of ecotourism may have positive social and cultural consequences such as cultural exchanges and social interactions, development of educational programs and the preservation of cultural heritage, and negative consequences such as imitating local people from tourist culture, transmitting disease from human to animal, Diminishing the principles, beliefs and values and forcing the locals to it The cup is a traditional activity (Figure 2).

Table 2: Open Coding

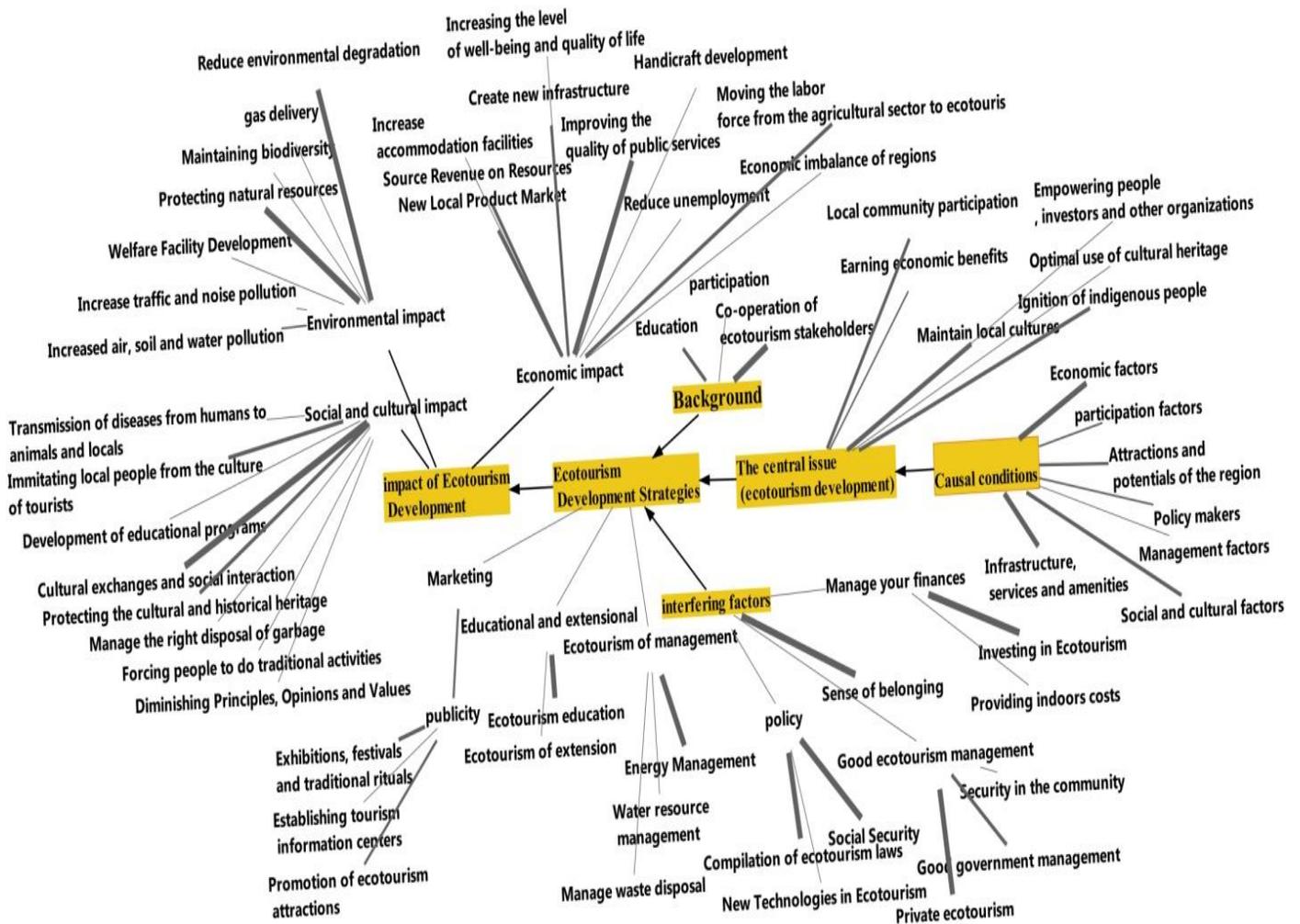
Category	concepts	Interview Key
Excellent conditions	Ecotourism infrastructure and facilities	Ecotourism resorts need to be developed.
		Building a hotel can be helpful in developing ecotourism and sustaining tourists.
		Parking and a place for setting up tents, barracks and water, etc. have been created in some villages.
		Asphalting and improving the roads of the villages, more tourists come to these villages.
		Creating toilets, green spaces and children's play equipment
	Policy factors	Development of special laws and regulations for environmental protection
		Establishment of environmental protection base in villages
		Economic priorities must be given to the local people.
		Government financial support for local workshops and handicrafts
	Attractions and potentials of the region	Offering traditional food in tents and restaurants
		Using natural building materials in the village
		Performing music, holding local ceremonies and celebrations
		Existence of beautiful natural cultural landscapes and attractions
		Introduction and sale of medicinal plants in the region
		Beautifying the paths leading to the village
	Management factors	Giving economic priorities to the local people
		Surveys of policymakers and planners involved in the ecotourism project
		Surveys of tourists and locals
		Rural waste disposal management
		Training local people and tourists on environmental issues
	Social factors and cultural	Tourist satisfaction with hosting, facilities and services provided
		Create a seasonal exhibition of local products
		Pleasant and unpleasant experience from previous trips of tourists
		Distribution of brochures and pamphlets at the entrances of villages
		Installation of signs prohibiting fires and cutting down trees and observing hygiene
Providing rural life experience for tourists		

