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## The Presentation of a Cultural Marketing Model Based on the Destination's Cultural Elements: A Case Study of Shiraz

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### Abstract

This study proposes a cultural marketing model for Shiraz based on its cultural characteristics. The study was conducted using a qualitative method and semi-structured interviews with tourism and marketing specialists. In a rational approach of theoretical and judgmental sampling, 16 participants were sampled until theoretical saturation was reached. MAXQDA software was employed to code the data. In the study, 20 sub-themes were identified within the cultural marketing pattern. The sub-themes included valuing the cultural experience, engaging the local community with conservation, the government's role, friendly communication between hosts and guests, transforming the tourism approach, revitalizing culture, national pride, media, technology, supplying infrastructure and cultural background, destination features, residents and destination management, the destination community's awareness and training, cultural identity, the tourist's influence on the host, the tourist's behavior in the destination, the foreign tourist's influence, the human role, cultural products of tourism, and finally the production and representation of cultural products. The study also identified four primary categories: product, destination, communication, and process. Tourism development has a wide range of effects and consequences, and cultural marketing, considering the cultural capacities of destinations, can play an important role in tourism development and managing its various effects and consequences. Cultural marketing can restore the national and cultural identity, protect authentic culture, and preserve cultural heritage by generating employment and income for locals.

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## Introduction

Tourism and culture are intertwined as cultural phenomena. The location's culture unites individuals and offers each destination distinct defining qualities (Wei, 2012). Prior to COVID-19, destinations faced the challenge of accommodating an increasing number of tourists seeking cultural sites while also attempting to sell merchandise to visitors. This was especially true in historical and cultural cities. This circumstance requires a shift in perspective regarding marketing (cultural) tourism (Richards, 2022).

The "intercultural" nature of the tourism sector is mainly due to the desire of cultural tourists to engage with other cultures. Among the critical elements in drawing visitors and the most crucial factors for the successful growth of international tourism is the cultural disparity between foreign travelers and their destinations (Wei, 2012).

To this end, the issues of destination marketing and culture are tied together, and marketing messages will never reach potential tourists without cultural intervention. In addition, different regional cultures are a stimulus for tourism activities, especially cultural tourism. In the tourism environment, the cultural differences of people from different societies will undoubtedly affect their social interactions. Thus, a comprehensive understanding of tourism's cross-cultural characteristics is essential for rapid tourism development.

In marketing research, a precise definition of cultural marketing is more challenging and crucial than in other sectors. The unfamiliarity of the tourist and host with each other's cultures and environmental factors, particularly concerning the destination, can make comparisons more difficult (Malhotra et al., 1996). This can also be one of the possible reasons for the scarcity of macro-level analysis of cultural marketing apart from intercultural marketing and its strategy.

In most developing countries, the majority of key tourism stakeholders, particularly governments as tourism development policymakers, focus on the economic aspect of tourism, and in destination planning, they seek to increase the number of incoming tourists regardless of cultural considerations. Thus, they disregard tourism's positive and negative impacts on the host society (and vice versa). In the tourism development process based on the destination's life cycle, there are different challenges in the growth and maturity stages of the destination, which can sometimes lead to the decline of a tourism destination (Vazin & Sheikhi, 2020).

Despite this broad view, research indicates that tourists accept cultural goods more readily when their cultural content corresponds to their cultural preferences and interests (Lee, 2006). However, not all tourists equally appreciate a location's cultural offerings (Song et al., 2017). A greater comprehension of host-guest relations is necessary to explain these cultural variations in goods

manufactured or already used in the destination. We believe it is essential to comprehend the effects of cultural tourism marketing strategies for managing items with rich cultural content.

In contrast, the rise of what has been referred to as “mass cultural tourism” has been greatly influenced by a growing supply of cultural offerings, the general expansion of tourism, and the increasing number of visitors to historic city centers (Richards, 2021). Due to this increase in demand, those who oversee, promote, and research cultural tourism face severe challenges. According to Munsters (2004), it is becoming increasingly important to balance the needs of visitors and other stakeholders regarding culture and tourism (Musters, 2004, as cited in Richards, 2022).

Among the factors that can develop and improve the tourism industry are using effective marketing tools and parameters and tourism demand management. This is because marketing makes it possible to inform potential tourists about what a particular area has to offer and encourage them to visit that area (Zehrer, 2009).

However, to attract these remote audiences, it is necessary to inform them of the region's amenities. A natural reflection of the destination area is to display every aspect of the local culture, emphasizing the richness and diversity that the visitor can encounter (OECD, 2009).

Tourism professionals must raise awareness of cultural differences and cater to the cultural tourists' needs, especially cultural visitors, tour operators, and translators who are pivotal players in intercultural tourism interaction to facilitate cultural tourism development. Since international tourism offers the most opportunities to interact with tourists and significantly affects the overall tourism process, it serves as a critical window through which any tourist site may connect with the rest of the world. Consequently, the understanding and communication skills of managers, decision-makers, and experts are unavoidable requirements for international tourism growth (Wei, 2012).

We believe that understanding the effects of cultural tourism marketing methods is particularly crucial for managing products with rich cultural content. However, previous research has not examined what type of destination marketing model should be utilized in a cultural city, considering characteristics such as cultural preservation and authenticity in the tourism development plan and economic growth. Therefore, it is necessary to provide a model for destination marketing to bridge the gap between economic and cultural perspectives, as well as to predict the positive and negative effects of tourism and formulate appropriate policies to protect cultural originality and prevent the commodification of local communities' cultures. The key point is that destinations should identify aspects of their cultural offering that are likely to appeal to this concept. This type of information can help cultural destinations to promote more effectively and predict tourists' decision-making (Lam-González, 2021).

In light of the above, this research aims to further the idea of cultural marketing as a kind of marketing focusing on the cultural aspects of tourist destinations. Culture and national identity can be transmitted via cultural marketing by maintaining cultural authenticity and meeting the cultural needs of the target community (tourists). Thus, a cultural marketing strategy that utilizes the cultural elements of the destination becomes critical. Are there any other elements involved?

