



<https://doi.org/10.22133/ijtcs.2025.476067.1179>

## Investigating the Contributory Factors to the Development of Cultural Tourism in Tehran: Emphasis on the Role of Museums

Anahita Mohammadi<sup>1</sup>, Mehdi Basouli\*<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ph.D. Candidate, Faculty of Tourism, University of Science and Culture, Tehran, Iran

<sup>2</sup> Associate Professor, Faculty of Tourism, University of Science and Culture, Tehran, Iran

### Article Info

#### Received:

2024-09-02

#### Accepted:

2025-01-15

#### Keywords:

Cultural tourism  
Cultural identity  
Museum, Tehran  
Interpretive structural modeling

### Abstract

Tourism, particularly cultural tourism, has the potential to create new opportunities for knowledge, development, and sustainability, playing a crucial role in the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of nations. In this context, identifying and effectively utilizing local tourism resources is essential for the growth of this industry. This study examines the role of museums in fostering the development of cultural tourism in Tehran, focusing on the interactions among factors influencing this process. A qualitative research approach is employed, incorporating content analysis and Interpretive Structural Modeling (ISM) techniques. The findings draw on the perspectives of cultural tourism experts, professionals from the Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts, and Tourism Organization, and museum managers. The results highlight that the role of museums in preserving Tehran's historical and cultural artifacts, along with the architecture and design of museums in attracting tourists, has a significant influence with low dependence. Conversely, factors such as the connection of museums to Tehran's history and culture, their educational and cultural impact on attracting tourists, their role in presenting Tehran to cultural visitors, and their contribution to national and cultural identity exhibit both high influence and high dependence. Moreover, the role of museums in promoting cultural identity, the thematic diversity of museum content, the representation of local handicrafts and arts, the enhancement of cultural exchanges, the development of organizational culture, and the increase in public awareness of cultural values also show high influence and dependence. However, the factor of enhancing the mindset of cultural tourists demonstrates low influence but high dependence.

#### \*Corresponding author

E-mail: basouli@usc.ac.ir

#### How to Cite:

Mohammadi, A., & Basouli, M. (2024). Investigating the Contributory Factors in the Development of Cultural Tourism in Tehran: Emphasis on the Role of Museums. *International Journal of Tourism, Culture and Spirituality*, 7(2), 59-78.

## Introduction

The dynamic tourism industry, with its promising future, continues to attract increasing investments. As a powerful tool in the hands of governments, tourism not only introduces their cultures to the world but also offers cultural, economic, social, and security benefits. Cultural tourism, rooted in heritage, is a formidable force in constructing and preserving national identity while acting as a means to attract tourists. By showcasing cultural heritage, the tourism industry presents contemporary national concepts to a global audience (Modabber Khaknezhad et al., 2021). In other words, alongside their economic development, some countries aim to project their culture to other societies through the expansion of tourism (Haj Agha Mir et al., 2022).

Tourism, as a cultural phenomenon, provides a platform for the interaction and exchange of cultural and social experiences among diverse communities. This phenomenon is directly linked to human motivations, desires, and needs, which are deeply rooted in the culture of their society (Mai et al., 2023). Culture, as a comprehensive and unique system, is embedded in the collective unconscious of individuals within a society, influencing their actions, behaviors, and thoughts across all aspects of life (Basouli, 2020). A nation's culture is reflected in its tourist attractions, and by engaging with these cultural values, tourists are drawn closer to the depths of that nation's history and identity.

Museums, as one of the most significant tourist attractions, play a prominent role in drawing tourists and offering services. These venues serve as platforms to amplify the voice of cultural heritage to the public. Museums' activities are fundamental to preserving the artifacts housed within them (Torabi Farsani et al., 2023).

Museums hold a pivotal role in interpreting and preserving cultural heritage. In recent years, one of their primary objectives has been to organize educational and recreational activities, enabling visitors to engage with and learn in these artistic and cultural spaces (López Ronco et al., 2023). As public institutions with profound social responsibilities, museums contribute to fostering a healthy, informed, and joyful society (Weber, 2022). Tourist destinations such as museums act as essential venues for presenting a nation's unique identity, showcasing historical records that affirm the legacy and existence of a people (Wang & Meng, 2023).

The significance of national culture lies in its function as the repository of a society's ideas, ideals, values, and traditions, cultivated over generations. It fosters emotional bonds and solidarity, uniting people through shared heritage. The preservation and nurturing of a nation's cultural fabric ensure its survival while safeguarding the dignity and resilience of its people. When culture is deeply rooted in history and infused with innovation and creativity, it serves as a robust defense against external cultural, spiritual, and moral encroachments (Mai et al., 2023; Mir Sondosi, 2020; Mohseni, 2014).

Museums, as educational institutions, hold substantial potential for advancing sustainable tourism. However, the connection between museums and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in Iran remains limited, with ICOM being the sole active NGO in this field. Strengthening collaboration between NGOs and museums could play a pivotal role in raising awareness of the challenges hindering sustainable tourism (Torabi Farsani et al., 2023).

In this context, the present article delves into the factors influencing the development of cultural tourism, with particular emphasis on the role of museums. The study begins by introducing the concept of cultural tourism and highlighting its importance. It then explores the key factors shaping the development of cultural tourism, including history, local identity, art and culture, tourism infrastructure, and communication. The article examines museums' roles as vital instruments for fostering cultural tourism by evaluating their impact on enhancing cultural awareness, safeguarding cultural heritage, creating educational and recreational spaces, and boosting local economies through tourism. Finally, the article provides strategies and recommendations for strengthening the role of museums in promoting cultural tourism. Through a thorough and insightful analysis, this work offers valuable guidance for scholars, tourism professionals, and policymakers seeking to enhance the contribution of museums to cultural tourism and to utilize the sector's potential for sustainable development.

## **Literature Review and background review**

### **Culture and Tourism**

The relationship between tourism and culture has undergone significant transformations over the past century, remaining complex and multifaceted. Tourism serves as a powerful tool for the cultural development of nations, while culture, in turn, acts as a primary catalyst for tourism, particularly in countries like Iran. Tourism managers face the continuous challenge of meeting market demands, responding to global crises, addressing the fluctuations of seasonal tourism, and mitigating the risks of mass tourism, which can threaten historical, artistic, environmental, or landscape heritage.

