



## PLANNING AND MANAGING RESTRICTIONS AND BARRIERS TO TOURISM DEVELOPMENT BETWEEN IRAN AND CHINA

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### ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research was to identify the obstacles resulted in the lack of development of tourism between Iran and China. According to the results, what is considered as a weakness in the development of tourism industry between Iran and China in Iran and preventing the attraction of Chinese tourists to Iran is Interaction with foreign banks, Traffic and transit status, How to provide health services and its types and quality, Passenger services, including ground and air vehicles and passenger terminals, The performance of tourism management at high levels, Electronic Tourism, Degree of conformity of quality of tourism facilities of Iran with international standards including hotels, and restaurants. This work proposes suitable solutions for tourism product promotion.

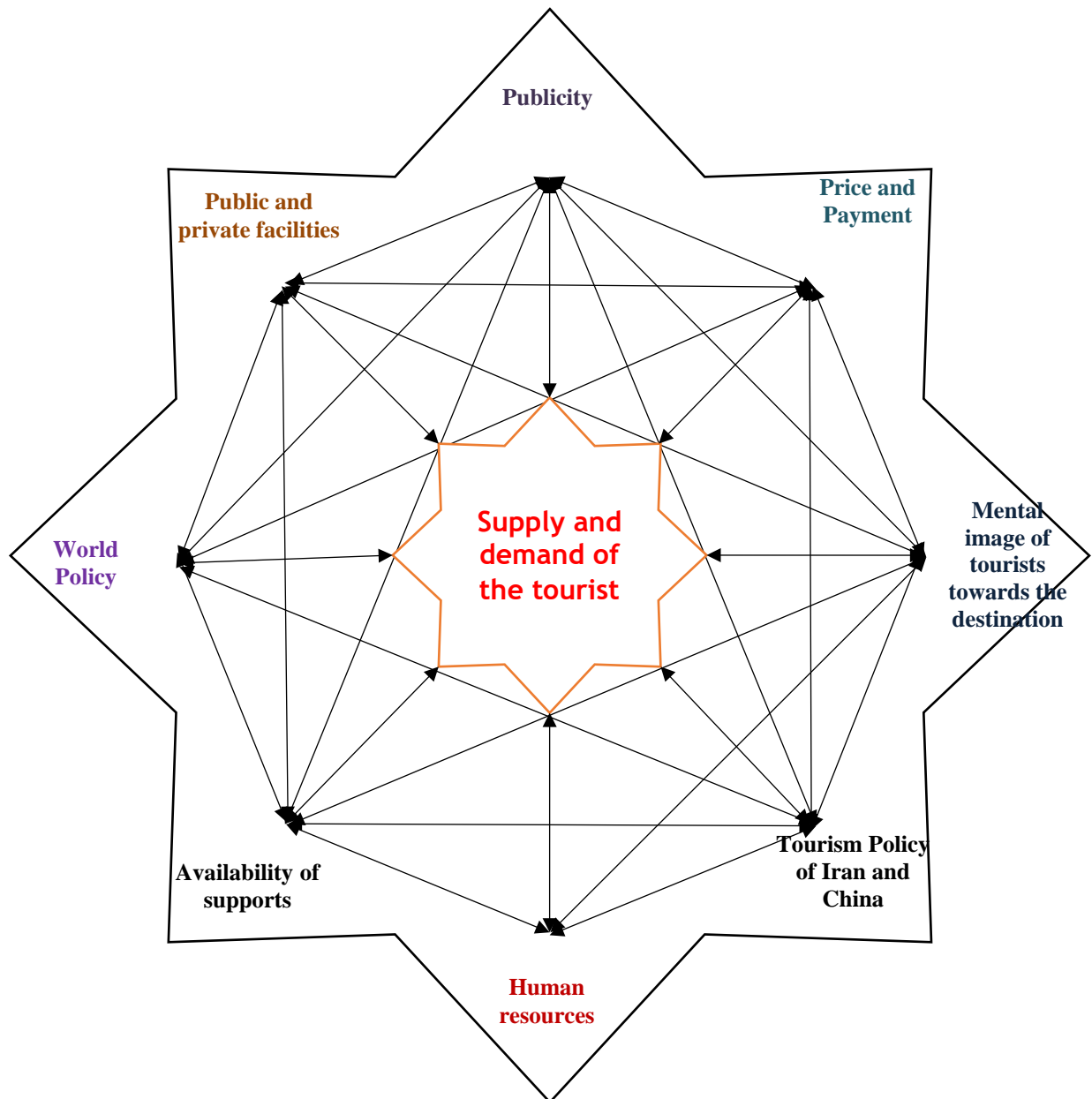
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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Tourism is of great importance so that the tourism industry is considered as the second source of income for more than 49 developing countries based on the available statistics. It is also a strategy to increase incomes and poverty reduction in these countries. According to WTO forecasts, the number of tourists will increase to 6.1 billion by 2020 (Mohammad and Zangi et al., 2006). According to the statistics provided by WTO, more than 50 percent of unemployment in developing countries can be resolved through the development of the tourism industry. However, like global development, tourism development does not consider the elements and grounds creating this industry. Tourism development in any location is a link between the three essential attitudes including capabilities, effects, overall coordination and tourism system (Butler, 2003).

