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Wellness Tourism Pattern with Socio-Cultural Approach to Improve Tourist's Health in Baraghan Alborz Village

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Abstract

Wellness tourism represents the intersection of a powerful lifestyle trend and a growing global industry. The purpose of this study is to design a pattern of wellness tourism with socio-cultural approach to improve the tourist's health in (Baraghan Alborz village). In order to conduct the research, a Mixed Method has been used. The statistical population includes experts in the fields of tourism, health tourism, spiritual health, psychoanalysts and psychologists (qualitative part) and in the quantitative part, tourists of Baraghan Alborz village period of July to August 2024 are considered. The size of the sample was determined in the qualitative method by the logical method of theoretical and judgmental sampling and until the theoretical saturation was reached, a total of 12 people, and in the quantitative part, 384 tourists (n = 384) were surveyed. For sampling, random sampling method was used. In the qualitative section using semi-structured interviews and Qualitative data coding was done in order to identify the components of wellness tourism in improving the health of tourists in Baraghan Alborz village, by theme analysis method. The questionnaire data were analyzed using factor analysis techniques with SPSS 26 software to assess the impact of the identified components. The findings indicate that the model of wellness tourism in improving the health of tourists, consists of 11 sub-themes, quality management of the wellness tourism destination, the necessity of linking science with wellness tourism, nature, physical dimension, mental dimension, social dimension and spiritual dimension, professional and expert team work, training and empowerment, nostalgia and memory-making, the characteristics of the unique wellness tourism model. Additionally, 7 main categories including destination management, the necessity of linking science with wellness tourism, nature, physical dimension, mental dimension, social dimension and spiritual dimension, which have the greatest impact in improving the health of tourists in Baraghan village, has been achieved. The development of wellness tourism, while introducing Baraghan as a wellness tourism destination, not only helps to improve the health of the community and tourists (which is one of the basic pillars of a healthy society), but also can create a sustainable livelihood for local communities and is focused on the support and protection of natural, cultural and historical resources. By increasing the participation of local people in related activities and businesses, while expanding employment, it brought countless economic benefits to the tourist destination and ultimately country.

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Introduction

In recent decades, tourism has become one of the most important and essential industries in the world. The rapid development and growth of tourism, along with increased disposable income, have led individuals to spend more on travel and tourism programs (Lopes & Rodríguez-López, 2022). In the present era, the increasing expansion of technology and the hurried efforts toward industrialization and rapid urbanization, particularly in developing countries, bring along various challenges. The current century, rooted in technology and industry, has been characterized as an age of anxiety, stress, and neurological disorders, consistently impacting human health and giving rise to new social, health, and medical issues.

It is evident that a society thrives and flourishes when its citizens enjoy optimal physical and mental health (Zabihzadeh & Afshar, 2015). The continuous advancement of technology, the expansion of social networks, and urban life have accelerated the pace of life and increased daily pressures, posing significant threats to human health and driving individuals further away from nature, leading to escapism, alienation from reality, and ultimately to routine and depression (Liu et al., 2023).

For a long time, humanity has been grappling with various crises such as natural disasters, infectious diseases, economic recession, poverty, hunger, lack of quality of life, and deteriorating living standards, resulting in a decline in happiness and satisfaction with life. Consequently, there is a constant search for ways to escape this situation and achieve a desirable quality of life, happiness, and satisfaction (Konkol, 2012). People are in pursuit of reintroducing happiness and well-being into their lives, embracing their existence and life as it is, achieving peace and unity within themselves, and taking significant steps towards their growth and development.

As a result, wellness tourism has emerged as an alternative market and is rapidly growing. This innovative approach to tourism, by reducing stress and restoring individuals' physical and mental health, can enhance their sense of happiness (Dillette, 2016) and mitigate the negative consequences of certain trips. The reality of most modern travel environments reveals situations that can actually reduce overall health. According to the Global Wellness Institute (GWI), the combination of airport hassles, interruptions in exercise routines, overeating, alcohol consumption, and sun exposure often leaves tourists needing another vacation after their trip.

Consequently, the World Tourism Organization defines wellness tourism as a type of tourism activity aimed at improving and balancing all major areas of human life, including physical, mental, emotional, occupational, intellectual, and spiritual health. The primary motivation for wellness tourists is to engage in preventive and enhancing activities and lifestyle modifications such as fitness, healthy eating, relaxation, and healing therapies (Lopes & López, 2022). By considering health as a continuum ranging from illness to optimal wellness, wellness tourism ensures complete physical, mental, and social

well-being. Notably, in this type of tourism, tourists do not have a specific physical illness but are primarily seeking to benefit from the healing nature of wellness-oriented regions (Global Wellness Institute, 2018).

The village of Barghan, located in Alborz province, is rich in attractions and numerous potentials suitable for the development of wellness tourism. However, there has not been significant, deep, and purposeful attention or planned development of this type of tourism, and the necessary resources and potentials for wellness tourism development have not been utilized. Therefore, to fill this gap, the present study aims to design an optimal model of wellness tourism with a socio-cultural approach to improve the health of tourists in the village of Barghan.

To achieve the main goal of the research, two important questions are addressed:

- What are the components of wellness tourism that enhance the health of tourists in Barghan village?
- To what extent do the components of wellness tourism impact the health of tourists in Barghan village?

Theoretical Concepts of the Research

Definition of Wellness Tourism

Wellness is clearly a complex concept that encompasses elements of lifestyle, physical, mental, and spiritual health, as well as an individual's relationship with themselves, others, and the environment (Smith & Puczkó, 2008). Wellness refers to a state of overall health that includes the mind, spirit, body, and their interactions with the environment. Wellness is not static but rather a continuously evolving phenomenon that impacts daily life (Dillette, 2016).

According to the definition provided by the World Tourism Organization, wellness tourism is a type of tourism activity aimed at improving and balancing all major areas of human life, including physical, mental, emotional, occupational, intellectual, and spiritual aspects. The primary motivation for wellness tourists is to engage in preventive and strengthening activities and lifestyle modifications, such as fitness, healthy eating, relaxation, stress relief, and healing therapies (Lopes & López, 2022). Generally, tourism activities that focus on improving physical and mental health or self-discovery and personal transformation are recognized as wellness tourism (Lee & Kim, 2023).

Wellness tourism is a niche market within the broader tourism sector and has recently experienced significant growth rates, with predictions for continued development (GWI, 2018). In fact, wellness tourism is growing faster than global tourism, which is expected to grow at an annual rate of 7.5% (GWI, 2018). In response to this growth, health and wellness services are currently being offered through various active and passive activities in hotel and resort brands, wellness retreats, and specialized travel packages (Stará & Peterson, 2017).