Given the rising global interest in travel, each country must devise strategies to attract tourists in a manner that aligns with its socio-economic development goals and infrastructure capacity (Penacho et al., 2023). Tourism, as a dynamic and systematic activity, offers tourists opportunities for personal transformation and renewal, creating spaces conducive to meaningful changes and novel experiences. By nature, tourism lacks an inherent order; its meanings are not predetermined in the actions of tourists. Instead, the tourism experience is accompanied by a cognitive component that arises from the interpretations and meanings tourists assign to the phenomenon and the sites they visit. Consequently, the situations encountered by tourists are not fixed but are continuously shaped and reshaped by their perceptions (Soltanynezhad & Shahriyari, 2023).

Tourism offers numerous practical benefits. It fosters mental well-being, enhances intellectual capital, broadens perspectives, and facilitates connections and interactions with individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds. Ultimately, it helps create and sustain a network of social relationships that can be essential for both personal and professional lives (Ibrahim & Adamu, 2020). At its core, tourism is a cultural phenomenon that deepens exchanges and interactions, linking people, motivations, desires, needs, and aspirations shaped by their respective cultures. As a cultural force, the growth of tourism unlocks countless opportunities for cultural exchange between visitors and host communities. Consequently, culture assumes multiple roles within the tourist experience (Calvi & Moretti, 2020).

Tourism plays a vital role in fostering awareness of one another's lifestyles, thereby strengthening connections between the cultures of different nations. This has contributed to the rapid rise of cultural tourism, a form of tourism most closely tied to culture, surpassing other types of tourism in popularity worldwide. Culture, as a rich source of tourism, vividly showcases its tangible and intangible heritage to cultural tourists. Interactions between cultures provide individuals with a broad array of choices and opportunities to engage in diverse fields (Mohammad Esmail, 2022).

Culture encompasses both the spiritual and material values created by humanity throughout history. Each culture, in its respective era, reflects the level of progress and technological advancements achieved, along with the productive experiences in work, science, literature, education, arts, ideals, and social institutions that define human life. In essence, culture represents the way of life of each nation. It includes all creations, accumulations, achievements, regulations, beliefs, customs, arts, and shared knowledge passed down from one generation to the next (Hassanvand & Sattari Sarbanqoli, 2023).

### **Cultural tourism**

The term "cultural tourism" gained prominence in the 1980s, coinciding with a rise in international visits to notable landmarks and attractions. During this time, it was considered a form of "virtuous" travel, valued for its potential to preserve local cultural heritage and bolster local economies (Richards, 2018). Although the concept of cultural tourism became a research focus in the late twentieth century, it was not formally defined until 2002 (Matteucci & Zumbusch, 2020).

Cultural tourism, as a vital branch of the tourism industry, plays a key role in promoting the culture and history of societies. Rooted in cultural experiences, it involves understanding local history, art, and traditions while engaging with diverse communities. It is often viewed as a favorable alternative to traditional tourism, capable of mitigating the negative impacts associated with over-tourism in popular destinations (Hojjati et al., 2023). This form of tourism blends conventional offerings, such as restaurants and entertainment, with cultural heritage attractions like museums, galleries, and cultural events. It requires investment in cultural assets, including local cuisine, historical landmarks, traditions,

and customs (Kontogeorgis & Varotsis, 2022). The primary goal is to satisfy curiosity and deepen understanding of culture and humanity by immersing travelers in the history, architecture, economy, society, and lifestyle of the destination (Baquero & Rivelles, 2020).

Cultural tourism is presented as a modern and promising alternative for fostering tourism development across various regions. The need for sustainable tourism development is widely recognized by national and international organizations (Adam et al., 2018). According to the World Tourism Organization, cultural tourism has grown significantly faster in developing countries than other forms of tourism, representing a substantial share of the global market. Continued growth is anticipated, with UNWTO reporting in 2018 that cultural tourism accounted for nearly 39% of all tourist activities (Matteucci et al., 2022). The revitalization of ancient structures, the highlighting of significant sites, and the recreation of collective memories and places of belonging are among the first steps in fostering mental engagement with historical environments, ultimately shaping the phenomenon of cultural tourism. Regional distinctions, racial and ethnic origins, history, and contemporary features including the interwoven elements of traditions and experiences reveal the identity of a nation and its people, serving as a reflection of its land (Manola, 2022).

Cultural tourism is generally categorized into two main types. The first involves visits to tangible sites, such as museums, historical landmarks, archaeological sites, and architectural marvels. The second encompasses intangible heritage elements, including customs, cultural practices, traditional livelihoods, and anthropological insights (Abbaszadeh & Isham, 2016). In countries like Iran, which possess significant potential for attracting cultural tourists, cultural tourism can serve as a powerful tool for exploring and strengthening cultural identity by emphasizing cultural symbols (Hassanvand & Sattari Sarbanqoli, 2023).

Cultural tourism now constitutes a significant portion of global travel demand. It serves as a compelling attraction for many, with global mobility trends indicating steady growth in the sector. Cultural tourism, in particular, has experienced notable expansion, bringing new pressures and demands on the industry (Sanagustín-Fons et al., 2020). However, this growth can sometimes lead to a distorted and inauthentic portrayal of cultural identity, shaped by market demands and economic interests, potentially resulting in the de-identification of host societies. In light of cultural globalization, there is increasing emphasis on sustainability, with cultural tourism emerging as an invisible export that offers significant benefits to regions and countries (Nedae Tousi & FarkhondehKish, 2018).

### **Museums and Cultural Tourism**

Museums play a vital role in safeguarding cultural heritage and creating a meaningful link between historical and contemporary contexts. These institutions have evolved from static collections of artifacts

into dynamic spaces that encourage active public participation. By offering immersive and educational experiences, museums cater to the diverse preferences of their audiences, combining enjoyment with instruction. Like any impactful educational tool, museums strive to satisfy sensory needs in an engaging manner while achieving their social objectives (Wang & Meng, 2023).

As the most visited cultural attractions globally, museums extend their role beyond recreation to include community enrichment. They host educational and leisure activities that enhance quality of life. Acknowledging the multifaceted contributions of museums is essential to addressing visitor needs and showcasing the role of cultural attractions in enriching human experiences. The well-being and comfort of visitors are increasingly recognized as key outcomes of museum experiences, emphasizing their broader social impact (Šveb Dragija & Jelinčić, 2022).

Many tourists visit museums to delve into the art, history, and culture of their travel destinations, reinforcing the significance of these institutions as cultural hubs (Richards, 2018). Over time, museums have transitioned from ancient temples to influential social institutions that actively construct meaning. They serve as custodians of collective memory, fostering a deeper understanding of identity and a sense of place among their audiences (Herman et al., 2023).