As a cultural tourism city, Shiraz contains the most authentic sources of Iranian culture in terms of history, religion, and literature; this has made the city distinctive, and it can therefore promote creative and cultural industries. It is hoped that utilizing the findings of this study will lead to greater success in this field and provide tourists with cultural experiences with minimal environmental impact and the best possible conditions.

### **Theoretical literature and background**

Culture consists of a multi-layered structure with an external and global layer that permeates the native strata of society and ultimately transforms into values shared between groups (Bullough et al., 2021). A national group's values, beliefs, conventions, and behavioral characteristics are referred to as a culture (Leung et al., 2005). Culture is described as being on a spectrum of levels, from the fundamental, deeply ingrained, and unconscious assumptions that characterize a specific culture to the outward expressions that are palpable and obvious and readily visible and experienced by outsiders. Beliefs, values, and norms, along with behavioral guidelines, make up the intermediate strata between these two extremes and serve as the fundamental tenets by which individuals of a community conduct themselves (Bullough et al., 2021).

According to Greffe and Pflieger (2005), with the decline of the industrial sector in the 1980s, culture became a key component of regional progress and development. In the process of transformation, the land is transformed from an export source or a growth core based on raw minerals or manufacturing industries. Having lost this foundation for growth, it is necessary to establish a new one. This view of culture provides a foundation for tourism-based growth (Greffe & Pflieger, 2005).

Approximately 500 million tourists travel annually for cultural tourism, which accounts for more than 39% of international tourism arrivals (Richards, 2018). Strengthening cultural tourism positively affects destinations subject to seasonality because, for this particular market segment, the weather conditions of the destination are not a limiting factor. Cultural tourists spend more and stay longer on average in a destination, thus having higher profitability potential than other sectors (Lam-González, 2021).

Nevertheless, Greffe et al. (2015) cautioned that cultural tourism-based methods might hamper local development. Culture and development are context-specific concepts, which means that different

localities have different definitions of what constitutes development. According to Fonseca (2014), a place's identity, values, and features are the most prominent ways to identify the connection between culture and the city (Fonseca, 2014, as cited in Azevedo, 2016).

Authenticity has been proven to be the most important of the set of features that interfere with adapting a cultural experience (Lam-González, 2021). Intercultural sensitivity is one aspect of intercultural understanding, which is a central concept in intercultural communication (Blue et al., 1996) and is defined as "the ability to distinguish and experience the relevant cultural difference" (Hammer et al., 1996). Cultural sensitivity is called "the ability to communicate effectively in intercultural situations and create appropriate communication in different cultural contexts." In tourism, understanding between members of different cultures is always important and is a matter of survival for tourism destinations. The presence of intercultural sensitivities and the development of cognitive biases between guests and hosts can cause a destination's failure in tourism development.

Intercultural communication research seeks to answer the question, "How do people perceive or understand others, especially when they do not share a common cultural experience?" (Bennet, 1998). Milton Bennett defines intercultural sensitivity as a kind of developmental process through which a person develops a wide range of abilities and capacities to adapt to individual differences (Fuller, 2007). This generally suggests that the development of interpersonal communication leads to the reduction of intercultural sensitivities (Ghaderzadeh & Abdollahzadeh, 2012). While cultural awareness and intercultural communication are inevitable requirements for harmonious day-to-day encounters in tourism and other businesses, tourism research has mainly focused on intercultural marketing.

Engelen and Brettel (2011) demonstrate that cross-cultural marketing research encompasses a wide range of topics and advances in areas such as cross-cultural consumer behavior, consumer attitudes, and marketing. Reviewing 99 articles in 14 journals, they argued that although researchers have advanced in both conceptual and methodological aspects, studies still focus heavily on Hofstede's (2001) dimensions. Although the primary objective of cross-cultural marketing research is to demonstrate the generalizability or boundary conditions of marketing theories, the authors argue that cross-cultural marketing research does not achieve its objective of identifying strong boundary conditions or generalizability.

According to Magnusson et al. (2008), researchers should discuss the superiority of alternative frameworks with broader sets of cultural dimensions and more recent country classifications over Hofstede's (2001) traditional dimensions. Consequently, the present research aims to conceptualize and model cultural marketing as a novel approach to intercultural marketing.

Cultural marketing is a process in which we offer cultural services or commodities in response to cultural demands. It involves human, cultural, organized, and leadership elements. In other words, it

encompasses an organized effort to anticipate and meet society's cultural requirements. The phrase "series of actions that will contribute to drawing the customer's attention to supply services or cultural items" may also be used. Cultural marketing aims to be crucial and beneficial for non-profit organizations (Sharafi & Tafarjizadeh, 2020).

Culture has diverse effects on consumers, so marketers must be prepared to respond to or adapt to these differences. In addition, they should adapt their cultural products to the needs of the target population. Cultural indicators are attitudes, practices, and expectations that affect social culture (Leung et al., 2005).

### Research Method

The present study is categorized as a field study because it serves a practical purpose. The study was conducted using a qualitative methodology.

Flick (2021) asserts that the qualitative approach explains lifeworld from the perspective of its actors and participants, thereby improving our understanding of social realities. According to Flick, qualitative methods can fully comprehend activists' ideas and display a reality.

In the first phase of this study, theoretical foundations were examined. This included archival data, articles published in local and international scientific journals, conferences, seminars, and books written about the cultural field, marketing, and tourist destinations and culture. After collecting requirements, the initial framework was developed. The interview procedure was determined based on this framework. The statistical population consisted of university professors with marketing, tourism, and Shiraz heritage management backgrounds. We selected respondents using targeted nonprobability sampling and snowball sampling techniques and gathered the necessary data through semi-structured interviews with subject matter experts. Participants included academic and organizational marketing, tourism, and Shiraz city heritage managers (Table 1).