According to a meta-analysis of studies from ten foreign sources that examined the concept and dimensions of wellness tourism, wellness tourism is divided into seven components (nature, food, relaxation, mental aspect, physical aspect, experience, and spirituality), each consisting of variables dependent on the component concept as follows:

1. Nature Component: Variables include (fresh air, clean water, beautiful scenery, easy access, natural resources, environment, hot springs, mineral springs, marine environment, nature motivation, connection with nature).
2. Food Component: Variables include (healthy food, quality and safety of food).
3. Tranquility Component: Variables include (a safe and relaxing environment, tranquility, and escape from daily life).
4. Mental Dimension Component: Variables include (psychological vitality, control of negative emotions, mind, and body care).
5. Physical Dimension Component: Variables include (high-quality treatment, physical condition improvement, health enhancement, sports and health aspect, body, medical tourism, fitness, massage-physiotherapy, treatment, exercise, longevity, listening to various styles of music at sunset, activating the sense of sight, health improvement, physical and mental readiness, and environmental health).
6. Experience Component: Variables include (authentic yoga experiences, water-focused experiences, self-exploration/education, novelty, improved social relationships, and quality of life).
7. Spirituality Component: Variables include (the search for spirituality, spiritual aspect, spirit, spirituality (yoga), walking with senses, meditation at sunrise, disconnecting from the outside for inner connection, and focusing on weightlessness).

Thus, considering the provided concept of wellness tourism, it can be said that today's world, alongside the development of industrial life and the increase in physical and mental illnesses, needs wellness tourism more than ever (Shahrabi Farahani & Ramezanloo, 2023).

In the figure below, the components of wellness tourism and the variables related to each component are clearly defined.

Indian Ayurvedic practices date back to 5000 B.C., or Egyptian women used cosmetics similar to those sometimes used today around 3000 B.C. The oldest known writings related to Chinese medicine date back to 1000 B.C. Ancient Greek civilizations introduced cold water baths for warriors around 700 B.C., while Persians (600-300 B.C.) previously used steam and clay baths, and Hebrews introduced ritual purification with water through immersion in the Dead Sea around 200 B.C. (Smith & Puczkó, 2008).

The relationship between health and tourism can be traced back hundreds of years, with travelers seeking therapeutic hot springs or tourists heading to the Dead Sea to experience its healing properties (GWI, 2013).

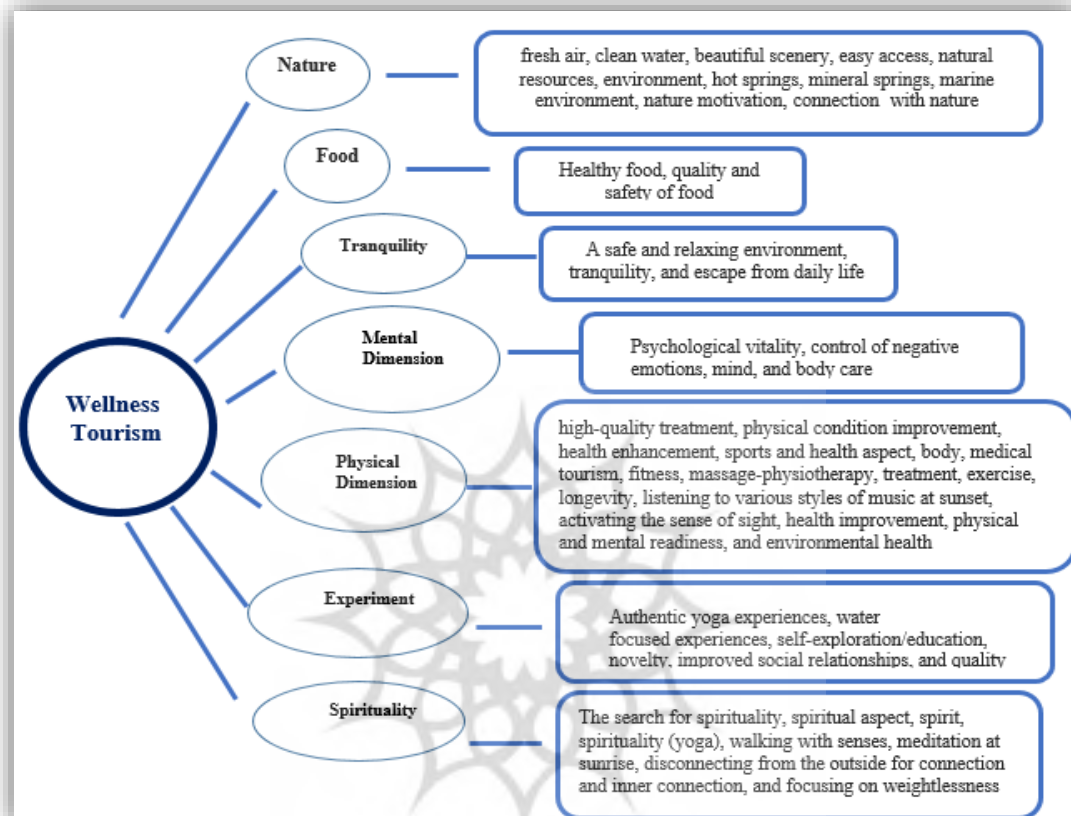


Figure 1. Wellness tourism components and variables related to each component (Shahrabi Farahani and Ramezanloo, 2023)

Tourist's Health

The globally accepted definition of health is one provided by the World Health Organization in 1948, which describes health as a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being and is not merely the absence of disease or infirmity (World Health Organization, 1984). Since 1984, the World Health Organization has expanded its definition to include a convergence of issues related to physical and mental health and broader matters concerning wellness and lifestyle management. Thus, according to the World Health Organization (1984), health is also a state in which an individual or group is capable of realizing aspirations and satisfying needs, as well as adapting to or coping with the environment.

Health is a resource for everyday life, not the objective of living; it is a positive concept that emphasizes social and personal resources, as well as physical abilities (Smith & Puczkó, 2008).

Human health is defined in four dimensions: spiritual health, which is considered the most important aspect of human health, depends on other dimensions of health. The other dimensions include mental health, social health, and physical health. Mental health refers to an individual's focus, calmness in the face of anxiety, role perception, decision-making ability, understanding problems and difficulties, enjoyment of daily activities, ability to cope with challenges, trust and confidence, self-esteem, general happiness, and resilience to stress and discomfort. On the other hand, social health is the ability to effectively and efficiently perform social roles, as well as an individual's assessment and understanding of their functioning in society and the quality of their relationships with others, including close ones and social groups. Physical health emphasizes the physiological well-being of the human body and the absence of physical ailments. The type of activities, mobility, nutrition, and the environment in which a person lives are important elements in ensuring their physical health (Imani Khoshkhoo & Shahabi Farahani, 2022).