Steiner (2010) in his study interprets new tourism spaces as 'hyper-realities'. By developing a theoretically informed, postmodern interpretation of the symbolic value and the global competitive advantages of these hyper-real places, the article presents a new perspective on the transformation of tourism spaces. A diagram of tourist–community interactions in ethnic tourism is developed to outline different types of interactions, factors

affecting these interactions, and impacts to both groups of actors. The research of Su et al. (2014) explores tourist–community interactions through a comparative examination of tourists' and residents' perceptions in China. Chinese tourists are regarded as being accustomed to experiencing nature through associating it with high culture such as landscape poetry and paintings, calligraphy, and so on, and the impacts of traditional popular culture are seldom addressed (Cui et al., 2017). Tourism prospect could include brochures, CDs and promotional video views of pristine beaches, attractive places, unique cultures, and original place. Policy making is necessary for the development of the tourism market. Appropriate strategies should be determined to achieve market goals.



**Figure 1.** Research variables and their relationship linkages.

From the political and geological perspective, tourism has effects inside and outside countries. Attractions, as the best element of the tourism system, are the main reason for traveling.

Since tourism is a collection of activities, services, and industries that provide the

grounds for the traveling experience, it is important to identify and classify supply components. The quality and quantity of these elements will determine the success of tourism in any region.

Iran and China with monuments, natural and tourist attractions, climate variability and transportation-accessible ecotourism and facility services are able to meet the needs of all type of tourists with different goals. Both countries have tourism products and attractions with high capabilities. Despite different and pristine natural and tourism attractions, climate variability and variety of ecotourism, Iran and China have failed to attract tourists (tourist supply and demand show a reverse trend).

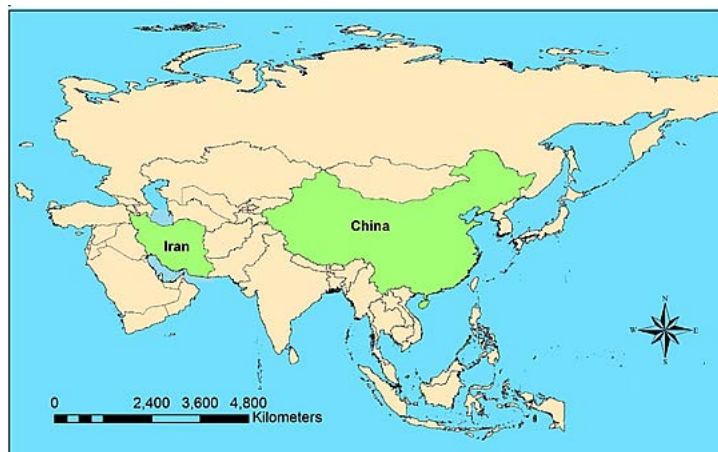
## 2. Research Method

A research method is a tool or instrument used to collect data and analyze empirical evidence (Sam & Sam, 2011). Figure 1 shows the variables and method of the research.