**Table 1. Participant details**

| Row | Area of Expertise   | Organization level | Number | Organization                                      |
|-----|---------------------|--------------------|--------|---------------------------------------------------|
| 1   | Tourism             | University faculty | 6      | University                                        |
| 2   | Communication       | University faculty | 4      | University                                        |
| 3   | Marketing           | Science Committee  | 3      | University                                        |
| 4   | Tourism and culture | General manager    | 3      | Organization of Cultural Heritage and Handicrafts |



We conducted 16 expert interviews using the snowball technique. As each interviewee concluded their interview, they were required to recommend the following expert. The inclusion criteria for experts were: (A) a minimum of ten years of work experience, (B) organizational specialists with management expertise, (C) university professors for subject-matter authorities, and (D) knowledge of marketing, culture, or tourism.

Each interview lasted between one and two hours and took place at the interviewees' place of employment. All interviews were recorded and immediately analyzed afterward. Obtaining more recent data was difficult, and data collection continued until the theoretical saturation point of the categories. Every interview was videotaped and coded using the theme analysis technique. Based on Braun and Clarke's (2006) theme analysis method, data were analyzed using MAXQDA2020 in three phases: open, central, and selective coding. The hunt for new themes that best capture the phenomena is known as theme analysis. Braun & Clarke's (2006) defined it as "a strategy for detecting, evaluating and reporting patterns within data" and stated that it "seeks to study and comprehend phenomena, a procedure, or the viewpoints and worldviews of the individuals involved" (Mogaji & Yoon, 2019).

After a thematic examination of the interviews, the cultural marketing elements were evident. As part of the retest technique's qualitative portion, the reliability of the two coders was evaluated to confirm the validity and reliability of the findings. A random sample of interviews was coded again, and the results of both codings were compared. According to Kvale (1996), the reliability of a retest is calculated by comparing similar codes across the period and non-similar codes as non-agreement.

$$\text{Intra - subject agreement percentage} = \frac{\text{Agreements' Percentage} * 2}{\text{Total}} * 100$$

The reliability of the interviews, as determined by the five selected interviews and their recoding, was 91%, validating the reliability of the codings. An expert-led Delphi panel also re-verified the validity of the original model. After receiving the surveys, standard deviations and Kendall's agreement coefficients were computed. The study determined that a minimum level of agreement was not met for the model to be considered valid. Based on the outcome of the round, specific indicators were merged, eliminated, or modified while maintaining the same methodology. The second Delphi and the agreement coefficient were considered quite robust. Finally, the marketing elements of Farhan were verified. The study's methodology is presented in Table 2.

**Table 2. Methodology specifications summary**

| <b>Empirical research for the cultural marketing model</b> |                                                                                                |
|------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Statistical Society</b>                                 | Organizational and academic specialists in the fields of marketing, communication, and tourism |
| <b>Statistical sample</b>                                  | 16 experts (13 from university faculty, 3 from tourism and cultural heritage organizations)    |
| <b>Sampling plan</b>                                       | Unprovable and purposeful                                                                      |
| <b>Sampling</b>                                            | Snowball                                                                                       |
| <b>Data collection tool</b>                                | Semi-structured interview                                                                      |
| <b>Data analyzing method</b>                               | Thematic analysis with MAXQDA                                                                  |
| <b>Reliability</b>                                         | Retest                                                                                         |
| <b>Narrative</b>                                           | Delphi panel                                                                                   |

### Research findings

The qualitative portion of the study's interview data was analyzed using the approach of a theme analysis. Following a series of in-depth interviews, a set of concepts were first coded and retrieved. Various conceptual categories were then analyzed and assigned to the correct categories to produce the final set of concepts.

Following the open coding phases, 471 fundamental topics were derived through theme exploration. Following their study in the axial coding phase, which yielded 108 ordered themes or sub-categories, they discovered the national media's influence on tax culture. After the final examination and selective coding with the theme network, ten key themes were identified.



**Table 3. Sample interview and instructions for obtaining the primary and secondary codes**

| Extracted codes                                              | Semantic unit                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Interview number |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|
| <b>Cultural concepts related to history and civilization</b> | 1. Visitors to Shiraz get the impression that they are strolling through Iranian history and civilization; from Takht Jamshid to Hafeziyah and Saadiyeh, the city immerses visitors in the rich heritage of the Fars region.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Interview 8      |
|                                                              | 2. Shiraz is home to several priceless historical structures, such as Persepolis, representing Iranian civilization and historical culture.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Interview 2      |
| <b>The role of man</b>                                       | 3. A visitor to a tourist site, such as Shiraz, will observe all the city's natural, cultural, and historical wonders, but what will stick in his memory and define his trip experience is the mannerisms and cultures of the locals.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Interview 2      |
|                                                              | 4. When a visitor arrives under Jamshid, the guide's cultural knowledge and ability to convey the magnificence of Persepolis are crucial.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                  |
| <b>Proper recognition of host and guest</b>                  | 5. The visitor has decided to travel to the host city. Consequently, the host has provided a place the visitor may use. Thus, both parties genuinely have the motive and want to achieve peace. The prerequisite for their success is that they have a proper understanding of one another, i.e., tourism should not lead to an incorrect perception of the host society due to an incorrect perception resulting in incorrect behavior, which results in an incorrect reaction from the host society, which disrupts harmony. | Interview 15     |
| <b>National pride</b>                                        | 6. In order to boost their sense of national pride, students should be educated about the culture and customs that their fathers and predecessors have practiced for decades.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Interview 14     |
|                                                              | 7. Host communities should take pride in their cultural identities.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Interview 13     |