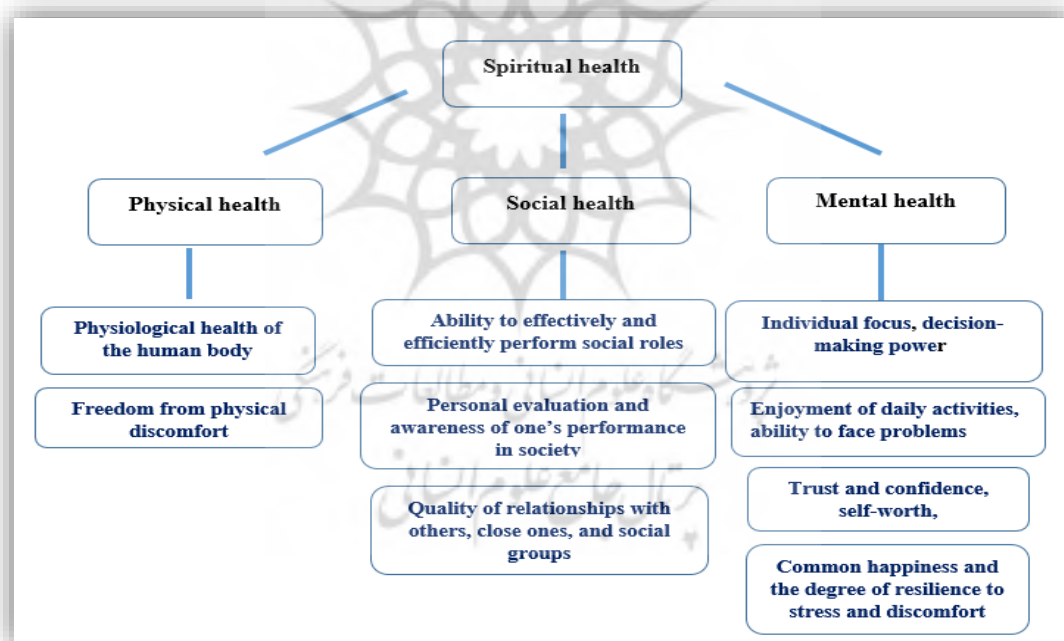


Figure 2. Dimensions of human health (Imani Khushkho & Shahrabi Farahani (2022))

A review of the research literature based on the analysis of important new researches related to the present research is as described in the following table:

Table 1. Research Background - Domestic and Foreign Studies

Row	Authors and The published Year	Article Title	Method	Result
1	Shahrabi Farahani and Ramazanloo, Winter 2023	The Role of Wellness Tourism in the Spiritual Health of Tourists: A Case Study of the Baghestan Recreational Tourism Village	Qualitative	The results of the qualitative content analysis show that positive impacts and individual positive emotions, along with intrinsic motivations, are factors of wellness tourism that ultimately lead to spiritual health over time. Although wellness and travel are inseparable components of physical, spiritual, and mental health, the element of self-awareness and inner peace allows tourists to enjoy and consciously experience travel, leading to health, vitality, and the integration of spiritual health dimensions.
2	Shahrabi Farahani and Ramazanloo, Fall and Winter 2023	Meta-analysis of Researches Conducted in the Field of Wellness Tourism	Qualitative	The results of the meta-analysis indicate that the concept of wellness tourism, across the studies considered, is divided into seven components: nature, food, relaxation, mental aspect, physical aspect, experience, and spirituality, each of which forms dependent variables of the component concept.
3	Hosseini, 2023	Explaining Wellness Tourism and Its Role in Attracting Incoming Tourists to Iran from ECO Member Countries	Mixed	The results showed that experts generally reported the status of wellness tourism as unfavorable. In terms of the status of wellness tourism in the country, the only advantageous element mentioned was the presence of very favorable natural conditions. Additionally, the roles that experts attributed to new technologies included highlighting cultural commonalities, booking services, measuring the status of wellness tourism in the country, aiding destination decision-making for foreign tourists, advertising, creating motivation for tourists, and generating imagery of tourism destinations, as well as information dissemination. The positive role of cultural commonalities and competitive advantage in attracting wellness tourists to the country was also emphasized by experts. Results in the second section showed that among 28 influential components on tourist experience, food quality and service, price, and then health policy in the destination country had the highest impact on wellness tourism experiences.
4	Seyedamiri et al., 2019	Providing a Framework for Identifying and Commercializing Entrepreneurial Opportunities in the Wellness Tourism Industry	Qualitative	Based on the analysis of the data obtained through manual coding, the dimensions and influential components in the development of wellness businesses are categorized into four areas: macro business environment, micro environment of wellness tourism industry, obstacles and challenges of development, and effects and consequences of wellness tourism development. The development strategies of this industry, framed in the context of the identification and commercialization process, serve as the core of the research output model, ranging from market recognition and potentials to knowledge enhancement and commercialization of wellness products and services, each encompassing several actions for sustainable utilization of business opportunities, especially in wellness tourism entrepreneurship.
5	Esfandiari, 2019	Designing a Wellness Tourism Model in Sarab County	Mixed	The findings indicated that among the studied variables, location factors, satisfaction, marketing-price, and quality-facilities had the most significant influence on wellness tourism. Additionally, the findings showed that among the components of wellness tourism, the physical-physiological component ranked highest, followed by individual and interaction components in the second and third ranks, respectively.

Row	Authors and The published Year	Article Title	Method	Result
6	Liu et al., 2023	The Impact of the Wellness Tourism Experience on Tourist Well-being: The Mediating Role of Tourist Satisfaction	Quantitative	The results showed that recreational, aesthetic experiences, and escape from wellness tourism can significantly impact tourists' well-being and enjoyment. Tourist satisfaction, as a mediating variable, can enhance the positive impact of wellness tourism experience on tourists' well-being. Furthermore, gender and age have significant moderating effects on the relationship between wellness tourism, experience, tourist satisfaction, and tourists' happiness and enjoyment. This study enriches recent research in the fields of wellness tourism experience and tourists' happiness and provides a theoretical basis and scientific reference for wellness tourism companies and management.
7	Lee & Kim, 2023	A Study on Market Segmentation According to Wellness Tourism Motivation and Differences in Behavior between Groups - Focusing on Satisfaction, Behavioral Intention, and Flow	Quantitative	Initially, this study extracted seven motivations through literature review and expert discussion: relaxation/healing/escape from daily life, health improvement, novelty, luxury and prestige, self-exploration/education, nature-friendly motivation, and enhancing social relationships. Then, to extract distinctive features through motivation concerning market segmentation, differences in satisfaction, behavioral intention, and flow of wellness tourism participants were analyzed. This study highlights the necessity of understanding distinct strategies for wellness tourism motivation by developing a wellness tourism motivation scale and studying market segmentation, providing practical concepts based on individual group characteristics.
8	Liao et al., 2023	Dimension of the Health Benefits of Wellness Tourism: A Review	Qualitative	The results showed four main dimensions: physical readiness, mental readiness, quality of life (QOL), and environmental health; however, these dimensions require further investigation. The physiological health benefits can also be demonstrated through future testing, which can further focus on empirical research regarding psychological benefits and their overall impact on quality of life. This study contributes to the current literature by providing new theoretical foundations and subsequently helping practitioners better understand customers and effectively communicate marketing messages to tourists.
9	Dini & Pencarelli, 2021	Wellness Tourism and the Components of Its Offer System: A Holistic Perspective	Qualitative	Wellness tourism, as a broad multidimensional concept, consists of ten different components: hot springs, mineral springs, medical tourism, body and mind care, food and beverage quality, exercise, nature and environment, culture, spirituality, and events. Each of these categories may represent a tourism offer targeted at specific market segments but may also be one of several components in an integrated offering of tourism products.
10	Dillette et al., 2020	Dimension of Holistic Wellness as a Result of International Wellness Tourism Experiences	Qualitative	The findings indicate that to create a holistic and communal sense of health for travelers, four main strategies based on the specified dimensions should be prioritized for the sustainable development of the wellness tourism industry, namely body, mind, spirit, and environment. Consequently, this study provides new insights for wellness tourism companies in gathering ideas for building relationships with employees, culinary experiences, personal growth, self-improvement, and community development.