The International Council of Museums (ICOM) redefined the role of museums in 2022, emphasizing their modern responsibilities and societal impact. According to ICOM: *"Museums are inclusive, democratic spaces for critical dialogue on the past and future. They address current conflicts, preserve artifacts for future generations, protect cultural diversity, and ensure equal access to heritage for all, holding these treasures in trust for society"* (Kusbiantoro et al., 2022).

Museums offer a distinct platform for experiential and emotional learning that is unmatched elsewhere (Weber, 2022). As cultural and artistic hubs, they connect citizens directly with their heritage, facilitate informal education, and provide unique urban cultural tourism experiences. They are instrumental in interpreting and preserving cultural heritage, serving as open community learning spaces with broad societal recognition as centers for heritage education (Bonilla Sánchez, 2022).

Preserving cultural heritage involves embracing contemporary advancements while reinterpreting traditions through new perspectives. This process seeks sustainable and living elements within cultural practices, emphasizing the importance of acknowledging and promoting heritage (Shalbafiyani et al., 2021). Museums play a critical role in safeguarding the past while connecting it to future generations. They open doors to art, science, and diverse civilizations, offering visitors unparalleled opportunities for education and reflection. By introducing contemporary national arts to global audiences, museums facilitate cultural exchange and foster relationships with international scientific and cultural institutions.

Visiting museums inspires admiration and awe, fostering understanding of the histories and cultures of both one's own and other nations. This deepened awareness promotes empathy and contributes to

global harmony and peace (Porfaraj & Ahmadi, 2023). Beyond their cultural significance, museums also serve as repositories of human knowledge and experience. They bridge the past and present, showcasing humanity's shared heritage and its connection to the natural world through the lenses of history and geography.

Economically, museums create jobs for local communities, attract tourists, and stimulate local businesses. They foster the development of infrastructure, playing a pivotal role in promoting sustainable tourism. By raising awareness about the importance of preserving cultural heritage, museums encourage visits to historical sites, supporting their conservation efforts.

Given the multifaceted contributions of museums across cultural, educational, and economic domains, providing them with robust support is essential for ensuring their continued impact (Kannike et al., 2021).

In their article titled "Determining the Meaning of Cultural Consequences of Communication with an Emphasis on Tourism Development (Case Study: Kong Native Community)," Soltanynezhad and Shahriyari (2023) examine both the positive and negative impacts of tourism. On the positive side, tourism has been shown to improve social services, transportation, recreational facilities, and cultural activities. It also promotes pride in local traditions and culture, enhances the quality of life, and strengthens social capital. However, the negative socio-cultural effects of tourism include cultural shifts, changes in lifestyle, alterations in social life and societal values, increased crime rates, overcrowding, and noise pollution.

Rokneddin Eftekari et al. (2020) conducted a study on the factors influencing experiential tourism development in nomadic areas, with a focus on the Qashqai nomads. The study identified the most significant factors affecting the perceived tourist experience, which included tangible cultural components, the sense of place perception, intangible cultural elements, and perceived quality.

Ghasemi et al. (2020), in their study "Cultural Impacts of Tourism on Host Communities," explored the economic and cultural impacts of tourism in the Hooraman region of Kurdistan province. Their research highlighted negative consequences, such as changes in clothing styles, damage to the local ecosystem, promotion of drug use and addiction, harassment, physical conflicts, poor-quality tourism, shifts in the socio-economic life of residents, erosion of trust in foreign tourists, and adverse effects on traditional lifestyles.

Šveb Dragija and Jelinčić (2022) in their research "Can Museums Help the Growth of Visitors? A Review of Studies of Mental Health in Museums" emphasized the social value of museums and their capacity for long-term impact. Museums, as major cultural attractions, have the potential to enhance the psychological well-being of visitors, contributing to their flourishing. The study found that museums positively influence the mental health of visitors and stakeholders.

In their study "Cultural Tourism in Developed Island Tourism Destinations: Development of an Alternative Tourism Model in Corfu," Kontogeorgis and Varotsis (2022) observed that cultural tourism is closely tied to local attractions and sights. They suggested that cultural tourism could serve as an alternative model, with the potential to increase tourism revenues and improve living standards in mature destinations like Corfu. The authors recommended that tourism policies and destination marketing focus on promoting this alternative tourism model.

Burksiene et al. (2022) conducted research on "Service Quality Management in Museums Using the SERVQUAL Model" in Lithuania. Their findings revealed that the most important dimensions of service quality in museums are reliability, tangibility, and empathy, with reliability being a key factor in visitor satisfaction.

Lastly, Alobeidat (2018) examined the transformation of heritage and socio-cultural effects of tourism in Umm Qais. His research revealed that tourism profoundly alters both tangible and intangible heritage in host communities, leading to significant changes in traditions and societal roles.

### **Research methodology**

This study employed a qualitative approach, with a descriptive data gathering method, and falls under applied research based on its objectives. To investigate the contributory factors in the development of cultural tourism, with an emphasis on the role of museums, the study reviewed existing literature and conducted structured interviews with tourism experts. The data were analyzed using content analysis. The experts selected for the study were tourism professors, chosen based on criteria including theoretical expertise, practical experience, willingness and ability to participate, and accessibility. A total of 15 experts were selected through targeted sampling until data saturation was reached.

Content analysis, a widely used method for analyzing texts, was applied to examine the research data. It allows researchers to identify recurring themes, words, or concepts in texts and analyze their relationships. By systematically identifying these elements, content analysis provides insights into the messages conveyed, the author's perspective, the intended audience, and the broader cultural and historical context.

For data collection, in-depth, unstructured interviews were conducted with the experts. These interviews used open-ended questions to extract factors influencing cultural tourism development, particularly the role of museums. The unstructured nature of the interviews allowed for flexibility and depth, making it an ideal approach for qualitative research. Through these interviews, 14 factors affecting cultural tourism development were identified, based on expert consensus. Factors were included for analysis if the majority of experts agreed on their importance, and those widely rejected were excluded.



Given the limited number of experts and the qualitative nature of the Interpretive Structural Modeling (ISM) method, central tendency measures like the mean were not suitable for selecting factors. Instead, the mode of expert opinions was used to identify the most significant factors for analysis.

ISM is a method that interprets expert views and establishes the relationships between different concepts within a problem. It provides a comprehensive structure for complex concepts and helps identify the prioritization and sequencing of elements' influence on one another. It also determines the direction and strength of the relationships between elements, organizing them into a hierarchical structure (Morovati Sharifabadi & Asadian Ardakani, 2013).