**Table 1.** Variables, indices, and the number of fields associated with each of the displays.

| Variable   | Indicators   | items |
|--|--|-------|
| Advertisements to attract tourists                   | Axial motto  | 2     |
|  | Tourism symbol   | 2     |
|  | presence in the International Exhibitions                                  | 2     |
|  | activity in international media  | 2     |
|  | Use of the Internet for advertising  | 2     |
|  | The use of promotional tools such as posters and brochures                 | 2     |
|  | Centralization on attracting tourists of a particular origin               | 2     |
| Price and Payment                                    | Pricing method   | 2     |
|  | International credential Cards   | 2     |
|  | International Banking Interaction  | 2     |
|  | Currency exchange of mechanism   | 2     |
| The mental image of tourists towards the destination | The mental image of tourists towards the destination                       | 2     |
| Iran and China Tourism Policy                        | Visa   | 2     |
|  | Management of measures   | 2     |
|  | Participate in international conferences and conferences                   | 2     |
|  | The performance of the international relations of the tourism organization | 2     |
|  | Performance of diplomacy   | 2     |
| human resources                                      | Tourist Guides   | 2     |
|  | The culture of the host country in dealing with foreign tourists           | 2     |
|  | Proficiency in English   | 2     |
|  | The food culture of the host country                                       | 2     |
|  | Religion   | 2     |
| Availability of supports                             | The distance between the origin and destination                            | 2     |
|  | Internet accessory   | 2     |
| Public and private facilities                        | The quality of tourism facilities based on international standards         | 2     |
|  | Quality of the transportation network                                      | 2     |
|  | Traffic situation  | 2     |
|  | Handicrafts  | 2     |
|  | E-tourism facilities   | 2     |
|  | health services  | 2     |
| World Policy   | Signs and symptoms Help  | 2     |
|  | Islamophobia   | 2     |
| Total = 8  | 32   | 64    |

In the questionnaire, the Likert scale has five options (very positive), (positive), (ineffective), (negative), and (very negative). The views of twenty professors and tourism geography experts were used to determine the weight and importance of indices. Table 1 shows the variables, indices, and the number of fields associated with each of the displays. Figure 3 shows the geographical location of Iran and China.



**Figure 3.** The geographical location of Iran and China

The goal of the research was to study the obstacles and restrictions of tourism development between Iran and China. The statistical population of the study consists of two sections of Chinese and Iranian tourists, researchers and specialists and experts in the tourism industry of Iran and China.

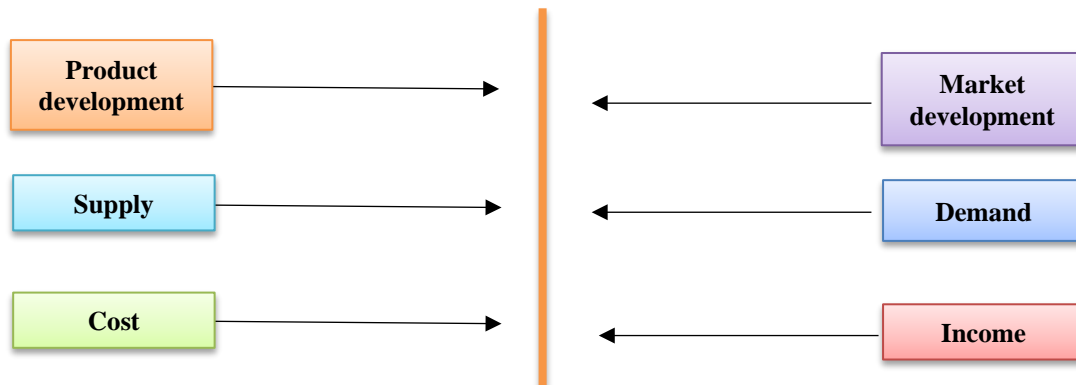
### **3. TOURISM PRODUCT (TOURISM DEMAND AND SUPPLY)**