		Production and broadcast of TV programs about the attractions of the village
	Participatory factors	The participation of villagers in providing accommodation services to tourists
		Sharing indigenous peoples in the use of pastures
		Involve local people in the management, planning and decision-making of the village
		Local people's participation in environmental protection
	Economic factors	Local investors invest in environmental housing
		Export development of some local products
		Suitable marketing for selling local products
		Improving the quality of handicrafts
		Indigenous people's activity in selling livestock and agricultural products
		Spending tourism revenue in the village
		Divide local people's income from ecotourism
		Invest in herbs and traditional medicine
		Foreign investment in the village
Development of small and medium handicraft production companies		
Pay low-interest financial and credit facilities to start small businesses		
Axial category	Ecotourism development	Local community participation in environmental protection
		The participation of the local community in the management and decision-making of the village
		Gain economic benefits
		Empowering people, investors and other organizations
		Local community participation in tourism investment
		Preserving local cultures
		Increase of jobs
		Optimal use of cultural heritage
Background conditions	Water management	Optimal use of water
	Education	Environmental protection training in schools
		Development of public awareness through excellent tourism training centers
		Training border guards and law enforcement to protect the environment.
		Increase public awareness of environmental protection through charismatic individuals
	Participation	All-round participation of the people, the government and the private sector in preserving cultural and historical monuments
Creating tourism infrastructure in the village with the participation of the people and the government		

	The cooperation of ecotourism stakeholders	Cooperation of the Radio and Television in promoting and implementing ecotourism training programs Cooperation of organizations, villagers and rural councils in environmental protection
Interfering factors	Sense of belonging	Prevent the change of pasture user and ecotourism attractions
		Application of old architectural facades in the construction of new houses
	Policy	The role of the police in protecting the environment
		The role of local people in environmental protection
		The role of the Cultural Heritage Organization in identifying and introducing attractions
		Licensed by the Cultural Heritage to create ecotourism facilities
		Laws and guidelines on cultural heritage in the field of environmental protection
		Transfer of new and low-consumption technologies to the village
	Good ecotourism management	Reinforce buildings against earthquakes
		Expansion of roads and fencing in road construction sites
	Security in ecotourism	Recreational boat insurance
		Handicraft insurance
		Assign residence supervision to the private sector
		Housing supervision by the private sector
		Assignment of exploitation of attractions to the private sector
	Management of government institutions	Residence permits, restaurants and hotels to the private sector
		The role of government in protecting natural resources
		Responsibility of the Cultural Heritage Organization in introducing cultural and natural heritage
	Ecotourism Financial Management	The role of government in providing ecotourism infrastructure
		Establishing a fund to help restore and restore courtyards and historical sites
Apply financial incentives for optimal energy and water consumption		
Ecotourism development	Educational and promotional	Use municipal revenues to develop ecotourism services and facilities
		Use of crimes committed by border smugglers to restore historic buildings and religious shrines Training to protect the environment and how to deal with each other