**Table 4. Core codes and extracted themes**

| <b>Theme</b>                                             | <b>Code oriented</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|----------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>The effect of the tourist on the host</b>             | Consumerism's impact on societal values and beliefs is shown in lifestyle and luxury impacts                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>Destination characteristics</b>                       | Infrastructures, a city known for its literature, cultural geography, people from Shiraz, and a specific place                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| <b>Friendly communication between the host and guest</b> | Tolerance, providing visitors with a genuine and authentic experience, coming to a shared concept of tourism, and the goal to develop pure culture - closeness to one another geographically - host's lack of fundamentalist beliefs                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <b>The role of man</b>                                   | Man in the role of business - in interaction with tourists - acceptance of the role of humans in nature - the role of humans in the transmission of culture - the role of people's training in influence and influence - the relationship of humans with each other - the formation of the behavior of the people of the destination in the mind of the tourist - leader, and guide - tourist as a consumer-provider of goods and services |
| <b>Production and presentation of cultural products</b>  | Creating food diversity - introducing historical periods - family culture - music and ritual symbols of Shiraz                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| <b>Providing infrastructure and cultural platform</b>    | Preparing the destination for cultural tourism - Preparing the society for tourists with different tastes - completing one's local and social culture - knowing and using cultural patterns to assess the needs of tourists                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| <b>Government role</b>                                   | Strengthening national cohesion - government regulations - creating a coherent social network - control of modern lifestyle - recognition of the scientific program for tourism - ideological nature of governance – providing information about cultural backgrounds                                                                                                                                                                      |
| <b>Cultural identity</b>                                 | The feeling of belonging to the cultural identity - self-confidence and identification - familiarity with the cultural identity                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>Cultural tourism products</b>                         | Rituals and ceremonies - highlighting cultural products and spiritual heritage - festivals - image of civilization - hosting services - food and lifestyle coverage - performing various rituals - preparation and reproduction of linguistic and phonetic culture                                                                                                                                                                         |
| <b>Culture revival</b>                                   | Familiarizing younger generation with cultural heritage - continuity of cultural components - cultural dynamism - the revival of arts and traditions - promotion and development of culture - protection of cultural heritage - religious revival                                                                                                                                                                                          |

| Theme                                                             | Code oriented                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Involving the local community in the field of conservation</b> | Educating the destination community - strengthening the self-esteem of the community - creating an opportunity for Fars province residents to interact - Fars province tourist booklet - residents' awareness of the destination - indirect training in the media              |
| <b>The role of media and technology</b>                           | The use of short films - the use of documentary clips and teasers - social media - use of media for training                                                                                                                                                                   |
| <b>The effects of foreign tourists</b>                            | Promotion of western culture, isolation, sanctions, bad western copies                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| <b>Changing the tourism approach</b>                              | The following types of tourism are encouraged: slow tourism, astronomy tourism, creative tourism, heritage tourism, religious tourism, preventing mass tourism, natural tourism, intelligent tourism, food tourism, and respectful tourism                                     |
| <b>National pride</b>                                             | The feeling of love and pride - being familiar with and boasting about the cultural identity, recognizing and introducing values to increase national pride - strengthening national pride in youth and teenagers - national identity - strengthening national unity and pride |
| <b>Valuing the cultural experience</b>                            | Revival of historical sites and museums - unique Islamic art of mosques and markets - cultural concepts related to history and civilization                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>Awareness and training of the target community</b>             | Training of the local community - training of local tour guides - training of the business                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>Destination management</b>                                     | Empowering the local community, including tourism, urban management, cultivating civic responsibility, and using the potential of destination learning                                                                                                                         |
| <b>Tourist behavior at the destination</b>                        | Respect and prudence are prerequisites for transferring tourism knowledge from the tourist destination of interest to the tourist awareness training destination                                                                                                               |
| <b>Having a comprehensive program</b>                             | Developing a strategy to resurrect the tourist attraction - establishing a framework; - macroplanning for efficiency - refraining from leaving places, and using anti-tourism techniques                                                                                       |

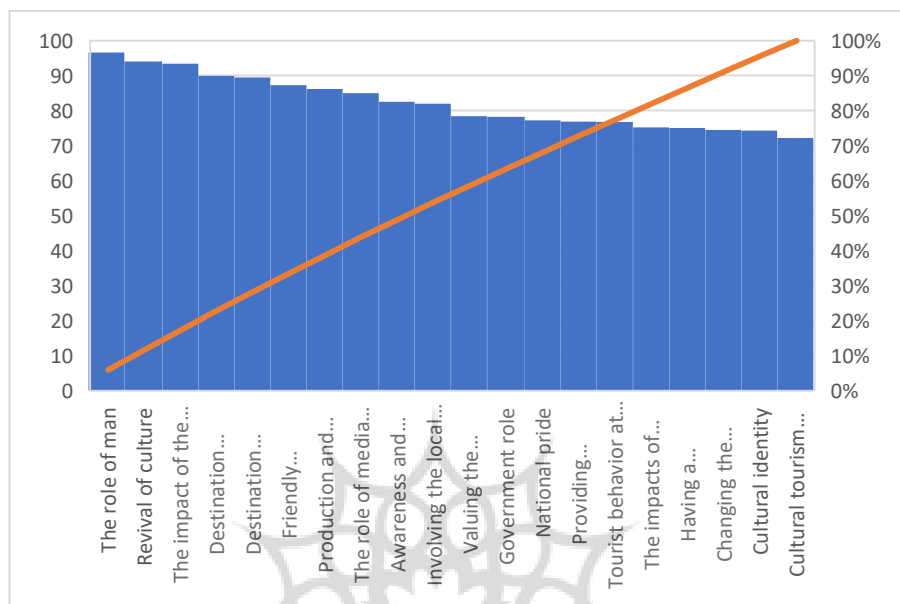
The Delphi approach was used to analyze the sizes and classifications selected by specialists and experts in two rounds. Using a Likert scale with the choices of very high impact: 5 points, high impact: 4 points, medium impact: 3 points, low impact: 2 points, and remarkably low impact: 1 point, the cultural marketing elements' significance and score will be determined in both rounds. The number of points earned in the last round and each participant's prior response were also revealed to the players per round, along with each recommended factor and its explanation.

The degree of agreement among the members of the Delphi panel was assessed in this study using Kendall's coefficient of coordination. According to Kendall's coefficient of coordination, those who organized various categories according to their relevance essentially utilized the same standards to assess each category's significance and agreed on these matters. Schmidt (1997) asserts that a Kendall coefficient of 0.5 denotes a moderate level of agreement, a coefficient of 0.7, a high level of agreement, and a coefficient of 0.9, a remarkably strong level of agreement.