Research methodology

The research method of the present study is of a mixed nature, employing both qualitative and quantitative approaches. This research aims to present a model of wellness tourism with a socio-cultural perspective, under which it identifies the components of wellness tourism in enhancing the health of tourists in the village of Baraghan, and Measuring and evaluating the impact of wellness tourism components on enhancing the health of tourists in the village of Baraghan.

In this study, the research onion model (Saunders et al., 2009) is used for the research methodology.

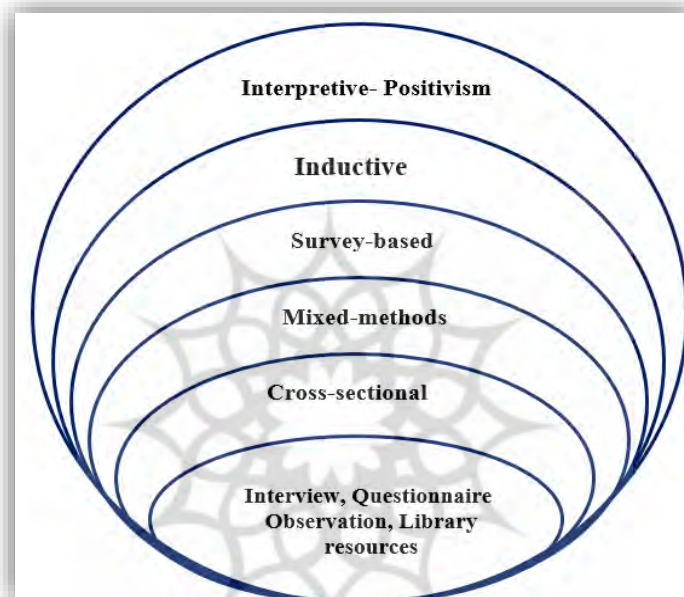


Figure 3. Research Onion Model

Research paradigms are based on the interpretivist perspective, where reality is contingent upon human experience and interpretation. According to the research onion model, the research approach is inductive, moving from a specific sample to a general statement (part to whole). This study employs an inductive approach, utilizing expert opinions to identify themes of wellness tourism in enhancing the health of tourists and ultimately presenting a wellness tourism model based on the final output. Given that this research uses questions and interviews for data collection, its strategy is survey-based. The current research is descriptive-analytical in terms of execution method. Descriptive research involves collecting information to test hypotheses or answer questions related to the current state of the study topic (Khaki, 2013). Since this research describes the characteristics, attitudes, beliefs, thoughts, and behaviors of individuals in a community at a specific time during the spring and summer of 2024, it is

cross-sectional in terms of time. For gathering qualitative information, library and documentary studies, as well as focused interviews, are used, while the quantitative section employs a questionnaire

In the qualitative section, interviews were conducted with experts in the fields of tourism, health tourism, spiritual health, psychoanalysts, and psychologists. The interview questions were semi-structured, and a total of 12 individuals were interviewed until theoretical saturation was reached.

The quantitative statistical population consists of tourists who have traveled to the village of Baraghan and were selected through convenience sampling. In this study, for sample selection, based on received statistics, since the number of incoming tourists to Barghan is 8,000, the population is $N=8000$ and the sample size is approximately $s=367 \approx 370$. The face validity method was used for the validity of the data collection tool and the reliability of the questionnaire was determined using Cronbach's alpha, which is at an acceptable level (0.786).

Data Analysis Method

Qualitative Data Analysis

In analyzing the qualitative data of the research, thematic analysis was utilized. Thematic analysis is well-suited for identifying patterns in qualitative data. Themes are the most valuable units to consider in the analysis, representing specific meanings derived from a word, sentence, or paragraph. In this analytical method, the researcher carefully examines, identifies, records, categorizes, and interprets themes that are valuable for describing the phenomenon under study and are significant for answering the research questions, ultimately yielding several meaningful patterns. Therefore, coding is a prerequisite for forming and extracting themes from speech or text. The steps of thematic analysis and data coding are as follows:

1. **Familiarization with the data:** Before beginning to analyze individual units of analysis (i.e., interviews), it is crucial to have an overall view of all the collected data. This step includes transcribing audio, reading the text, making initial notes, and generally reviewing the data to understand the content of the work.
2. **Initial coding:** This step involves creating initial codes. Coding refers to highlighting sections of the interview text (phrases or sentences) and providing brief labels or codes to describe their content.
3. **Creating codes:** In this stage, the initial codes created are reviewed, and different codes are categorized into themes or subjects. By analyzing the initial codes, some codes convert into main themes, while others form sub-themes, and the remaining codes are discarded. Some codes may not belong to any main or sub-theme, and ultimately, a miscellaneous theme is created for these codes.
4. **Defining and naming themes:** This stage begins when a suitable list of themes is available. The presented themes are then defined and reviewed again. Through definition and re-evaluation, the

nature of what the themes refer to and which aspect of the data each theme encompasses is clarified (Braun et al., 2021).

Quantitative Data Analysis

In the quantitative section and analysis of the research data, exploratory factor analysis was employed because no hypotheses were used in this research, and its objectives align with answering the main and sub-questions of the study. In exploratory factor analysis, the researcher seeks to examine empirical data to discover and identify the main factors of the subject in question and the relationships among them. If properly and appropriately applied, exploratory factor analysis can assist researchers in evaluating the relationships between variables and achieving the construct validity of indicator scores. In this process, the number of variables is reduced, and various categories of variables or factors are created, which are then organized into appropriate dimensions (factors) using software. Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) is a statistical method used to identify the underlying categories of a set of items. In this method, based on the correlation among items, various clusters are created, each referred to as a factor. Thus, from a large and scattered set of items, a few limited and specific factors or clusters can be identified (Habibi & Kalahi, 2022). In this research, factor analysis of the principal components was performed using SPSS version 26 on the data collected from tourists.

Study Scope

The geographical scope of the study is the Barghan district. The Barghan district, located in the Savojbolagh County, has a natural structure and notable features, including gardens, valleys, open and green spaces, streams, and rivers, with a suitable mountainous climate for winter and summer recreation, recognized as one of the rural tourism areas in Alborz province. This district is situated between 49 degrees and 5 minutes longitude and 36 degrees and 57 minutes latitude. The Barghan district, centered in the village of Barghan, comprises 17 villages, with the village of Karyshan being uninhabited. This district is bordered by the Alborz mountain range and the Taleqan County to the north, Karaj County to the west, Kamalabad to the south, and Savojbolagh to the east, with a population of 3,949 and 1,484 households (Statistical Center of Iran). A significant portion of the village's inhabitants are long-time locals who speak Tati; however, this language is fading with the arrival of non-local migrants (Mehrvar, 2008).