Impacts of ecotourism development	Marketing	Construction of small cultural and historical museums
		Promoting the tradition of using religious places and sites
		Guide the student camps of the Path of Light to these areas
		Create small and medium workshops and local production factories
		Starting small businesses in the field of ecotourism
		Seasonal exhibition of local products in the villages
		Festivals and traditional and religious rites
		Village council and village administration, and information offices
		Editing and broadcasting TV programs
		Media advertising about tourism and village attractions
		TV shows, promotional CDs, brochures and ...
	Managing people in Ecotourism	Observance of construction standards in energy consumption
		Fuel consumption management
		Energy saving by people
		Use of livestock waste as fertilizer in agricultural lands
	Social and cultural impacts	Collect solid waste and recycle it
		Transmission of diseases from humans to animals and local people
		Increasing the desire of villagers to use luxury and decorative goods
		Educational programs for the development and support of ecotourism
Destruction of the principles and values of the beliefs and customs of the local people		
Cultural exchanges and social interactions between locals and tourists		
Protecting the cultural and historical heritage of the villages		
Use of animal waste for fertilizer		
Economic impacts		Forcing people to do dance activities and ..
		Ignoring the rules to earn as much as possible from available resources
	Increase accommodation facilities such as hotels, restaurants, tents and campsites	
	Increase the level of well-being and quality of life	
	Demand for economic infrastructure has increased	
	New markets for local products and handicrafts	
	Development of works of art and handicrafts	
	Transfer of work from agriculture to ecotourism	
	Economic imbalance of regions	
	Ecotourism in the busy season has reduced unemployment	
Economic impacts	Increased air, soil and water pollution and noise pollution	
	Rapid development of ecotourism amenities	
	Avoid the extinction of rare animal and plant species	
	Reduce environmental degradation	
	Gas supply to tourist target villages	
	Sensitivity of local people to different types of environment	

Figure 2: The model presented by the selective coding of factors affecting ecotourism development



4. Qualitative Research Findings

The demographic characteristics of tourists and heads of households in the target villages are based on Table 3.

Table 3: Frequency Distribution of Sample Members by Individual Tourism Characteristics and Head of Families.

Sex (tourists)	Variable	Abundance	Abundance Percent
	Man	184	90.6
	Female	19	9.4
	Total	203	100
Married (tourists)	Single	170	83.7
	Married	33	16.3
	Total	203	100
Education (tourists)	illiterate	2	1
	Diploma and Diploma	99	48.8
	Associate Degree	22	10.8
	Bachelor	53	26.1
	Masters degree and higher	27	13.3
	Total	203	100
Age (tourists)	15-23 years	14	6.9
	24-32 years	24	11.8
	33-41 years old	58	28.6
	42-50 years	73	36
	50 years and more	34	16.7
	Total	203	100
Occupation (tourists)	Governmental	104	51.2
	Free	73	36
	Unemployed	26	12.8
	Total	203	100
Age of Head of Households	29-23 years	15	6.4
	36-30 years	37	15.7
	43-37 years	53	22.9
	50-44 years	71	30.1
	More than 50	59	25
	Total	236	100
Head of household	Man	217	91.9
	Female	19	8.1
	Total	236	100
The head of households	Governmental	63	18.8
	Free	112	33.7

	Agriculture and Animal Husbandry	114	33.8
	Unemployed	47	14
	Total	336	100
Education of the head of households	illiterate	8	3.4
	Diploma and Diploma	140	59.3
	Associate Degree	13	5.5
	Bachelor	63	26.7
	Masters and higher	12	5.1
	Total	336	100

The results showed that 83.7% of the surveyed tourists are married and 16.3% are single. 81.8% of household heads were married and 8.2% were single. The survey findings showed that most of the tourists (51.2%) have freelance jobs, 36% government jobs and 12.8% unemployed. The highest percentage of heads of households surveyed (33.8%) were agricultural and livestock, 33.4% freelance, 18.8% government and 14% unemployed. Findings related to factors affecting ecotourism development are as follows. 80.6% of the tourists were male and 8.4% were female. Also, 81.8 percent of the household heads were male and 8.1 percent were female. Therefore, it can be concluded that most of the subjects in both groups are men. The mean age of tourists was 41.2 years and standard deviation was 10.7 years, with the youngest being 23 years and the highest being 73 years. The mean age of the head of households was 44 years, with the youngest being 23 years and the highest age being 76 years. In both groups, the most common age group was less than 45 years. Findings from the respondents' education indicate that a small percentage of illiterate tourists (1) and 48.8% of tourists have a high school diploma and below, 10.8% have a high school diploma and 26.1% have a bachelor's degree and 13.3% of tourists have a high school diploma. Postgraduate Education and Higher Education the majority of the sample studied is postgraduate and higher. Also, 3.4% were head of illiterate households, 58.3% had a bachelor's degree and below, 5.5% had a bachelor's degree, 26.7% had a bachelor's degree, and 5.1% had a bachelor's degree or higher. The education of the majority of members is a sample of diplomas and diplomas.