**Table 5. The percentage of agreement between categories in two Delphi rounds**

| Sub-theme                                         | The agreement percentage of the first round of Delphi | The agreement percentage of the second round of Delphi |
|---------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|
| The impact of the tourist on the host             | 68                                                    | 93/4                                                   |
| Destination characteristics                       | 61/2                                                  | 90                                                     |
| Friendly communication between the host and guest | 58/2                                                  | 87/3                                                   |
| The role of man                                   | 74/5                                                  | 96/6                                                   |
| Production and presentation of cultural products  | 69/2                                                  | 86/2                                                   |
| Providing infrastructure and cultural platform    | 70/1                                                  | 76/9                                                   |
| Government role                                   | 64/1                                                  | 78/3                                                   |
| Cultural identity                                 | 65                                                    | 74/3                                                   |
| Cultural tourism products                         | 66/1                                                  | 72/2                                                   |
| Culture revival                                   | 73/2                                                  | 94/1                                                   |
| Involving the local community in the health field | 71                                                    | 82                                                     |
| The role of media and technology                  | 81/3                                                  | 85                                                     |
| The impacts of foreign tourists                   | 62/7                                                  | 75/3                                                   |
| Changing the tourism approach                     | 66/3                                                  | 74/5                                                   |
| National pride                                    | 67/8                                                  | 77/3                                                   |
| Valuing the cultural experience                   | 71/3                                                  | 78/5                                                   |
| Awareness and training of the target community    | 76/1                                                  | 82/6                                                   |
| Destination management                            | 75/5                                                  | 89/5                                                   |
| Tourist behavior at the destination               | 74/9                                                  | 76/8                                                   |
| Having a comprehensive program                    | 70/1                                                  | 75                                                     |

The ranking of cultural marketing sub-themes is shown in Figure 1. The percentage changes vary from 72.2 to 96.6, demonstrating the significance of each metric.



**Figure 1. Different aspects of cultural marketing importance**

The research results show that 96.6% of experts believe that man's role in cultural marketing is the most crucial topic.

In travel, individuals interact with other people and learn about their motives, needs, and aspirations, which are influenced by the local society's culture. The interactions extend beyond the tour guide and begin when they arrive at the airport and stand in front of the visa controller until they depart. In addition, the visitor interacts with law-abiding citizens and ordinary citizens. During their visit, visitors may encounter airport personnel, tour guides, drivers, information office guides, local guides, museum guides, tour managers, train and airline attendants, merchants, and regular citizens. In this case, how each individual acts significantly impacts the visitor experience. Every person encountered by the traveler represents the "destination culture."

From the experts' view, cultural revival is placed second in cultural marketing, earning 94.1% of the vote. We are now dealing with the duality and misunderstanding between historical and cultural identity across Iranian cities, such as Shiraz. On the other hand, contemporary urbanization has become a global and national issue due to its expanding social and spatial changes. Despite Iran's deep historical and cultural roots in urbanization and the growing globalization phenomenon, this conflict

and ambiguity have resulted in an identity crisis that includes an urban, spatial, and cultural identity crisis. We must revitalize culture in the cultural marketing topic to address this difficulty and dualism. The most frequently mentioned topic was exposing the younger generation to cultural heritage. When cultural concepts are transferred to young people, they retain cultural elements and dynamics.

The interviews mention how “traditions and arts inevitably decline as the owners of the methods get older. It is critical to keep these skills and practices alive, and passing them down to the next generation is the best way to do so.” (Interview 9).

The visitors’ influence on the host country ranks third among the factors that cultural marketing specialists should evaluate (93.4%). Although a respondent stated that domestic and international tourism has a significant impact on this problem, other experiences have proven that tourism can affect the tourist host’s culture and society. The cultural consequences of tourism refer to the changes made to the host society’s art, habits, traditions, and architecture. “Socio-cultural impacts” refers to the alterations that occur in the host society’s values, way of life, and creative and intellectual outputs daily.

A tourist’s influence on a host and a host’s influence upon a guest cannot be ignored due to cultural dynamics. When the issue of cultural identity and authenticity does not undermine culture, it does not pose a problem (Interview 15).

The destination’s features, with 90% agreement, rank fourth in the cultural elements’ ranking of the destination’s recovery. During the demonstration of the cultural marketing sample, the following pillars must be examined: the destination’s features based on indicators such as cultural and social infrastructure, indicators, and urban factors; the destination’s cultural geography and tourism products; the destination’s strength and cultural wealth, its demographic structure and characteristics, and its geographical location.

However, cultural strength and richness are crucial for preserving the destination’s culture and controlling how the host community affects visitors (Interview 10).

Another crucial element of cultural marketing is destination management. Among the respondents, 89.5% agreed that this area is vital. This category encompasses developing the local community, identifying the incoming tourist market, urban administration, teaching community responsibility, and destination learning power. In the analysis of interviews, the local community’s empowerment was emphasized the most, followed by an examination of the inbound tourist market. To promote the preservation of culture as a tourist resource, it is crucial to empower culture owners to create effective preservation plans. The government’s and local community governance’s assistance is needed to empower local communities and cultural owners. Besides creating a community responsibility strategy, the government should consider how to pass on culture to future generations.

The inbound market's administration is equally crucial; the destination's management should be in charge of developing the plans and policies for incoming tourism.

In Figure 1, industry professionals rank the importance of other cultural marketing elements. After that, the community and host should be able to interact amicably. As a result of interview data analysis, this theme included tolerance, ensuring visitors have a genuine experience, harmony, and cooperation between hosts and visitors, establishing a shared tourism understanding, maintaining pure culture, maintaining geographic proximity, and avoiding fundamentalism. Tourism entails tourists selecting a location to visit and hosts preparing to welcome them. Developing a genuine tourist experience and monetizing culture are the goals. As a result, this complex interaction may be influenced significantly by goodwill between the visitor and host.