### Findings

**The First Stage:** In the initial stage, a review of the research background and an in-depth literature study were conducted to identify and extract the factors influencing the development of cultural tourism, with a particular focus on the role of museums in Tehran. This phase led to the identification of 15 key factors. Table 2 presents the contributory factors in the development of cultural tourism, emphasizing the role of museums, based on both the research literature and expert opinions.

**Table 1. Investigating the Contributory Factors in the Development of Cultural Tourism in Tehran with Emphasis on the Role of Museums**

Factors	Row
The role and relationship of museums with the history and culture of Tehran	1
Educational and cultural effects of museums in attracting cultural tourists	2
The role of museums in introducing Tehran to cultural tourists	3
The role of museums in preserving and conserving the historical and cultural monuments of Tehran	4
The connection of museums with the national and cultural identity of Tehran	5
The role of museums in attracting cultural tourists	6
The role of museums in the development of cultural identity	7
Thematic and content diversity of museums	8
Architecture and design of museums in attracting the attention of tourists	9
Handicrafts and local arts of Tehran	10
Promotion of cultural communication between different regions	11
Development of organizational culture in society	12
Improving the thinking and mentality of cultural tourists	13
Raising the level of public knowledge of cultural values	14

**The Second Stage:** The Second Stage of the Interpretive Structural Modeling (ISM) Approach involves creating the Structural Self-Interaction Matrix (SSIM). This matrix captures the relationships between the identified factors. The process of building the SSIM involves determining the type of interaction between each pair of factors. The four symbols used are as follows:

- **V**: There is a one-way relationship from factor i to factor j.
- **A**: There is a one-way relationship from factor j to factor i.
- **X**: There is a two-way relationship between factors i and j (i.e., mutual influence).
- **O**: There is no relationship between factors i and j.

This matrix allows for an analysis of the interrelationships and dependencies between the factors, which helps clarify the hierarchical structure and causal relationships within the system of cultural tourism development.

**Table 2. Structural autocorrelation matrix**

14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	
V	V	O	V	O	V	V	V	V	X	X	V	A		The role and relationship of museums with the history and culture of Tehran
V	V	V	V	A	A	O	V	X	A	A	V			The educational and cultural effect of museums in attracting cultural tourists
V	V	O	V	A	A	A	A	V	X	O				The role of museums in introducing Tehran to cultural tourists
V	O	O	O	O	O	V	V	V	X					The role of museums in preserving and maintaining the historical and cultural monuments of Tehran
V	V	O	V	O	A	O	X	V						The connection of museums with the national and cultural identity of Tehran
V	V	O	V	O	A	A	X							The role of museums in attracting cultural tourists
X	O	V	O	A	A	A								The role of museums in the development of cultural identity
X	O	V	O	A	A									Thematic and content diversity of museums
V	V	V	V	O										Architecture and design of museums in attracting the attention of tourists
V	V	O	A											Handicrafts and local arts of Tehran
V	V	X												Promotion of cultural communication between different regions
V	V													Development of organizational culture in society
V														Improving the thinking and mentality of cultural tourists
														Raising the level of public knowledge of cultural values

Third Stage: In this stage, the data from the Structural Self-Interaction Matrix (SSIM) is used to develop a Reachability Matrix.

**Third Stage:** The next step involves the creation of the initial **Reachability Matrix**. To do this, the letters in the self-interaction matrices are first converted into numbers (0 and 1) according to modeling rules. Since 16 questionnaires were completed in this study, there are 16 corresponding reachability

matrices, which need to be combined into a single unified matrix. The diagonal elements of the matrix are assigned a value of 1. In this way, the final initial reachability matrix is obtained.

**Table 3. Final table of overall primary achievement**

	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	
1	1	0	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0		1
1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1		1	2
1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0		0	0	3
1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1		0	1	1	4
1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1		1	1	1	1	5
1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1		0	0	0	1	0	6
1	0	1	0	0	0	0		1	1	0	1	0	0	0	7
1	0	1	0	0	0		1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	8
1	1	1	1	0		1	1	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	9
1	1	0	0		0	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	10
1	1	1		1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	11
1	1		1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	12
1		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	13
	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	14

**Fourth Stage: Final Reachability Matrix:** In this step, internal consistency among the factors must be established. In the table below, the cells marked with an asterisk (\*) indicate that they were initially zero in the reachability matrix but were updated to one after achieving consistency.

**Table 4. Table of final Reachability matrix and influence-dependence analysis**

Influence power	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	
14	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
14	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2
13	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	3
13	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	4
14	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	5
12	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	6
12	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	7
10	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	0	8
14	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	9
12	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	10
9	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	11
7	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	12
4	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	13
7	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	14
	14	13	13	12	9	5	14	14	11	11	7	12	11	9	degree of dependence

**Fifth Stage: Determining the Levels of Variables:** In this step, the variables of the model are categorized according to the prescribed guidelines. To determine the level and priority of each variable, the reachability set and antecedent set for each factor are identified. The reachability set of a factor includes the factors that can be reached through it, while the antecedent set includes the factors that can lead to it. This process is carried out using the reachability matrix. After determining the reachability and antecedent sets for each factor, the common elements in both sets are identified. Once these sets are determined, the next step is to assign levels to the factors. The level of a factor indicates whether it influences other factors or is influenced by them. Factors at the highest level (Level 1) are influenced by other factors but do not influence any others. The factor at the first level is the one where the reachability set and the common elements are completely identical. After identifying this factor or factors, they are removed from the table, and the next level is formed with the remaining factors. At Level 2, these factors influence those at Level 1, while themselves being influenced by factors at Level 3. This process continues until all factors have been assigned a level.