5. Investigating Factors Affecting Tourism Development from Respondents' Viewpoints

Findings show that in terms of infrastructure, the views of both groups, the increase of ecotourism resorts, the construction of hotels, the creation of new educational and health and service infrastructure, the establishment of parking spaces for tents, ports and water, etc. The establishment of local tourism guides at the entrance to the village has been given top rankings for ecotourism development.

Tourists				Households				Variables
Rating	CV	Average Ratings	Deviation Criterion	Rating	CV	Average Ratings	Standard deviation	
1. Infrastructure, services and ecotourism facilities								
3	0.3	3.4	1.04	3	0.33	3.45	1.15	Deployment of local tourism guides at the village entrance
6	0.34	3.26	1.1	4	0.35	3.52	1.22	Creating a bathroom; green space and children's playgrounds
5	0.33	3.6	1.19	1	0.3	3.73	1.13	Increase in eco-tourism
2	0.29	3.49	1	2	0.32	3.24	1.03	Provides parking and parking space for tents, benches and water.
4	0.31	3.46	1.06	5	0.36	3.27	1.17	Distribution of leaflets and booklets at the entrance of the villages to the tourists
6	0.34	3.35	1.15	1	0.3	3.5	1.05	Construction of the hotel
1	0.25	3.71	0.94	2	0.32	3.48	1.1	Creating new educational, health and service infrastructure
2. Policy								
5	0.4	3.09	1.25	3	0.39	3.08	1.2	Reduce the formalities for investment

2	0.37	3.11	1.14	5	0.42	2.78	1.18	Increased road safety
3	0.38	2.86	1.08	2	0.37	2.96	1.1	Establishment of an environmental checkpoint in the villages
3	0.38	3	1.14	4	0.41	2.77	1.15	Neighboring security
1	0.34	2.99	1.01	1	0.33	3.01	1	Develop special laws and regulations to protect the environment
3. Potentials and Attractions of the Area								
5	0.33	3.27	1.08	3	0.31	3.45	1.08	The presence of beautiful natural cultural landscapes and attractions
4	0.32	3.46	1.12	7	0.37	3.33	1.23	Resources and potentials of the village
6	0.35	3.24	1.15	6	0.36	3.32	1.2	Various and favorable climate of the villages
1	0.27	3.48	0.92	4	0.32	3.16	1	Using natural building materials in the village
5	0.33	3.4	1.11	2	0.29	3.39	0.99	Protecting historical monuments and religious sites
3	0.29	3.4	0.98	3	0.31	3.2	0.98	Beautifying the roads leading to the village
2	0.28	3.51	0.97	1	0.28	3.35	0.95	Music performances, local celebrations and celebrations
4. Management								
3	0.3	3.51	1.06	4	0.33	3.41	1.12	Managers' experience and education
2	0.28	3.64	1.04	5	0.35	3.46	1.21	Survey of tourists
1	0.27	3.32	0.91	3	0.32	3.47	1.11	Survey of policy makers and planners involved with ecology
3	0.3	3.2	0.96	1	0.3	3.4	1.03	Proper disposal of village waste
4	0.32	3.23	1.03	2	0.31	3.35	1.04	Pay attention to the views of indigenous people in village planning and decision making
5. Social and cultural								
2	0.36	3.17	1.14	1	0.35	3.24	1.12	Tourist satisfaction with the facilities and services provided
1	0.34	3.31	1.12	2	0.36	3.11	1.13	Providing tourists with the opportunity to experience rural life