Naturally, the tourist's actions while there, which have been identified as a component of cultural marketing, also affect this connection. Tourism's focus on tourist behavior at the destination is crucial since it affects how well the host and visitor get along. Additionally, it causes the host society's responses, potentially with more significant repercussions. For example, a tourist intending to travel to Iran should know its destination, its conditions, and its laws. Moreover, tourists should accept all the responsibilities of wearing a hijab, having limited access to the Internet, not paying attention to the government's warnings against traveling to Iran, and not being able to access excellent facilities in luxury hotels. Adapting their behavior appropriately, this tourist interacts with the host society properly.

Local communities and tourists have distinct languages, customs, and traditions, leading to misunderstandings that strain the host-guest relationship. Tourists who travel based on their interests and knowledge have better relationships with locals.

Tourists should have the opportunity to explore the culture of the destination community beyond sightseeing and shopping as much as possible. As a result, they will have the opportunity to interact with the host country's cultural context (history and cultural identity). Expecting most tourists to engage in the host community's culture is unrealistic. It is crucial, however, to find ways of engaging those most interested in the culture and history of the community. This method permits the production and presentation of cultural products. The interviewees mention the production and presentation of cultural products to protect culture. Among the items are dishes, herbal tea, and different foods (such as Bahar Naranj, Muscat, and others) belonging to Shiraz. It is also important for the family to integrate their culture into their daily lives. There is also a need to educate and inform the local community, especially the younger generation, about the different historical periods of Shiraz. In all cases, media and technology play a critical role, as shown by the results of subtheme extraction.



In social media, where tourists spend their time before traveling, tourist destinations can provide content about themselves (a short film, a story about the destination, and attractions, among others). Touch points include mobile phones, Twitter or Facebook accounts, websites, YouTube, emails, information books, or location-based markers. Apart from the destination's content, tourists also pay attention to other pieces of information. Besides, the platforms of choice must work together strategically and synergistically based on their strengths and drawbacks and how audiences use them. Tourists can be stimulated and encouraged to travel to a destination by using social media. Handling the tourists and how interacting with them is the next step after the tourist has decided to travel to a destination. Regarding cultural marketing, training and awareness among the destination community are the following priorities.

When tourists are sufficiently motivated to visit a destination, motivation can be increased by educating local communities about changing attitudes toward tourism and how it can result in economic, social, cultural, and political benefits, as well as how to serve and treat tourists as welcomed guests. Training in this area can take any form.

The expansion of tourism heavily depends on the host city's residents. They are regarded as the primary guardians of the tourist industry and natural heritage. Furthermore, they care about conserving their area's natural resources and ecosystem; their cultural and indigenous characteristics are strongly protected while also considering ways to increase income and utilize sustainable tourism's advantages. A society like this has recognized the importance of education to keep up with the sustainable growth of tourism.

Conversely, the codes of cultural identity, self-confidence, and belonging are classified concerning the inhabitants under the topic of cultural identity. Extra attention is recommended to be given to these aspects to preserve the above factors while promoting tourism. Understanding the components of this identity is the first step to understanding how it is produced, developed, and modified. Is cultural identity a singular, unified condition, or is it multiple and fragmented? What are the characteristics and outcomes of these two multiple-part scenarios? What is the relationship between social behaviors such as tourism and cultural identity? If these concerns are adequately addressed, the visitor can trade with the host community without endangering its cultural identity. "In the tourist industry, cultural identity—the identity of the members of that society—is something we heavily depend on. There is more to this issue than merely the self-esteem of society members. The local community's sense of identity and self-belief determines how useful tourism is for society. The local community may be shielded against cultural decay through culture" (Interview 2).

Paying attention to and emphasizing the cultural and national pride resurrection may be the best strategy to boost self-assurance and boost cultural identity on the route to tourist growth. Residents

take pride in their culture and traditions when visitors show interest in their way of celebrating, grieving, cooking, and other activities. The result is a certain amount of cultural confidence, avoidance of estrangement, and a sense of cultural inferiority. National pride has played a significant role in defending against and preventing invasions by occupying countries throughout history. A sense of national pride binds different social classes and ethnicities together, which signifies cultural allegiance. This sentiment will ensure the continuation and stability of the dominant culture within any society.

Determining the level of national pride in dimensions such as history, science, art, and literature, among others, enables the development of a comprehensive method to eliminate threats and transform them into opportunities in cultural dynamics to preserve national identity and culture. Consequently, fostering national pride in the neighborhood through education and awareness is one of the topics of the study. To aid children in comprehending their cultural identity, national identity, and cultural values, we aim to instill a sense of pride in them.

Consequently, it can be said that people are the primary focus in this region, but government involvement in local administration and destination planning should not be overlooked. Establishing community values, developing markets and products, and implementing programs are all crucial components of community-oriented tourism development. This kind of tourist focus may assist the local economy to grow as a motivator to enhance cultural development and conservation and develop new actions in a place for the community. The third interviewee emphasizes the need for “a type of culture building that educates the public about promoting cultural works and avoiding their commercialization so that the public prohibits those who seek to pervert and display them illegally.”

However, the respondents assert that the growth of tourism, the protection of culture, and the encouragement of public engagement are all directly influenced by the government's genuine intentions. Therefore, the government's opposition and unwillingness to let people enter and participate in these places could seriously harm tourism. An effective administration is essential to establishing laws and institutions that encourage individuals to engage in economic and cultural activities. In the absence of government involvement, sustainable growth in the cultural and social spheres is not possible. The government does not directly generate growth, but it contributes significantly as a partner, an accelerant, and a facilitator. The government's ability to provide infrastructure and a cultural platform is among the topics discussed in cultural marketing.

Cultural infrastructure is the first step in the process of cultural development; however, these infrastructures must be developed by the destination's culture. Because cultural spaces are considered the best places to showcase the destination community's lifestyle, they can and should reflect the community's cultural identity. The cultural context is particularly important. These cultural

infrastructures should be built based on the beliefs of the local community. It is also crucial for cultural marketing to change the tourism strategy in places with high potential for cultural tourism. Tourism needs to adapt its business model to account for changing visitor priorities. Visitors' social and emotional needs must be met by the destination's capacity to maintain contact with them. As far as culture and its preservation are concerned, tourism must be rethought, and mass tourism should not be a part of this context because it is incompatible with sustainable development.