**Table 5. Determining the levels of variables**

level	Share	output (effectiveness)	Input (effectiveness)	Criteria
1	1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,11,12,13,14,	1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,11,12,13,14,	1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11,12,13,14,	7
1	2,3,5,6,7,8,11,12,13,14,	2,3,5,6,7,8,11,12,13,14,	1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11,12,13,14,	8
1	3,5,6,7,8,12,14,	3,5,6,7,8,12,14,	1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11,12,13,14,	14
2	13,	13,	1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11,12,13,	13
3	1,2,3,5,6,10,11,12,	1,2,3,5,6,10,11,12,	1,2,3,5,6,9,10,11,12,	10
3	2,3,10,11,12,	2,3,10,11,12,	1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11,12,	11
3	10,11,12,	10,11,12,	1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11,12,14,	12
4	1,2,3,4,5,6,9,	1,2,3,4,5,6,9,	1,2,3,4,5,6,7,9,10,	1
4	1,2,3,4,5,6,9,	1,2,3,4,5,6,9,	1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11,	2
4	1,2,3,4,5,6,	1,2,3,4,5,6,	1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11,14,	3
4	1,2,3,4,5,6,9,	1,2,3,4,5,6,9,	1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,14,	5
4	1,2,3,5,6,	1,2,3,5,6,	1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,14,	6
5	4,9,	4,9,	1,2,3,4,5,7,9,	4
5	4,9,	4,9,	1,2,4,5,9,	9

In the final model of the research, the levels are determined as follows:

**Level 1:** The role of museums in the development of cultural identity, the thematic and content diversity of museums, and raising public awareness of cultural values.

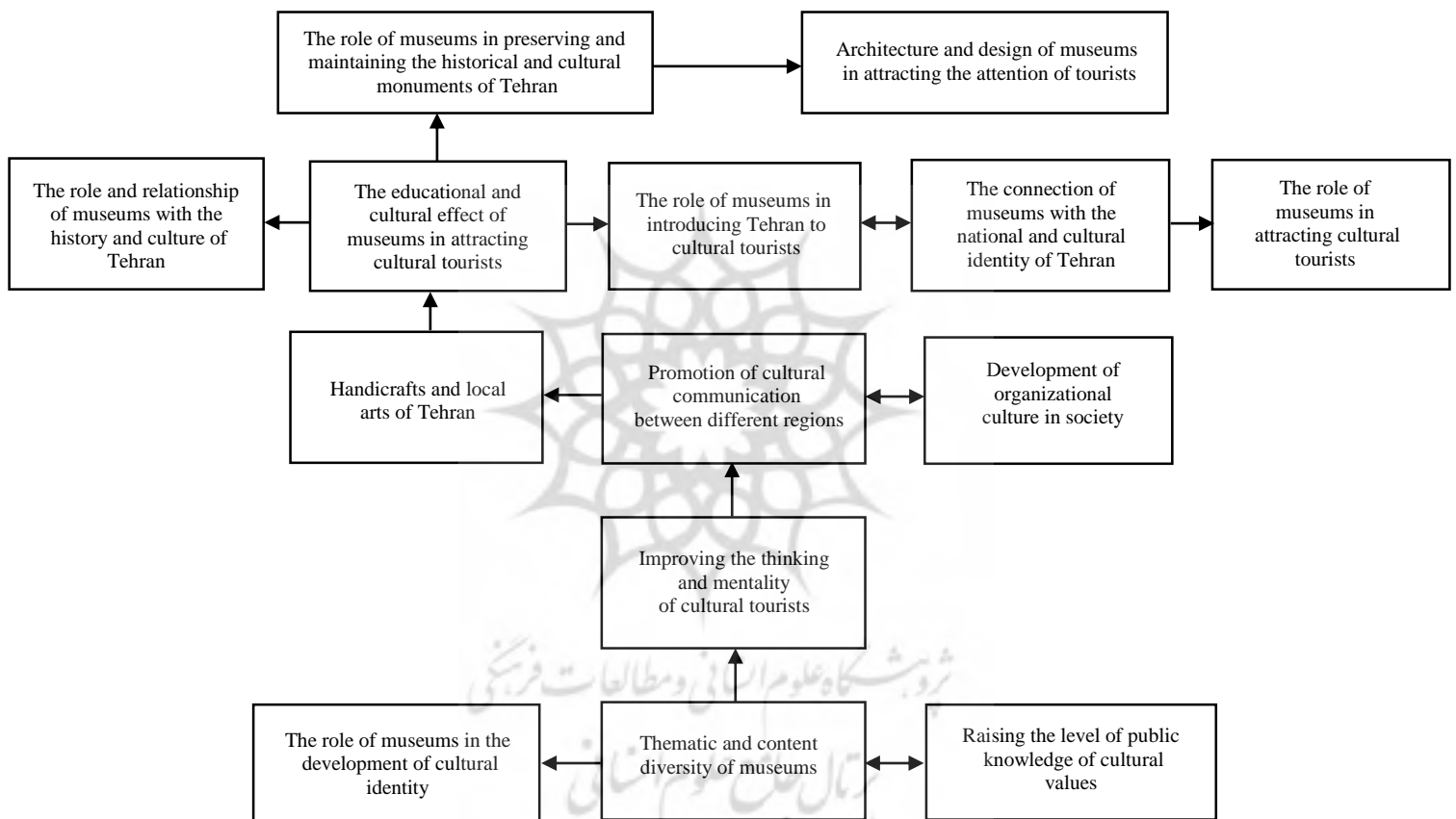
**Level 2:** Enhancing the thinking and mindset of cultural tourists.

**Level 3:** Handicrafts and local arts of Tehran, promoting cultural communication between different regions, and developing organizational culture in society.

**Level 4:** The role and connection of museums with the history and culture of Tehran, the educational and cultural impact of museums in attracting cultural tourists, the role of museums in introducing Tehran to cultural tourists, and the connection of museums with the national and cultural identity of Tehran.

**Level 5:** The role of museums in preserving and maintaining the historical and cultural heritage of Tehran, and the architecture and design of museums in attracting tourists.

In the next step, based on the determined levels and the final reachability matrix, the model is constructed. This model is presented in Figure 1.