5	0.51	2.63	1.34	7	0.43	2.88	1.24	Preserving the creations and works of the past
3	0.41	3	1.23	3	0.37	3.11	1.16	Enjoyable and unpleasant experience of previous tourists' journey
3	0.41	3.24	1.32	4	0.39	3.06	1.21	The humility and courtesy of the locals
6. Participatory								
1	0.31	3.61	1.11	3	0.35	3.55	1.25	Indigenous peoples share rangelands
3	0.41	2.74	1.12	4	0.37	2.86	1.07	People's participation in management, planning and village decision making
2	0.38	3.2	1.22	2	0.34	3.32	1.13	Establishment of tourism cooperatives
4	0.42	3.07	1.28	1	0.31	3.37	1.06	Rural participation in providing accommodation services to tourists
7. Economic								
3	0.22	3.52	0.78	3	0.27	3.63	0.97	Paying low interest finance and credit facilities to start small businesses
3	0.22	3.53	0.76	2	0.26	3.65	0.97	Spending the proceeds of tourism on the village
1	0.19	4	0.77	1	0.24	3.96	0.93	Development of small and medium-sized handicraft companies
2	0.21	4.1	0.88	4	0.28	3.91	1.1	Improve the quality of handicrafts
8. Ecological Development Indicators								
2	0.23	3.27	0.76	3	0.23	3.24	0.74	Local community participation in village management and decision making
3	0.3	3.73	1.12	4	0.27	3.75	1.01	Optimal use of cultural heritage
1	0.22	3.41	0.76	1	0.2	3.42	0.68	Preserving local cultures
1	0.22	3.3	0.74	2	0.22	3.37	0.74	Local community participation in tourism investment
2	0.23	3.39	0.77	3	0.23	3.36	0.77	Earn economic benefits

In terms of policy making, the formulation of specific laws and regulations to protect the environment has been ranked first by the policy maker, ranking second and third, respectively, from the perspective of household heads, the use of local environmentalists, and the reduction of administrative formalities for investment, respectively. Which has the greatest impact on ecotourism development. But from the perspective of tourists from neighboring countries' security, increased road safety and the deployment of rural environments have been ranked second and third in tourism development. In the area of potentials and attractions in the area, music performances, local celebrations and celebrations are top priority, preservation of historical monuments and religious sites and beautification of roads leading to the village rank second and there are beautiful natural and cultural landscapes and attractions.

The third priority was the one that had the greatest impact on eco-tourism development. From the tourists' point of view, the use of natural building materials in the village, music performances, local celebrations and beautification of the roads leading to the village were among the most important factors affecting eco-tourism development which made the first to third priority in eco-tourism development have dedicated themselves. In terms of management, proper waste management, consideration of indigenous peoples' views in village planning and decision-making, and surveys of policy makers and planners involved with the eco-project were the first to third priorities, respectively, which had the greatest impact on ecosystem development. From the perspective of tourists, surveys of policy makers and planners involved with ecotourism project, first and second priority managers' experience and education and survey of tourists and proper management of rural waste management were the most important factors affecting eco-tourism development.

Both groups shared a common view of the main variables in the social and cultural factor that included, a pleasant and unpleasant experience of previous tourists' journeys, satisfaction of tourists with the facilities and services offered, and the provision of a rural life experience for tourists and the attitude and attitude of locals. As a participatory factor, the villagers' participation in providing accommodation services to tourists, establishing tourism cooperatives and indigenous peoples' use of rangelands is, from a tourist's perspective, including: indigenous peoples' use of rangelands, tourism cooperatives and local people's

participation in management are the planning and decisions of the village. In the economic realm, the development of small and medium-sized enterprises is the production of handicrafts, the spending of tourism revenue on the countryside, and the payment of low-interest financial and credit facilities to start small businesses. Likewise, the three main variables of the economic perspective, from the tourists' perspective, are: Priority development of small and medium-sized handicrafts companies, Improvement of the quality of handicrafts and spending of tourism income in the village and payment of low interest financial and credit facilities to start up. They are small businesses. And in terms of ecotourism development index, preservation of local cultures, participation of local community in investment in tourism sector and economic gain, respectively, they had first to third priority of indicators of ecotourism development and from tourist's point of view, preservation of local cultures, participation The local community has been a top priority in investing in tourism and preserving local cultures is a top priority and optimal use of cultural heritage is a top priority among the indicators of eco-tourism development.

6. Fitting the model and testing the research hypotheses

In this study, the fitting of the model derived from the effect of causal conditions on the axial category in the qualitative section will be investigated. Since in the measurement models a set of observable variables reflects a unique hidden variable that must have the homogeneity and unidimensionality of that model. For this purpose, there are some indicators at the software level to check the reliability of a measurement model. At this point, the weight of the indices related to the hidden external variables is measured. One of these indices is representative or single reliability (reliability of each of the observable variables) (Mohsenin and Esfandyani, 2017). The other two indices used for validity are composite reliability index (CR) and mean variance extracted index (AVE). In order to evaluate the individual reliability of each observed variable, the operating load of each index (observed variable) on the relevant hidden variable should be considered (Henseler and Sarstedt, 2015), if the standard operating load is at least 0.7, Reliability index is required and some others have stated minimum required load factor of 0.5 (Hulland, 1999). Given acceptable values of the fit indices and factor loadings of items for each variable