As a result, according to those who participated in the interviews, consideration should be given to various tourist philosophies, such as intelligent tourism, creative tourism, and respect-based tourism. Due to its cultural and geographical characteristics, Shiraz has the potential to develop numerous types of tourism, particularly literary tourism, which holds great promise. Nevertheless, several studies show that achieving this aim requires careful preparation. Otherwise, destinations will not be developed at all; they will suffer irreversible damage and may be destroyed.

The majority of interviewees mentioned a comprehensive strategy for cultural marketing in terms of concepts such as planning, a plan to attract tourists, a program to restore the destination, having an influence plan, and not abandoning tourists and the destination.

Numerous respondents stress the need for preparation to keep their goals and culture intact. Despite the benefits of tourist growth that have been described, studies have shown that if administration and planning are not adequate, the destination town's culture will suffer. An interviewee said, "to prepare for tourism in a country; we need the right people, the right culture, and the right geography; in fact, we need a planning framework." "To achieve what we desire from tourism, we must decide what we will contribute" (Interview 15).

### **Main themes and model presentation**

By conceptualizing cultural marketing, it is possible to comprehend the social perspectives and diverse modes of communication of visitors and hosts from diverse cultures. By doing so, it is possible to envision a future in which tourism is about more than just commerce and profit but also embracing diversity as an essential element of modern social structures and politics.

Grouping the sub-codes into broader semantic ranges yielded the key themes based on the communications between the key themes and the subjects. To this end, the following is the proposed final study model for cultural marketing using cultural components (Figure 2):

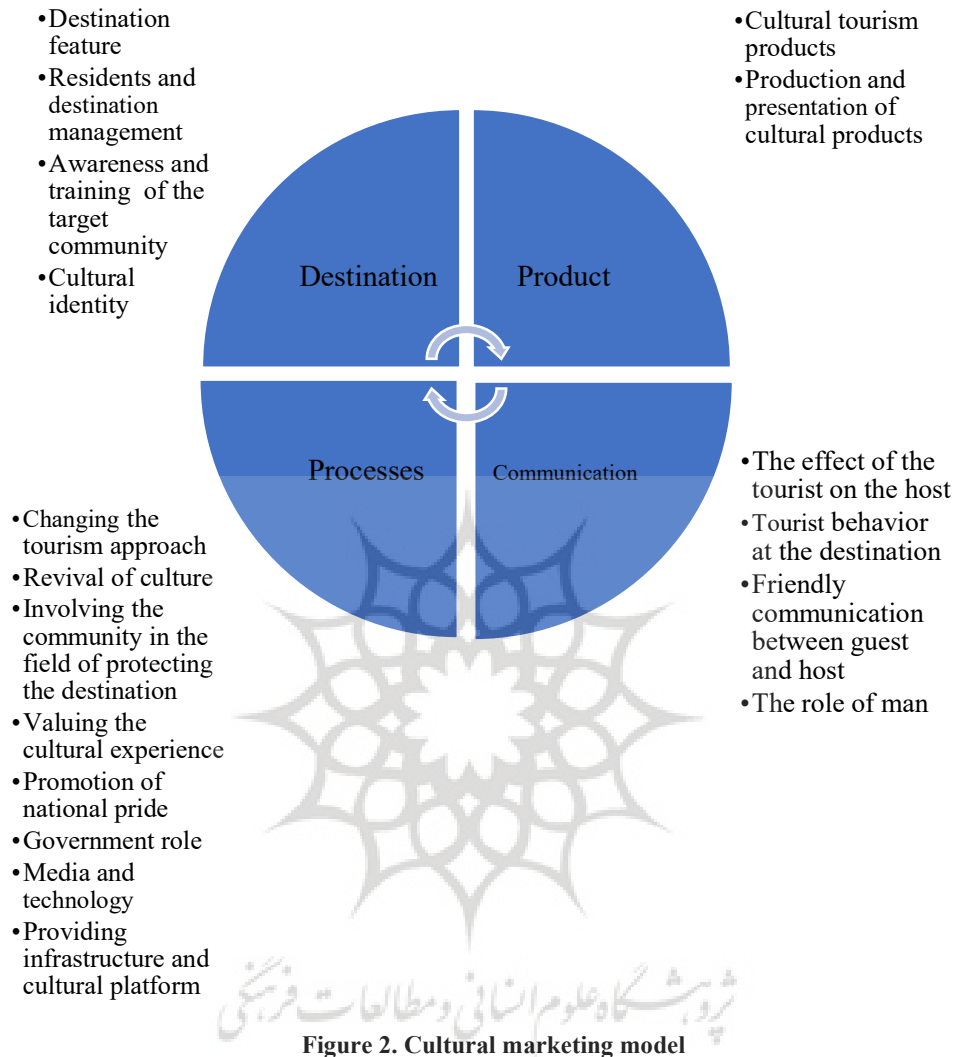


Figure 2. Cultural marketing model

## Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to expand the debates related to the cultural sector's role in tourism development. According to researchers, the current economic and monetary debate is insufficient to understand the externalities of culture and formulate policies accordingly. Since cultural tourism is evolving, all parties involved in its management, promotion, and research face challenges. The socio-cultural consequences of tourism were assessed in the context of the guest-host connection due to broadening the conversation and including additional social aspects and tangible and intangible cultural treasures. Theories have been developed to explain the processes by which cultural tourism has a cultural influence on the community.

This study makes a significant contribution to the understanding of the way cultural elements work with marketing strategy to influence the cultural tourism products' evaluation and, consequently, how managers' judgments are influenced by an awareness of the destination's culture in the tourism industry. As reported by Krylova et al. (2015), who examined the significance of interactions with host communities in fostering cultural sensitivity, interactions, and communication between host and visitor communities can simultaneously advance intercultural understanding.