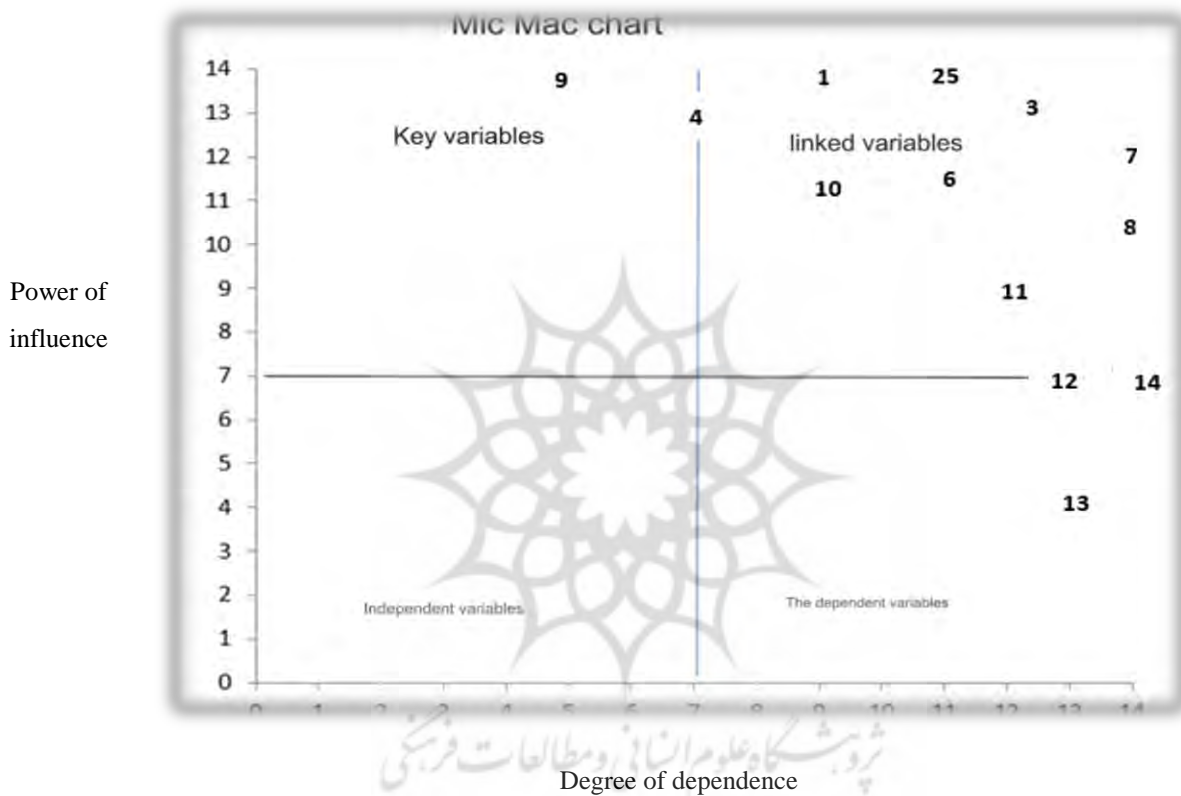
**Figure 1. Investigating Contributory Factors in the Development of Tehran Cultural Tourism with Emphasis on the Role of Museums**

Finally, the Influence-Dependence Diagram is drawn based on the final reachability matrix and the sum of the rows and columns for each factor, as shown in Diagram 1. The row sum values in the final reachability matrix for each element represent the degree of influence, while the column sum values represent the degree of dependence. Factors positioned at lower levels of the model, due to their higher driving power, are considered driving factors, while those positioned at higher levels, due to their

dependence on the driving factors, are considered dependent factors. Based on their influence and dependence power, four groups of elements can be identified:

1. **Autonomous:** Factors with both low influence and low dependence.
2. **Dependent:** Factors with low influence but high dependence.
3. **Linking (Connected):** Factors with both high influence and high dependence.

**Independent:** Factors with high influence but low dependence.



**Diagram 1. Influence – Dependency**

According to Diagram 1, the factors "The role of museums in preserving and maintaining the historical and cultural heritage of Tehran" and "The architecture and design of museums in attracting tourists" have high influence and low dependence. On the other hand, the factors "The role and connection of museums with the history and culture of Tehran," "The educational and cultural impact of museums in attracting cultural tourists," "The role of museums in introducing Tehran to cultural tourists," "The connection of museums with the national and cultural identity of Tehran," "The role of museums in attracting cultural tourists," "The role of museums in developing cultural identity," "The thematic and content diversity of museums," "Handicrafts and local arts of Tehran," "Promoting cultural

communication between different regions," "Developing organizational culture in society," and "Raising public awareness of cultural values" all exhibit both high influence and high dependence. Lastly, the factor "Enhancing the thinking and mindset of cultural tourists" shows low influence and high dependence..

### Results/Discussion/Conclusion

In the final research model, the levels of the model are specified as follows:

- **Level 1:** The role of museums in the development of cultural identity, thematic and content diversity of museums, raising the level of public awareness of cultural values.
- **Level 2:** Improving the thinking and mentality of cultural tourists.
- **Level 3:** Handicrafts and local arts of Tehran, promotion of cultural communication between different regions, development of organizational culture in society.
- **Level 4:** The role and connection of museums with the history and culture of Tehran, the educational and cultural effect of museums in attracting cultural tourists, the role of museums in introducing the city of Tehran to cultural tourists, the connection of museums with the national and cultural identity of Tehran, the role of museums in the development of cultural identity.
- **Level 5:** The role of museums in preserving and maintaining the historical and cultural monuments of Tehran, the architecture and design of museums in attracting tourists.

According to the influence-dependence diagram, the factors "The role of museums in preserving and maintaining the historical and cultural monuments of Tehran" and "The architecture and design of museums in attracting the attention of tourists" have high influence power and low dependence. On the other hand, the factors "The role and connection of museums with the history and culture of Tehran," "The educational and cultural effect of museums in attracting cultural tourists," "The role of museums in introducing the city of Tehran to cultural tourists," "The connection of museums with the national and cultural identity of Tehran," "The role of museums in attracting cultural tourists," "The role of museums in developing cultural identity," "The thematic and content diversity of museums," "Handicrafts and local arts of Tehran," "Promoting cultural communication between different regions," "Developing organizational culture in society," and "Raising public awareness of cultural values" have both high influence and high dependence. The factor "Enhancing the thinking and mindset of cultural tourists" has low influence power and high dependence.

Based on the above findings, it can be concluded that Travel, beyond being a source of fun and entertainment, has become a powerful tool for learning about people's lives, the world around them, and enriching one's vision and attitude. Culture is an irreplaceable attraction in the tourism industry, acting as a factor that attracts tourists, ensuring the stability and sustainability of the social system, and playing

a key role in the development of the socio-cultural dimensions of societies. Among different types of travel, cultural tourism plays a central role in the development and sustainability of societies and is known as a driving force in global development. In fact, culture and tourism share a two-way and complementary relationship, and museums are the pillars of cultural tourism, playing an essential role in its development throughout history as the keepers of cultural treasures.