that for most questions exceeds 0.5. However, a feature called GOF is used to measure model fit obtained by PLS software. But Henseler and Sarstedt (2015) found the index presented by Goodness of Fit Test to evaluate the inefficiency of the inefficient model. In this respect, the most valid characteristic used to evaluate the model fit is the SRMR, which experts believe should be below .08. The standardized value of SRMR in this study was .023. This indicates that the model fits well. Therefore, it can be stated that the research measurement model is at a desirable level and the components sufficiently explain the variance of the conceptual model variables of the research and there is no need for software modification (Table 5).

Table 5: Modified model fit indices for respondents' data

AVE	CR	Cronbach's alpha	Factor Loading	Items	factors
50.7	91.8	90.1	75.4	Local people invest in building ecotourism residences	Economic factors
			75	Export promotion of some local products	
			56.2	Proper marketing to sell local products	
			70.4	Improve the quality of handicrafts	
			78.2	Native people's activities in selling livestock and crops	
			74.8	Spending the proceeds of tourism on the village	
			61.6	Contributing local people to the ecological income	
			69.8	Invest in Medicinal Plants and Traditional Medicine	
			76.6	Development of small and medium-sized handicraft companies	
			68.3	Foreign investment in the village	
			73.9	Paying low interest finance and credit facilities to start small businesses	
52	86.6	81.7	74.1	Introducing and selling herbs	Potentials and Attractions of
			71.9	Music performances, local celebrations and celebrations	
			69	Traditional catering in tents and restaurants	

			74.7	Using natural building materials in the village	
			74.4	There are beautiful natural and cultural landscapes and attractions	
			68.2	Beautifying the roads leading to the village	
57.6	79.6	63.3	86.7	Survey of policymakers, tourists and locals about village planning	Management
			83.4	Proper disposal of village waste	
			53.1	Pay attention to the views of indigenous people in village planning and decision making	
58.1	84.7	76.3	73.6	Rural participation in providing accommodation services to tourists	partnership
			70.1	Indigenous peoples share rangelands	
			78.1	Involvement of local people in management, planning and village decisions	
			82.8	Involvement of local people in environmental protection	
50.7	91.8	90.1	68.9	Educate locals and tourists on environmental issues	Social and cultural
			70.8	Tourist Satisfaction with Hosting, Facilities and Services Provided	
			82	Creating a seasonal exhibition of local produce	
			71.2	Enjoyable and unpleasant experience of the previous tourist trip	
			53.2	Distribution of leaflets and booklets at the entrance of the villages	
			74.6	Installation of a ban on lighting fires and cutting down trees and maintaining hygiene	
			74.2	Providing tourists with the opportunity to experience rural life	
			53.8	Produce and broadcast television programs about village attractions	
58.4	84.8	76.2	75.9	Develop special laws and regulations to protect the environment	policy
			83.3	Giving local people economic priorities	
			67.6	Establishment of an environmental checkpoint in the villages	

			78.1	Government funding for local workshops and crafts	
56.5	86.6	80.8	79.8	Construction of the hotel	Infrastructure
			76.6	Creating a bathroom; green space and children's playgrounds	
			70.6	Asphalt and road improvement of villages	
			71.8	Provides parking and parking space for tents, benches and water.	
			76.8	Increasing ecotourism resorts	
64.4	87.8	81.5	82.6	Local community participation in environmental protection	Development of Ecotourism
			80.6	Earn economic benefits	
			79.4	Preserving local cultures	
			78.4	Indigenous people ignite	