One of the regions in Iran that possesses diverse and unique potentials in the field of wellness tourism, which can significantly impact increasing Alborz province's share of Iran's tourism industry revenue, is the tourist village of Barghan, which has been selected as the fourteenth best tourism destination in the country based on four indicators: attractions, infrastructure, tourism development, and sustainability. The wellness tourism potentials in this village include historical sites and attractions such

as (the Barmaleh Tekiyeh or the Great Hosseiniyeh, the Jameh Mosque of Barghan, the historical bridge of Barghan, the Barghan square, the Kash Kola hill, the Chinar tree of the Barghan mosque, the ancient tree of the Barghan mosque, the Narvan Darbikh, the shrine of the forty girls of Barghan or Pir Sepidark (the old tree of Sepidark), the path to the village of Barghan, and the pristine and beautiful nature of Barghan. Surrounding attractions of the village of Barghan include the villages of Sorheh, Aghasht, Kordan, Senj, Atashgah, and the chain waterfalls of Jozerod.

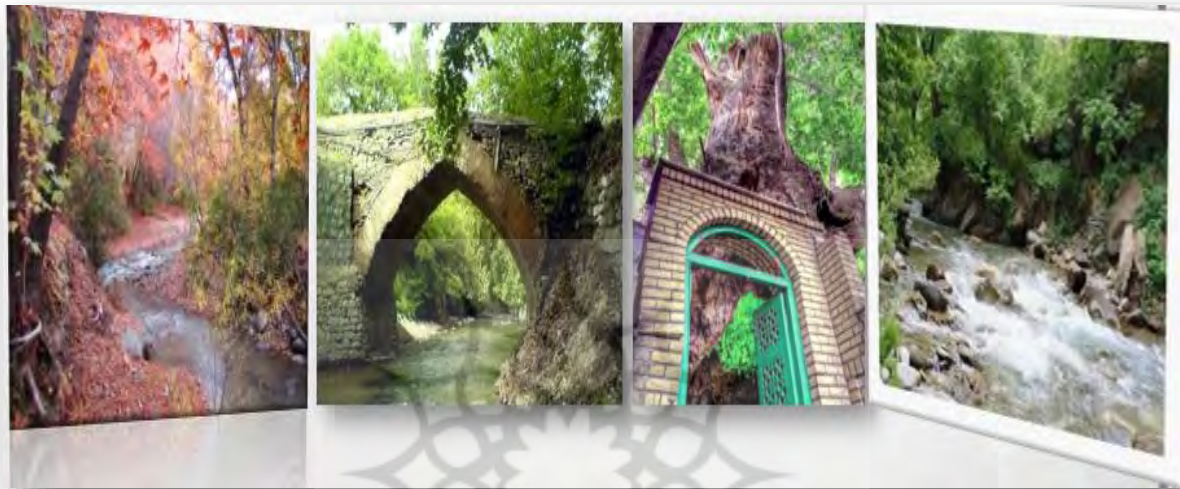


Figure 4. Part of the beauties of Baraghan (Source: Researcher)

Findings and Pattern

After analyzing all interviews and identifying semantic units, themes were extracted, and axial codes and categories were formed. In this stage, 381 open codes were identified, which were initially refined to 301 and then reduced to 279 open codes after further data review. The total of these 279 open codes was organized into 11 themes along with axial codes in response to the first question and objective of the research, as detailed in the following table.

Each of these themes consists of one or more concepts that represent the "characteristics," "conditions," or "status" of the subject in question, whether existing or desired. To achieve the objective and answer the second research question, a questionnaire was developed based on these themes to assess the impact of these themes from the perspective of tourists in the village of Baraghan, Alborz, during the period from June to August 2024. After collecting the questionnaire data and entering it into SPSS version 26, relevant tests for exploratory factor analysis were conducted to determine the components that have the greatest impact on improving the health of tourists in the Barghān village.

In the first step of factor analysis, the sample adequacy test and Bartlett's test were used.

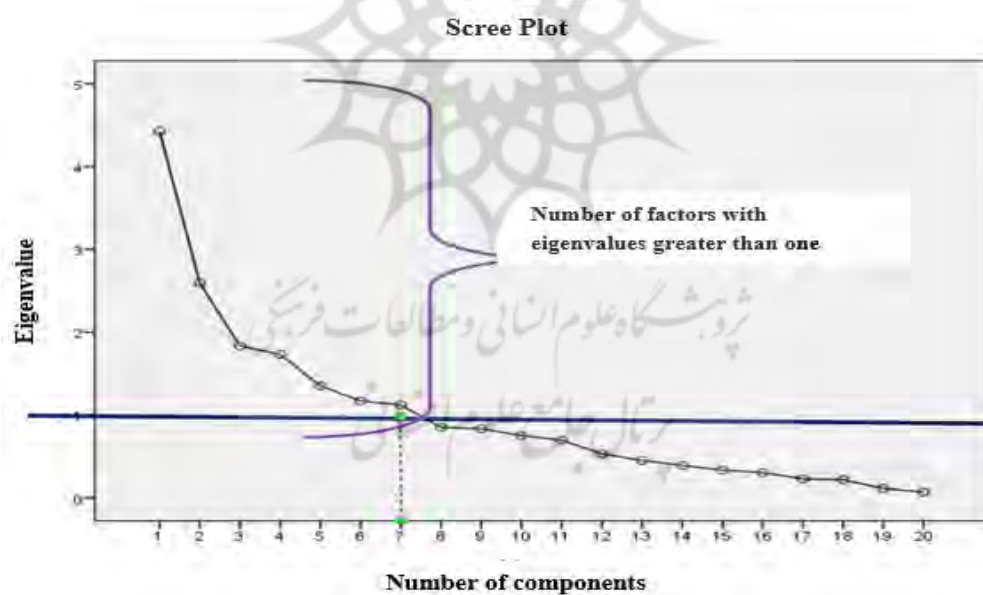
Table 2. Definition and Naming of Themes