In addition, if we pay closer attention to how the tourist and the host recognize, appreciate, and behave toward one another, we may be able to determine when engagement and collaboration are necessary and give tourists and cultural diversity, in general, more space. This paper provides new avenues for addressing crucial tourist concerns such as cultural revival and cultural preservation, in addition to the influence of locals and urban government in this area, by offering a conceptual approach to cultural marketing. Understanding social perspectives, diverse methods of connecting with culturally diverse visitors and hosts, and participating in tourist processes may all be aided through conceptualizing cultural marketing. To this end, it is possible to envision a society in which travel and tourism are not only about business and generating revenue but also about accepting diversity as a piece of history and culture and as a reflection of the reality of social and political institutions.

Data analysis revealed that all cultural marketing elements contributed to the tourism sector's growth and protected the heritage's authenticity. Among these elements, the two roles of man and cultural revival demonstrated the most significant effect on their ability to carry out the cultural marketing process and achieve the desired goals. These findings are consistent with those of Lustivati (2015), who demonstrated the contribution of tourism to the upkeep and protection of urban and cultural assets. The study emphasized heritage tourism's potential contribution to the defense and preservation of culture. According to the author, cultural tourism boosts the local economy by generating new employment and business prospects. In addition, it addresses the problem's applicability to locals and tourists (the human role), and these outcomes also strengthen the model's communication component.

As a consequence, it can be claimed that cultural marketing may be a valuable tool for attracting visitors, provided each of its many components is given careful consideration both practically and ethically. Cultural revitalization is one of the procedure category's components in cultural marketing, and it follows Okagbo et al.'s (2017) study, which looked at local perspectives on the relationship between tourism and cultural revitalization. They believe that, contrary to the findings of many tourism research studies, the issue or process of cultural revitalization is almost inconceivable without considering the opinions of locals (residents), especially those in developing countries. As a result of

this investigation, which aligns with the elements of the cultural marketing model discussed in recent research, it is evident that the importance of considering local opinions in tourism strategies and gaining an in-depth understanding of cultural revival in academic studies cannot be overstated.

Based on the findings of this study, the cultural marketing model leads to the proper positioning of cultural tourism through the effective application and blending of various components. Due to the research's emphasis on the integrated components of tourism marketing, it is concluded that implementing proper planning and policy regarding cultural marketing, as well as promoting proper relations between tourism subsystems, will facilitate the development of cultural tourism products (heritage products, rituals and festivals, culture and phonetic language, and others) as well as appropriate promotion and promotional movements. In this situation, marketing can contribute to protecting cultural heritage assets while reducing visitor transportation and lodging costs and increasing visitor satisfaction. Thus, the destination's market share increases and its economy, society, and culture benefit from tourism.

The main contribution of this study is the conceptualization and modeling of cultural marketing for the development of cultural tourism and a better and broader understanding of the sustainable development of cultural tourism. It empirically confirms that the sustainable development of cultural tourism will not be possible without considering the dimensions of cultural marketing.

According to the overall findings of this study, cultural marketing influences how tourism businesses communicate with cultural tourists and causes destinations to consider factors such as destination characteristics, communications, products, and specific processes when launching a marketing campaign. Using culture to create messages for tourists provides many opportunities for businesses. However, the lack of awareness of how culture affects the perception of guests and hosts threatens their relationship. The cultural marketing model provides opportunities for the growth and participation of the destination community. Additionally, fostering empathy, relationships, and communication between host and guest demonstrates tourists' respect for the host culture. Tourists are more interested in destinations that reflect their culture. Expanding cultural knowledge enhances communication and ensures clear communication. There is a weakness in cultural tourism that is caused by misunderstanding or misinterpretation of the host and guest culture. A lack of cultural sensitivity can lead to mistakes.

Addressing cultural differences and deep cultural understanding is crucial in tourism. This study demonstrates that shifting one's perspective on culture is crucial for designing effective marketing campaigns to reach specific market segments. Despite the challenges of cultural misunderstandings in tourism, the cultural recovery model contributes to the continued growth and development opportunities of cultural tourism in destinations. Thus, it is advised that managers and policymakers

present cultural tourism outcomes to satisfy visitor demands, that is, by paying attention to cultural characteristics and identifying the tourists' values and emotional experiences. This is because culture plays a significant role in tourism development. The focus is also on considering travelers' demands while developing the tourism industry. Operators and administrators should be aware that a strong cultural tourism offering should be directly tied to tourists' preferences, particularly their awareness of values and emotional attitudes. Coordinating linked experiences with visitors' demands will assist tourism professionals in finding solutions to related challenges.

Cultural marketing training is recommended as a vital component of cultural tourism growth to improve the intercultural communication abilities of tourist product providers. A training program should equip operators with the knowledge and skills necessary to sell to the cultural preferences of both domestic and international tourists. As the tourism industry becomes more competitive, operators must ensure that cultural tourism continues to grow while protecting existing sites. Therefore, it is advised that managers and policymakers place a high priority on understanding local citizens' emotional attitudes as well as their viewpoints on culture. A full review of cultural products from the perspective of product design, marketing, and assessment of the tourist experience may be facilitated by combining cultural goods' aesthetic, historical, educational, and spiritual components. To influence decision-makers, it is suggested that a project be developed by preserving, reviving, and increasing knowledge of the roles of inhabitants in connection to culture, history, civilization, and progress. These initiatives, which can also reduce mass tourism, may emphasize disseminating innovative tourism techniques and providing the necessary infrastructure to support them. According to the findings of this study, researchers should continue critically analyzing cultural marketing, particularly how universities and tourist destinations can focus on this field.

In addition to the results and the development of a model of cultural marketing, this study has several limitations that significantly limit the generalizability of its findings and the applicability of its conclusions. First, it is based on a cultural tourism destination, so it is necessary to examine the evidence regarding other domestic destinations that are comparable. In addition, the notion of cultural marketing necessitates additional research, including from the perspective of cultural tourists. Therefore, future research should investigate the concept using diverse approaches to supply and demand in various types of cultural destinations. Cultural marketing cannot be the final arbiter because of the complexities involved. When the concept of labor is advanced, cultural marketing becomes more acceptable and acknowledged as a subject for further study.

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