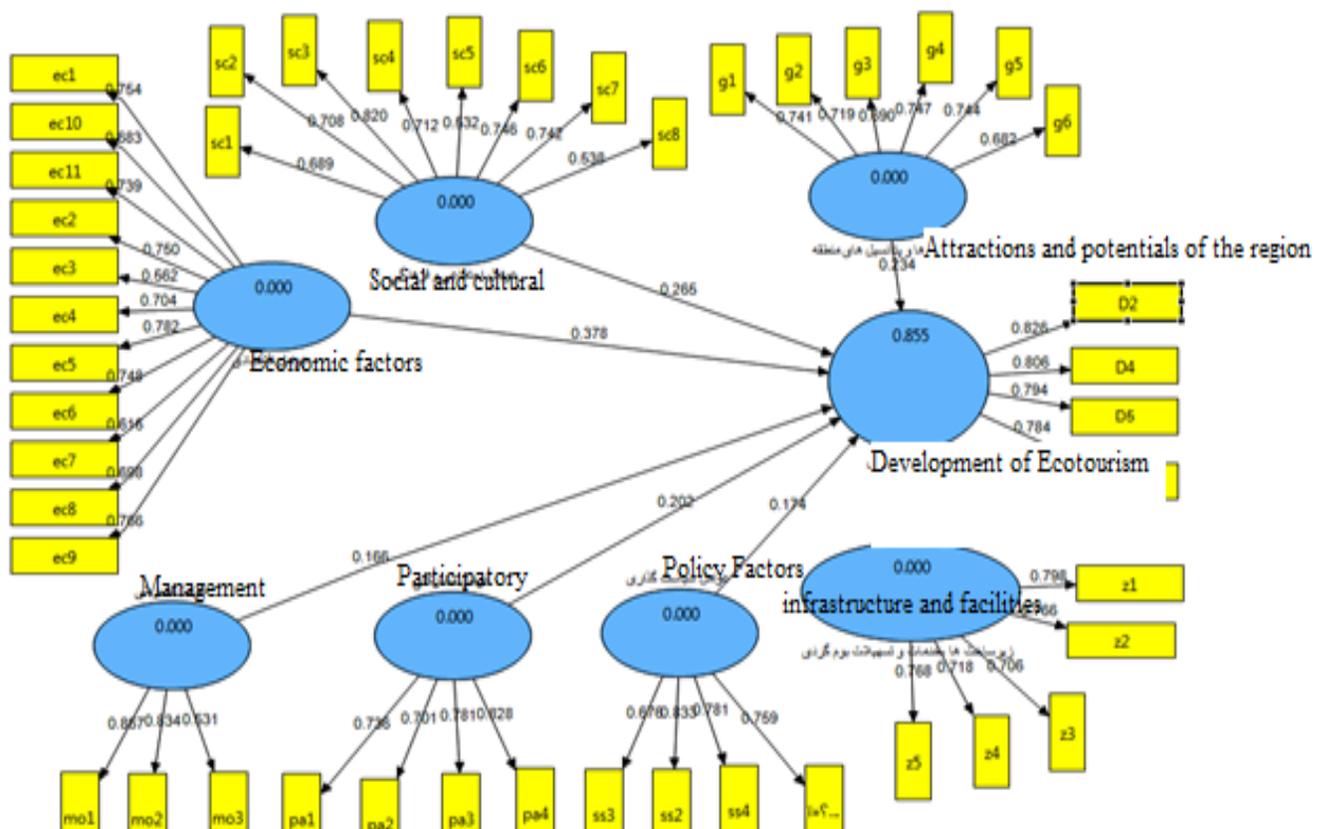


Figure 3: PLS 2 software output and T values

According to the results of the t-test, all path coefficients were significant at 99% confidence level and played a significant role in measuring their structures. According to the standard coefficient it can be said that the region's attractions and potentials (0.223), infrastructure, ecotourism services and facilities (0.077), policy factors (0.174), participatory factors (0.220), Economic factors (0.378), managerial factors (0.166) and social and cultural factors (0.256) influence the development of ecotourism. According to the results of the t-test, all path coefficients were significant at 99% confidence level and played a significant role in the measurement of their structures (Figure 3). Table 5 summarizes the results of the research hypotheses according to the respondents. Since the value of T for all hypotheses is greater than 2.58, all hypotheses are confirmed. Also, considering the path coefficient positive for each of the seven hypotheses, we can say that these seven variables are positive and direct to influence ecotourism development. In order to analyze the value of the path coefficient, it can be stated that, for example, if one percent of economic factors increase, the development of ecotourism for respondents (tourists and head of households of tourism target villages) would increase 38 percent of ecotourism development.

Conclusion

This study was conducted to explain the development of ecotourism in tourism target villages of Kermanshah province. In the current study, ecotourism development is considered as a central issue. The key areas of ecotourism development in this research include the sub-categories of local community participation in conservation, management and decision-making in the ecotourism sector, empowerment of stakeholders (people, investors and other organizations), economic benefit for stakeholders. It is intended to benefit, preserve local cultures, and make optimal use of the cultural heritage, and ultimately the indigenous people. These categories, as observed by Shatrian et al. (2018), Karami (2017), and Blancas et al. (2015), are also cited in a statement by the World Ecumenical Association in 2000. The causal conditions are considered to be factors contributing to the development of ecotourism, including economic factors, advertising and information, infrastructure, ecotourism services and facilities, resources, attractions, education, policy, social factors, and so on. It is the cultural, managerial, and

supportive factors that make the economic factor 66 the most abundant among the other factors. And the most important variables affecting the development of ecotourism are interviewees, media outlets, rural attractions, private sector investment, welfare and health facilities, and public participation in environmental protection.