Theme	Axial code
1. Spiritual Dimension	Unbreakable connection between true spirituality and tourist s' health - ontology, anthropology, theology -Human connection with a transcendent power - unity with the universe - Spiritual practices in nature - Prayers and intimate conversations with the Creator
2. Physical Dimension	Focus on improving wellness tourists' relationship with their physical body - Better digestion - Liberation from alcohol and tobacco consumption - Freedom from unhealthy relationships - Disease prevention and self-care - Engaging the tourist's five senses - Healthy, diverse, and local food and drinks - Swimming - Horseback riding - Breathing techniques and yoga stretching and strength exercises in nature - Cycling - Walking
3. Mental Dimension	Self-knowledge and improved connection with oneself - Creating a sense of self-knowledge need in tourists - Conducting personal development sessions - Providing hope for tourists - Vitality, freshness, and liveliness - Mood regulation - Mental health through speech control - Eliminating bad habits by replacing them with good manners - Digital detox - Memory enhancement and increased learning ability - Reducing anger and stress - Achieving peace from nature - Liberation from anxiety and daily tensions - Avoiding noise and air pollution - Experiencing authentic yoga, Zen in nature - Designing meditation protocols in nature
4. Social Dimension	Expanding and improving correct social interactions and relationships - Community therapy - Creating empathy and mutual understanding among tourists - Collective activities and social games - Creating a friendly and hopeful environment for conversation during the journey
5. Professional and Expert Team	dedicated, self-aware, and charismatic workforce - Charismatic, friendly, and knowledgeable tour leaders and managers - Quality service provision - Spiritual expert of the group - Coaches for personal development
6. Training and Empowerment	Training and empowering the host community/tourists/psychologists - Preparing tourists for accepting correct inputs
7. Nostalgia and Creating memorable experiences	Creating and preserving traditional human-centered houses and fostering a good feeling - The impact of adobe houses on creating a good feeling for tourists - Unique taste, aroma, and memorable sounds
8. Necessity of linking Sciences with Wellness Tourism	Linking astronomy, traditional medicine, and architecture with wellness tourism - Soothing and balanced music - Applying Feng Shui in the construction of tourist accommodations - Holding workshops and short therapeutic psychology courses in wellness tourism - Psychological tours in nature - Land use planning
9. Quality Management of Wellness Tourism Destination	Preserving and promoting the environment, culture, and identity of the destination - Inter-institutional cooperation and institutional groundwork - Future studies of the destination - Creating suitable infrastructure for wellness tourism - Economic growth of the destination - Providing quality services and logistics - Extensive advertising and creating a distinct wellness tourism destination - Tourist satisfaction - Ease of public access to wellness tourism products - Personalizing wellness tourism packages - Market research and feasibility studies - Economic and cost-effective considerations
10. Nature	Vegetation - Traditional village texture - Climate comfort indicators of the destination - Pristine green nature - Very beautiful landscapes - Local cultural heritage - Quiet and peaceful environment away from urban noise - Beautiful walking paths - Sounds of the Barghan river - Sounds of wind rustling through the leaves of Barghan trees - Birds chirping - Geographic conditions and suitable climate - The smell of damp and rain-soaked soil of the village - Sense of place - Nature-loving - Clean air - Watching sunrises and sunsets
11. Unique Features of the Wellness Tourism Model	Spirituality-based exercises and meditations - Engaging the tourist's five senses - Continuity and repetition - Localization of health village standards and wellness destinations - Experiencing a unique tranquility - Management with a wellness approach - Charismatic tour leaders and managers - Targeting the spirit, body, and spiritual dimension of tourists - Creating a space for establishing a good relationship with oneself

Table 3. KMO and Bartlett's Test

KMO Value	0.724	
Bartlett's Test	Chi-Square Value	1751.650
	Degree of Freedom	190
	Significance Level	000

The KMO value in this study is 0.724, indicating a satisfactory level of sampling adequacy; therefore, factor analysis is appropriate for the collected data. Additionally, the results show that the chi-square is 1751.650 with a significance level less than 0.001. Thus, the null hypothesis of the correlation matrix being equal is rejected, indicating a significant correlation between the variables, which supports the validity of the factor analysis in the sample. In the second step of factor analysis, to estimate the number of extractable factors and to assess the impact of wellness tourism components on enhancing tourist health, the Scree test was used. This test is one of the most common graphical methods for selecting the appropriate number of factors based on eigenvalues. The chart below shows the results of the Scree test, indicating the presence of 7 independent and acceptable constructs in the variance curve of wellness tourism factors in enhancing tourists' health. Acceptable constructs refer to those whose variance is statistically significant.

**Figure 5. Scree Plot for Factor Identification**

The third step includes identifying the contribution of the set of factors in explaining the variance, which is listed under the title of commonality in table (4):

Table 4. Communalities [Variances]

	Initial variance	Extracted variance
Being in pristine nature, clean climate of Baraghan village, and watching its beautiful landscapes	1.000	0.703
Watching beautiful flowers and plants, ancient green trees, listening to the music of nature in Baraghan, and watching the sunrise and sunset	1.000	0.687
The traditional fabric of the village, mud-brick houses, and the beautiful fruit gardens and garden alleys	1.000	0.658
Engaging the five senses of the tourist (touching tree leaves, listening to the sounds of nature, observing beautiful natural landscapes, the scent of rain-soaked earth and the delightful taste of local fruits)	1.000	0.532
Nature-based sports such as walking, mountain climbing, cycling and horseriding	1.000	0.705
Quality and health of food and drinks	1.000	0.699
Pleasant climate village and being in nature and digital detox	1.000	0.659
Practicing yoga, meditation, and relaxing activities in pristine and beautiful nature	1.000	0.689
Holding personal development sessions, focusing on self-awareness and improving self-relationship	1.000	0.716
Organizing cultural events in nature	1.000	0.679
Collective activities and social games - creating a friendly atmosphere	1.000	0.802
Being in Baraghan nature (hearing the sound of water, birds singing), admiring its beauty, praying, and ultimately gaining more understanding of existence	1.000	0.732
Quantity and quality of services, facilities, amenities, and the way services are provided in Baraghan village	1.000	0.673
Ease of access to tourist attractions in Baraghan village	1.000	0.693
Economic and reasonable costs of wellness tourism services and facilities	1.000	0.641
Creating suitable infrastructure and groundwork for wellness tourism in Baraghan village	1.000	0.464
Continuity and repetition of the process (being in nature and enjoying its beauty and engaging in nature-based sports)	1.000	0.738
Presence of knowledgeable, skilled, and charismatic personnel (tour guides, service providers)	1.000	0.707
Hospitality and the way local people of Baraghan village interact with tourists	1.000	0.637
Organizing psychoanalytic tours in nature, the presence of traditional medicine specialists, astronomy, and soothing music	1.000	0.713

The first column of the initial variance value shows the total value of the variance of each variable that the set of factors can explain, which is equal to one for all variables. The second column shows the amount of variance of each variable that the set of factors have been able to explain.

The next step involves identifying each factor's contribution to explaining the totality of all variables; In other words, we want to know how many percent of the variance of the set of variables was

determined by each factor. Table (5) shows the initial eigenvalues, the percentage of variance, and the cumulative percentage of variance explained from the dataset by each factor before and after factor rotation. Based on the last three columns of Table (5), a total of 7 factors with eigenvalues greater than one were able to explain 71.138% of the total variance of the main components of wellness tourism in enhancing tourist health.

Table 5. Total Variance Explained

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	4.425	22.124	22.124	4.425	22.124	22.124	2.699	13.494	13.494
2	2.594	12.971	35.095	2.594	12.971	35.095	2.326	11.632	25.126
3	1.833	9.166	44.262	1.833	9.166	44.262	2.265	11.325	36.451
4	1.732	8.659	52.921	1.732	8.659	52.921	2.124	10.621	47.072
5	1.353	6.764	59.684	1.353	6.764	59.684	1.761	8.803	55.875
6	1.169	5.847	65.531	1.169	5.847	65.531	1.586	7.932	63.807
7	1.121	5.607	71.138	1.121	5.607	71.138	1.466	7.331	71.138
8	0.851	4.253	75.391						
9	0.834	4.171	79.562						
10	0.752	3.758	83.320						
11	0.696	3.479	86.799						
12	0.531	2.657	89.456						
13	0.451	2.256	91.713						
14	0.391	1.955	93.667						
15	0.333	1.666	95.334						
16	0.304	1.521	96.854						
17	0.228	1.142	97.997						
18	0.219	1.093	99.090						
19	0.113	0.566	99.656						
20	0.069	0.344	100.000						

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

In Table (5), only the factors with eigenvalues greater than 1 remain, with the contribution of each factor to the explained variance being 22.124, 12.971, 9.166, 8.659, 6.764, 5.847, and 5.607, respectively. Together, they explain 71.138 percent of the total variance in wellness tourism. The final step involves categorizing factors based on the correlation between items and assigning each item to a factor, which is derived from the correlation matrix after Varimax rotation with Kaiser Normalization. The results are presented in Table (6).