The findings of this research show that the role of museums in preserving the historical and cultural monuments of Tehran, as well as the architecture and design of museums, have a high influence on attracting the attention of tourists. As custodians of history and culture, these cultural institutions play a central role in Tehran's national and cultural identity and promote public knowledge and awareness. By providing diverse educational and cultural programs, museums play a key role in attracting cultural tourists and introducing Tehran as an attractive destination for cultural tourism. Thematic and content diversity, unique architecture and design, and the display of handicrafts and local arts create a rich and memorable experience for tourists. Cultural connections between different regions are strengthened through museums, and organizational culture in society is promoted by fostering cultural values.

In this model, museums are considered the core, whose visits enhance the thinking and mindset of cultural tourists and raise the public's awareness of cultural values. Today, museums attract a large number of visitors and have become one of the main pillars of the tourism industry and a significant economic factor in every country. The existence of museums, which restore and preserve cultural artifacts left by Iranian civilizations and ethnic groups, not only strengthens the national and cultural identity of society members but also ensures the survival of Iranian culture for current and future generations. Visiting museums allows individuals to understand how culture is transmitted from the past to the future, observe cultural adaptation across societies, and witness the formation of new civilizations. It also gives them the opportunity to plan for the cultural awareness that arises from museum visits to build a new cultural foundation based on achievements and values.

In general, museums, as cultural centers, play an essential role in the identity, development, and dynamism of the city of Tehran. Given the importance of these institutions, effective steps must be taken to improve the quality of services, expand thematic and content diversity, and increase the attractiveness of museums for tourists.

Based on the significance of these cultural institutions, suggestions for improving Iran's tourism are as follows:

- Strengthening and developing the infrastructure of museums by allocating sufficient funds to modernize, equip, and improve museums, while incorporating new technologies to provide better services to visitors.
- Training and enhancing the knowledge and skills of museum staff.



- Expanding thematic and content diversity, including enriching existing collections, and employing creative and innovative methods to present content, which can attract more tourists.
- Utilizing effective advertising and marketing strategies to introduce museums, promoting museum visitation culture by offering discounts and benefits, and using the media to enhance awareness about museums.
- Encouraging collaboration and synergy among scientists, tourism industry professionals, and government officials to achieve these goals.

## References

- Abbaszadeh, M., & Isham, M. (2017). Definition of the historical, cultural and tourism axis in the ancient context of Urmia city (case study: Mehdi-ul-Ghadam neighborhood). *Quarterly Journal of Urban Studies*, 4, 114-97. [magiran.com/p1786746](http://magiran.com/p1786746) [In Persian]
- Adam, D., Kuhn, R., & Fu, S. (2018). Cultural Tourism in a Global Economy: The Search for Local Authenticity. *Bop Consulting*.
- Alobiedat, A. A. (2018). Heritage transformation and the sociocultural impact of tourism in Umm Qais. *Journal of Tourism and Cultural Change*, 16(1), 22-40. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14766825.2016.1199556>
- Baquero, A., & Rivelles, R. (2020). Talaiotic cultural heritage as a tourism resource in the Balearic Islands. *Journal of Gastronomy Hospitality and Travel*, 3(1), 64-70. <https://doi.org/10.33083/joghat.2020.31>
- Basouli, M. (2020). Interaction effect of Cultural Globalization and Cultural Tourism. *Tourism of Culture*, 1(1), 23-36. <https://doi.org/10.22034/jct.2020.110919>
- Bonilla Sánchez, E. (2022). Museos históricos gestionados por la Comunidad de Madrid. Experiencias, recourses iniciativas para la interpretación del patrimonio cultural. *Educación, interpretación del patrimonio y turismo: el patrimonio como recurso didáctico*, 183-211.
- Burksiene, V., Dvorak, J., & Valutiene, L. (2022). Quality Management in the Museums of Lithuania. *Cult. Manag. Sci. Educ.*, 6, 9–20. <https://doi.org/10.30819/cmse.6-2.01>
- Calvi, L., & Moretti, S. (2020). Future of cultural tourism for urban and regional destinations. Deliverable D2.2 of the SmartCulTour ‘Horizon 2020’ project (grant agreement number 870708). <http://www.smartcultour.eu/deliverables/>
- Ghasemi, Y., Mansouri Moghadam, M., & Mafakheri bashmagh, J. (2020). Tourism and its scientific and cultural encounters with the host community (Case study: Horman region of Kurdistan province). *Sociology of Culture and Art*, 2(1), 152-128.

- Haj Agha Mir, S. M., Reshadatjoo, H., Abtahi, A. A., Salehi Amiri, S. R., Azizabadi Farahani, F. (2022). Explaining the models of cultural tourism development in Iran. *JGS*, 22(66), 411-427. <https://doi.org/10.52547/jgs.22.66.411>
- Hassanvand, N., & Sattari Sarbanqoli, H. (2023). Cultural Differences in Muharram Rituals. *Tourism of Culture*, 4(12), 6-15. <https://doi.org/10.22034/toc.2023.368818.1101> [In Persian]
- Herman, G. V., Caciora, T., Grama, V., Baias, S., Beatón, M. O. R., Green, I., ... & Gozner, M. (2023). Tourist Perception Of The “Night Of The Museums” Event. Case Study in Oradea Municipality, Romania. *Geojournal Of Tourism And Geosites*, 47(2), 486-492. <https://doi.org/10.30892/Gtg.47215-1047>
- Hojjati, N., Zabihi, H., & Zarabadi, Z. S. S. (2023). Application of Numerical Taxonomy and Cluster Analysis in Ranking the Development Level of Tehran Districts Based on Cultural Tourism. *Tourism of Culture*, 4(13), 34-45. <https://doi.org/10.22034/toc.2023.392280.1115>
- Ibrahim, A. H., & Adamu, H. I. (2020). Characterization and spatial distribution of ethno-cultural tourism resources in Kaduna state, Nigeria. *FUDMA Journal of Sciences*, 4(4), 126-143. <https://doi.org/10.33003/fjs-2020-0404-467>
- Kannike, A., Bardone, E., Runnel, P., & Leivategija, K. (2021). Food heritage as a resource for museum cooperation: lessons from a project at the Estonian National Museum. *Museum Management and Curatorship*, 36(3), 303-317. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09647775.2021.1914137>
- Kontogeorgis, G., & Varotsis, N. (2022). Cultural Tourism in Developed Island Tourist Destinations: The Development of an Alternative Tourism Model in Corfu. *Journal of Environmental Management & Tourism*, 13(2), 456-465. <https://www.ceeol.com/search/article-detail?id=1087264>
- Kusbiantoro, K., Gunawan, I. V., Oktavia, T., & Yuwono, A. A. (2022). Study of preferential display method of a cultural museum in Bandung, Indonesia. *ARTEKS: Jurnal Teknik Arsitektur*, 7(3), 399-408. <https://doi.org/10.30822/arteks.v7i3.1878>
- López Ronco, M., Ángeles, Fernández-Laso, M. C., & Vacas Guerrero, T. (2023). Didactics in Museums for Higher Education: The Tourist-Cultural Project “Five Museums Another Madrid”. *Journal of Tourism and Heritage Research*, 6(3), 81-99. <https://www.jthr.es/index.php/journal/article/view/495>.
- Mai, N. T. T., Tuan, H. T., Tien, N. H., Van Tho, D., Trang, N. T. T., & Mai, N. P. (2023). Cultural tourism resources: State policy and solutions for SMEs in tourism industry. *International Journal of Entrepreneurship and Small Business*. <https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Hoang-Tien-Nguyen-2/publication/372160280>