These factors have been mentioned in Omidi Najafabadi et al., (2015) and Blancas et al. (2015). The underlying conditions in this study include the participation and cooperation of tourism stakeholders and ecotourism education. This finding is similar to the (Lane, 2018) and (Hea, 2018) which state that all stakeholders should be involved in tourism development. Quantitative findings showed that most of the subjects in both groups (tourists and heads of households concerned) were men and in both groups the highest frequency was in the age group of less than 45 years. Respondents indicated that a small percentage of the tourists were illiterate (1) and the majority of the educated members of the sample were diplomas and diplomas. The highest percentage of tourists (51.2%) had freelance jobs and the highest percentage of surveyed households (33.8%) had agricultural and animal husbandry jobs.

Findings from factors affecting ecotourism development show that from both groups' viewpoints, increasing the number of ecotourism residences, formulating specific laws and regulations to protect the environment, enforcing music, organizing local celebrations, proper waste management Villages, the pleasant and unpleasant experience of the previous tourist journey, the participation of the villagers in providing accommodation services to the tourists, the development of small and medium-sized handicrafts companies have been top notch. In the inferential section, the findings of the study indicated that 7 main factors including infrastructure, policy factors, attractions and potentials of the region, managerial factors, social and cultural factors, economic factors, participatory factors accounted for 63.5% of the total variance explained. The results indicated that economic factors had a significant effect on ecotourism development. The results have already been confirmed by Khosravi (2007), Baghani (2017), Erkara et.al. (2017) and Birendra & Suman (2018). Management factors also influence ecotourism development. The results confirm the findings of Hajinejad and Yari (2013) and Birendra & Suman (2018).

The results showed that social and cultural factors influence the development of ecotourism. These results are consistent with the research by Garcia (2017) and Shatarian et al (2017). The policy factor also influences the development of ecotourism. The results confirm the research of Funda (2018), Erkara et.al. (2017) and Baghani (2017). In this study, it was found that the factor related to infrastructure, services and facilities of ecotourism had a significant effect on the development of ecotourism, the results of which are consistent with the research of Ghaderi (2004) and Salehi et al. (2016). Also, the region's attractions and potentials have a significant impact on ecotourism development. The participatory factor has a significant impact on the development of ecotourism, which is consistent with the findings of Khosravi (2007) and Daniel (2013). Also, the results of the path coefficients in the model confirm that economic priority factor and socio-cultural factors, factors of regional attractions and potentials, participatory factors, policy factors, managerial and infrastructure factors, services and Ecotourism facilities have the second to seventh priorities, respectively.

Given the quantitative findings of research that is above the average of the averages of effective factors in ecotourism development and the inferential findings of positive, direct and significant effects of these factors in ecotourism development, it is suggested to reconstruct and repair important historical monuments. And archeology, organizing, equipping and preparing mirages and spas, creating and completing hotels and guesthouses for higher tourist satisfaction, a shared vision of the goals and missions of tourism management programs, forming a committee of experts and stakeholders. Tourism as a consultative committee for tourism development Developing road communication networks, providing a peaceful, clean place for tourist use, and protecting the ancient artifacts and landscapes of Kermanshah province.

In future research, reliable results can be obtained by removing the identified dimensions for each variable with low factor loadings. Future researchers can use other software to analyze qualitative data and evaluate concept model fit. One of the innovations of the present study was that for the first time explaining the development of ecotourism with the help of coding has been done. The application of quantitative-qualitative method is one of the newer methods which was less used in the field of ecotourism. While the variables and concepts extracted from the interviews are broad concepts. Another innovation of the present study is the distribution of

questionnaires obtained from interviews with experts and testing of conceptual model extracted by pls2. Despite efforts to fully implement this research, and to provide a framework that contributes to the broadening of the literature on ecotourism development, several limitations remain to be addressed in future research. Including: limited access and inability to interview all experts in this area, ignoring foreign tourists and limited research to the target villages of Kermanshah tourism.

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