Table 6. Rotated Component Matrix

Rotated Component Matrix							
	Component (factor)						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1-Being in pristine nature,clean climate of Baraghan village, and watching its beautiful landscapes	0.801						
2- Watching beautiful flowers and plants, ancient green trees, listening to the music of nature in Baraghan, and watching the sunrise and sunset	0.783						
3-The traditional fabric of the village, mud-brick houses, and the beautiful fruit gardens and garden alleys	0.702						
4-Engaging the five senses of the tourist (touching tree leaves, listening to the sounds of nature, observing beautiful natural landscapes, the scent of rain-soaked earth and the delightful taste of local fruits)		0.660					
5-Nature-based sports such as walking, mountain climbing, cycling and horseriding		0.822					
6-Quality and health of food and drinks		0.747					
7-Pleasant climate village and being in nature and digital detox			0.689				
8-Practicing yoga, meditation, and relaxing activities in pristine and beautiful nature			0.705				
9-Holding personal development sessions, focusing on self-awareness and improving self-relationship			0.801		0.810		
10- Organizing cultural events in nature				0.766			
11- Collective activities and social games - creating a friendly atmosphere				0.862			
12- Being in Baraghan nature (hearing the sound of water, birds singing), admiring its beauty, praying, and ultimately gaining more understanding of existence					0.810		
13- Quantity and quality of services, facilities, amenities, and the way services are provided in Baraghan village						0.688	
14- Ease of access to tourist attractions in Baraghan village						0.701	
15- Economic and reasonable costs of wellness tourism services and facilities						0.682	
16- Creating suitable infrastructure and groundwork for wellness tourism in Baraghan village						0.590	
17- Continuity and repetition of the process (being in nature and enjoying its beauty and engaging in nature-based sports)						0.804	
18- Presence of knowledgeable, skilled, and charismatic personnel (tour guides, service providers)						0.777	
19- Hospitality and the way local people of Baraghan village interact with tourists						0.732	
20- Organizing psychoanalytic tours in nature, the presence of traditional medicine specialists, astronomy, and soothing music							0.796

Finally, by naming the factors, the categories of wellness tourism that have the most significant impact on enhancing the health of destination tourists are presented in Figure (6).

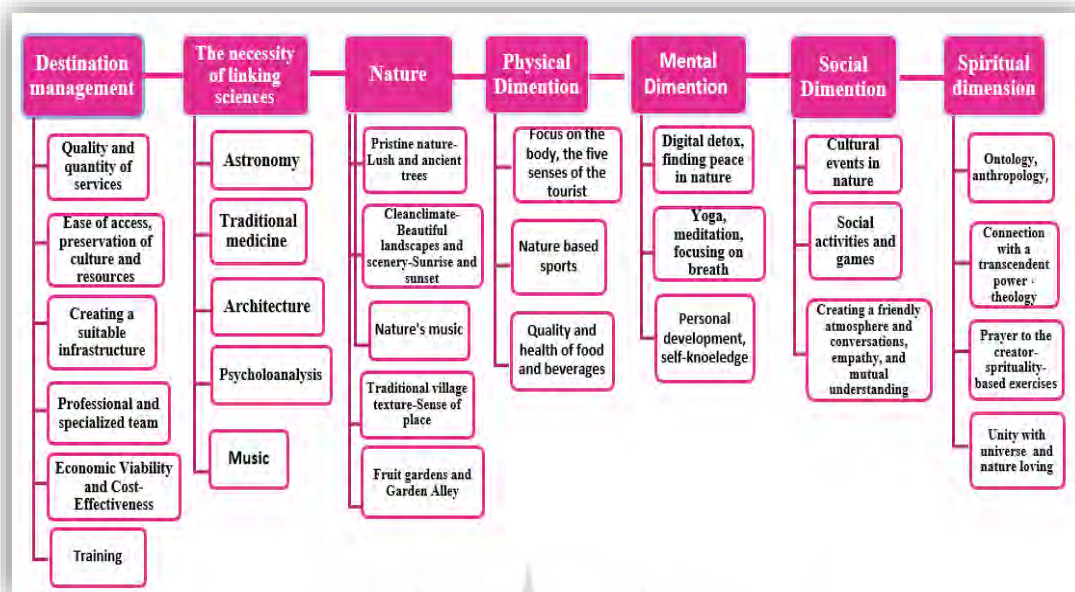


Figure 6. The categories of wellness tourism in enhancing the health of tourists (Source: Research findings)

To address the main research question and analyze the relationships among the categories, it can be argued that tourist's health consists of four main dimensions: physical, mental, social, and spiritual. Therefore, to enhance tourist's health, a balance must be established in these four areas. Based on research findings, physical health is improved through engaging in various activities and programs in nature that stimulate the five senses of the tourist (touching tree leaves, listening to the music of nature—sounds of water, wind, and birds singing, observing beautiful natural landscapes, smelling the rain-soaked earth, tasting local fruits, and picking fruit). This also involves focusing on the body and enhancing the connection with it (through massage, yoga, physical care, and mindfulness), participating in nature-based sports, and paying close attention to the quality and health of food and beverages (benefiting from organic and natural products). Since every action performed by the body affects the soul, these two are interdependent. In fact, the relationship between them always supports the idea that a sound mind resides in a sound body. To enhance the mental health of tourists, experiencing a serene natural environment away from urban noise, finding tranquility in nature, digital detoxing, practicing meditation, and focusing on breathing, as well as holding personal development and self-awareness sessions to improve the connection with oneself and self-love in the heart of nature, plays a significant role. It is evident that a tourist who has achieved relative satisfaction with their physical and mental health seeks to connect with others and their surroundings. In the social dimension, to achieve social health, organizing cultural events in nature, planning group activities and games, and creating a friendly

atmosphere for conversation and mutual understanding among tourists will significantly contribute to positive outcomes. Next, in the spiritual dimension, tourists, by gaining a deeper understanding of existence, engaging in spirituality-based practices (such as gratitude, being present, living joyfully, and reflecting feelings of joy to the universe), meditating in nature, and becoming friends with nature, feel the need for prayer and communion with the Creator, expressing gratitude for all the blessings and beauty, and seeking to protect them. In this space, opportunities for spiritual growth and improvement of the connection with the Creator arise, leading to the enhancement of their spiritual health.

What is clear is that all activities aimed at improving the health of tourists in the aforementioned four dimensions must take place in nature, benefiting from divine gifts such as pristine and pure nature, clean air, lush and ancient trees, the music of nature—sounds of rivers, wind, and birds, watching beautiful landscapes, sunrises and sunsets, the charming alleys and orchards of the village of Barghan, the sense of place, and the traditional texture of this village with its thatched houses. Nature resembles a mother that embraces all these dimensions of tourist health and bestows health, vitality, and liveliness upon tourists. To achieve richer results and a better quality of the experience of being in nature, as well as providing a unique and desirable experience for tourists, it is essential to link sciences with wellness tourism and quality destination management. Thus, it is necessary to integrate sciences such as astronomy (choosing the right time for travel considering times of the year when the external environment affects the inner state of individuals), traditional medicine (utilizing the vegetation of the tourist destination for treating illnesses and improving health status, healthy nutrition based on temperament analysis), architecture (designing and constructing accommodations and hotels to create a memorable and soothing environment), psychology (diagnosing and treating mental health issues, depression, fears, and stress, and teaching relaxation techniques in nature), and soothing and balancing music (reducing stress, improving sleep, enhancing focus, facilitating meditation and yoga, boosting feelings of happiness, and creating a pleasant atmosphere) with wellness tourism in a structured manner through precise planning.