- Manola, M. (2022). Contribution of the Venetian Monuments of Rhodes to cultural tourism and the local development of the island. *Open Journal for Research in Economics*, 5(2). <https://doi.org/10.32591/coas.ojre.0502.02035m>
- Matteucci, X., & Zumbusch, J. V. (2020). Theoretical framework for cultural tourism in urban and regional destinations. <http://www.smartcultour.eu/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/D2.1-Theoretical-framework-for-cultural-tourism-in-urban-and-regional-destinations.pdf>.
- Matteucci, X., Koensb, K., Calvic, L., & Moretti, S. (2022). Envisioning the futures of cultural tourism. *Futures*, 142, 10301. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.futures.2022.103013>
- Mir Sondosi, S. M.. (2020). Factors affecting cultural standardization from the perspective of the Holy Quran.Quranic Doctrines, 17(32), 95-118. [https://qd.razavi.ac.ir/article\\_1085.html?lang=en](https://qd.razavi.ac.ir/article_1085.html?lang=en)
- Modabber Khaknezhad, A., Hosseinzadeh Dalir, K., & Ezzatpanah, B. (2022). Analysis of planning and policy-making for development of historical-cultural tourism in Iran (case study: Tabriz metropolis). *Journal of Tourism Planning and Development*, 10(39), 197-222. <https://doi.org/10.22080/jtpd.2022.19965.3391>
- Mohammad Esmail, E. (2022). Culture and its impact on the tourism industry. *Management Science Research Quarterly*, 4(13). [www.jomsr.ir](http://www.jomsr.ir) [In Persian]
- Mohseni, L. (2014). *The role of holding festivals in attracting tourism in Bamyan region*. Master's thesis of tourism planning geography, University of Tehran.
- Morovati Sharifabadi, A., & Asadian Ardakani, F. A. (2014). Model for Health Tourism Development Using Fuzzy TOPSIS and Interpretive Structural Modeling in Yazd Province. *JHA*; 17(55), 73-88. <http://jha.iuums.ac.ir/article-1-1458-en.html>
- Nedae Tousi, S., & FarkhondehKish, A. (2020). Spatial Requirements for the Development of Creative and Competitive Cultural-Tourism Clusters (media cities); a case study for Tehran Metropolitan Area. *Journal of Tourism Planning and Development*, 8(31), 55-72. <https://doi.org/10.22080/jtpd.2020.16647.3078>
- Penacho, M., Lozano, D., & Jones, A. (2023). Sustainable Cultural Tourism awareness toolkit. Deliverable D8.2 of the Horizon 2020 project SmartCulTour (GA number 870708). <http://www.smartcultour.eu/deliverables>
- Porfaraj, A., & Ahmadi, S. (2023). The effect of perceived authenticity on tourists' satisfaction and intention to revisit (case study: Kurd House Anthropology Museum, Sanandaj). *Tourism Social Studies*, 24(11), 1-34. <https://doi.org/10.61186/journalitor.36228.11.24.1>
- Richards, G. (2018). Cultural tourism: A review of recent research and trends. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management*, 36, 12-21. <http://doi.org/10.1016/j.jhtm.2018.03.005>

- Rokneddin Eftekari, A., Imani Taeibi, L., & Farhadi Uonaki, M. (2021). The Influential Factors in Experience-Based Tourism in Nomadic Areas (Case Study: Qashqai Tribes). *Journal of Rural Research*, 11(4), 712-727. <https://doi.org/10.22059/jrur.2019.284926.1376> [In Persian]
- Sanagustín-Fons, M. V., Tobar-Pesántez, L. B., & Ravina-Ripoll, R. (2020). Happiness and cultural tourism: The perspective of civil participation. *Sustainability*, 12(8), 3465. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su12083465>
- Shalbafiyani, A. A., Khazaei, F., Abdoli, M., & Rajabi, N. (2021). Identifying and prioritizing the effective components in increasing the social participation of the host community in the protection of the UNESCO World Heritage (case study: World Heritage of Yazd Province). *Tourism social studies*, 9(18). <https://doi.org/10.52547/journalitor.36161.9.18.0>
- Soltanynezhad, M., & Shahriyari, S. (2023). Communication with an Emphasis on Tourism Development (Case study: Indigenous Kong University). *Rasaneh*, 34(2), 197-223. <https://doi.org/10.22034/bmsp.2022.317555.1657>
- Šveb Dragija, M., & Jelinčić, D. A. (2022). Can museums help visitors thrive? Review of studies on psychological wellbeing in museums. *Behavioral Sciences*, 12(11), 458. <https://doi.org/10.3390/bs12110458>
- Torabi Farsani, N., Hekmat, M., Sadeghi Shahdani, H., & Davoudian Dehkordi, A. (2023). Clarifying the role of Participation of NGOs and Museums in the Process of Promoting Sustainable Tourism. *Tourism Management Studies*, 18(63), 7-40. <https://doi.org/10.22054/tms.2023.75004.2859>
- Wang, Z., & Meng, J. (2023). Dialogues with cultural heritage via museum digitalisation: developing a model of visitors' cognitive identity, technological agent, cultural symbolism, and public engagement. *Museum Management and Curatorship*, 39(6), 810-833. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09647775.2023.2269164>
- Weber, K. E. (2022). The Role of Museums in Educational Pedagogy and Community Engagement. [https://via.library.depaul.edu/soe\\_etd/254](https://via.library.depaul.edu/soe_etd/254)

---

#### COPYRIGHTS

©2023 by the authors. Published by University of Science and Culture. This article is an open access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International (CC BY 4.0) <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>

---