Quality destination management (preserving natural resources and developing local tourism, facilitating access to tourist sites, providing diverse and high-quality local services and logistics, utilizing local products, managing costs of wellness tourism for economic feasibility, and managing a team of specialists in fields related to wellness tourism, while training hosts and guides in communication skills) plays a crucial role in enhancing the health of tourists and improving their tourism experience quality. To achieve greater impacts of wellness tourism and to bring about desirable, profound, and lasting changes in enhancing tourist health, the element of continuity and repetition in wellness tourism activities must be incorporated. It is evident that implementing wellness tourism in the village of Barghan not only encompasses economic, social, and environmental benefits but also leads to

the enhancement of the cultural and identity aspects of the host community. Therefore, to align with the history, culture, and natural resources of Baraghan village and to benefit from the positive effects that wellness tourism will have on economic prosperity and the preservation and enhancement of culture, environment, and natural resources, a proposed model of wellness tourism emphasizing health promotion must be developed based on the analysis of the interrelationships among components and the creation of harmony between factors.

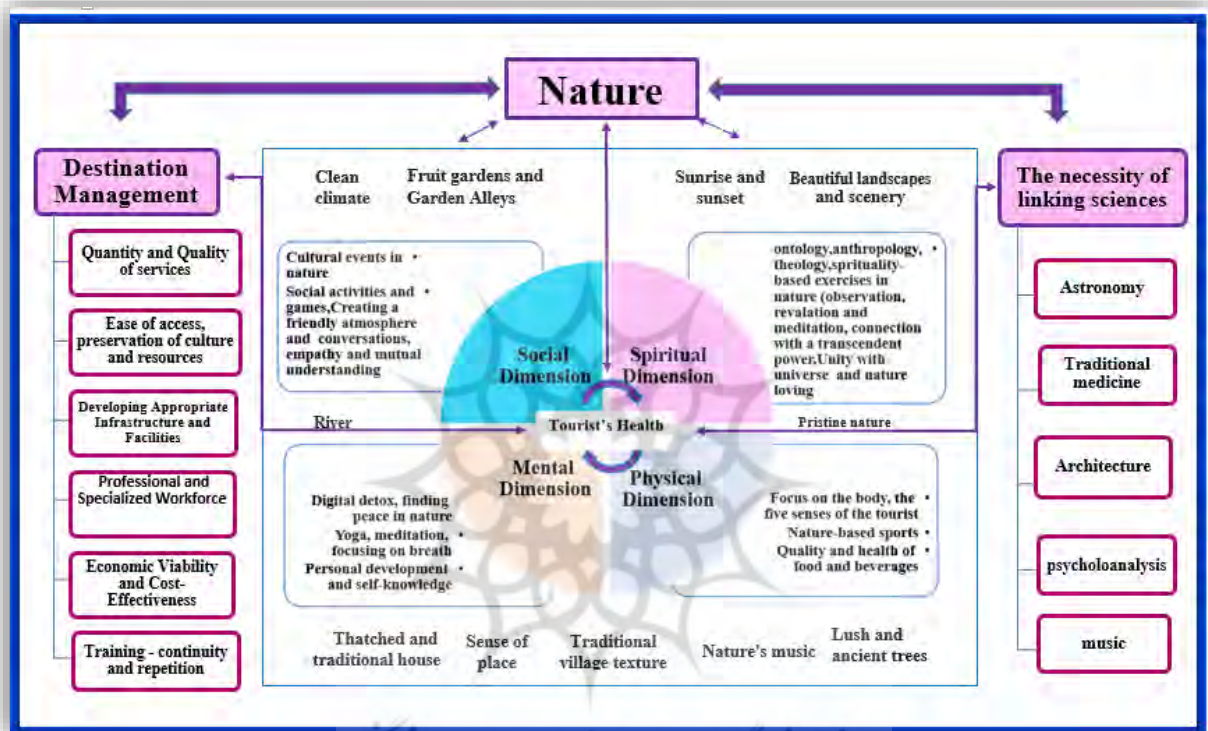


Figure7. Proposed Model of Wellness Tourism Emphasizing the Health Enhancement of Tourists in the Village of Baraghan, Alborz with socio-cultural approach

Conclusion

Based on the examination and exploration of research foundations and domestic studies, it has been determined that there has been very little attention and depth in the field of wellness tourism. According to the findings of the research, the village of Baraghan in Alborz is well-suited for the development of wellness tourism due to its potential. This study demonstrated that this village, considering its natural, cultural, and historical assets, can become an important destination for wellness tourism.

Consequently, the development of this industry will not only introduce the village of Baraghan as a wellness tourism destination, but it will also contribute to the enhancement of the health of community members and tourists (which is a fundamental aspect of a healthy society). Additionally, it can create

sustainable livelihoods for local communities, focusing on the protection and preservation of natural, cultural, and historical resources. By increasing local participation in related activities and businesses, it can lead to job creation and numerous economic benefits for the wellness tourism destination and ultimately for the country.

Therefore, the development of transportation infrastructure, preservation of the traditional fabric of the destination, aligning the community of psychologists with wellness tourism, organizing cultural events, and educating the local community are among the actions proposed to improve this type of tourism.

Limitations of the Research

Although useful results have been obtained from the current study, it has several limitations that may serve as a roadmap for future research. Additionally, we would like to emphasize that this research area is still relatively unknown within Iran and requires deeper investigation.

- In the literature on wellness tourism, there is limited understanding of the influencing factors regarding demographic characteristics that may affect the effectiveness of wellness tourism in promoting the health of tourists. Due to the breadth of the topic and the limited time for conducting the research, there was no opportunity to address these factors in this study.
- Furthermore, since non-probability sampling was used for selecting samples in the qualitative section, it is important to note that the results may be influenced by sample selection bias.
- There were few specialists in the fields of health tourism, wellness, and spiritual health and psychoanalysis.

Research Suggestions

- Since there is still limited understanding of the factors affecting wellness tourism in the local literature, it is suggested that the current study be further expanded in future research.
- Future studies are encouraged to identify the demographic characteristics of tourists in wellness destinations and to design wellness packages based on tourists' needs and customization to optimize the tourist experience.
- It is recommended to use a quasi-experimental design to confirm the findings and obtain objective results regarding the enhancement of tourists' health.
- Future research on destinations and identifying potential markets for the development of wellness tourism is essential.
- Future studies are invited to investigate the feasibility of developing wellness tourism in other temperate regions of Iran, given the abundant potentials for wellness tourism in the diverse climatic conditions of the country.
- Due to the limited attention given to wellness tourism, extensive research and various projects can be conducted in future studies in the fields of tourism, psychology, and psychoanalysis related to the development and enhancement of individual health, improving physical, mental, and spiritual health, as well as sociology, medicine, and sports.

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