In an open economy (free), the growth and development strategy by encouraging exports is of utmost importance. An open economy allows free flow of production factors (as well as goods and services) at the international level (Griffin, 1996). The free economy works by market supply and demand. Since tourism is expressed as an economic activity within the tourism market and as one of the exports (i.e. invisible) in any national economy, the role of supply and demand is of paramount importance (Papli and Saghaei, 2007). Economic literature shows five types of facilities for tourism supply: (1) attractions that can be divided into natural and human attractions, (2) transportation is closely linked to tourism development, (3) commercial facilities, hotels, guesthouses and public and private holiday camps (private residences and villas) and travel caravans, (4) banking services, medical centers and security services, and (5) infrastructure including railways, roads, airports, power plants, sewage channels and so on (1999, 46). Tourism demand necessitates four specialized subjects including (1) factors affecting the level of demand, (2) spatial characteristics, (3) typology efforts to identify different types of tourism activities and (4) tourism decisions. To increase demand for travel to a specific destination, advertising techniques must be used for making markets, marketing and maintaining markets. However, necessary capacities (resources, knowledge and skills and infrastructure) should be available for this purpose to provide and manage facilities required and interested by a specific group (Dasweil, 1999).

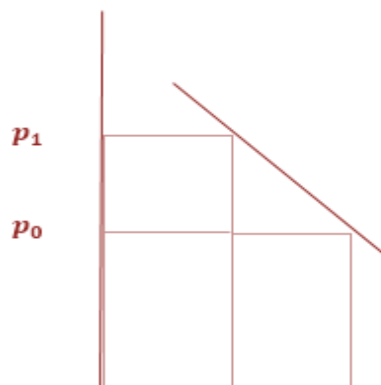
It is essential to pay special attention to the following three issues in tourism demand in a country:

- (1) Equitable distribution of national income
- (2) The level of culture and social well-being
- (3) The future security

Tourism demand is correlated with the fair distribution of income. This means that if the national income is evenly distributed between people, the strength or weakness of tourism demand can be realized given the per capita share of the national income (Gharrehnejad, 1995).



**Figure 4:** The relationship between supply and demand (after Dasweil (1999)).



**Figure 5.** Monitoring demand for the tourism products of a country

To explain the relationship between tourism demand and supply, the supply and demand analysis chart is examined (Figure 4). In a free trade economy, traveling to other points is unlimited. The relative value of a country in the global markets affects the balance of payments. In this case, tourist demand for a country can be estimated by simple analysis. As can be seen, for tourism at the cost of  $p$ , the volume of tourists will be equal to  $Q$ .

The tourism demand in a country is affected by its image in foreign markets. In addition, the ease of access including cultural and economic distance, politics, health, security and so on are effective in the framework of supply.

In the meantime, if a country's currency loses its value relative to other currencies, the purchasing power of foreign tourists in that country will increase. However, the number of foreign trips for residents of the country experiencing a reduction in the value of its currency

will decrease. These changes in the purchasing power are shown in the demand curve (Figure 5) by reduction of price from  $p_1$  to  $p_0$  and an increase in the purchasing power from  $Q_0$  to  $Q_1$ . Thus, for the residents of Country A, a reverse demand trend is formed (Gartner, 1996, 63, 64). It can be generally concluded that the relationship between the tourism supply and demand affects geographic spaces and has several effects in the economic field (Papli Yazdi & Saghaei, 2007).

## **4. DESTINATION MANAGEMENT**

Tourism is a highly competitive industry. For effective competition, destinations are forced to deliver superior value to visitors. From the time a visitor reaches the destination until he/she leaves, the value of the visitor is affected by services and many experiences including a range of public services, private goods, and local community engagement and the hospitality. This is very important to manage and coordinate the various components of residence to reach the maximum value of visitors during the entire stay (Delbari, 2011).

### **4.1 IDENTIFYING COMPETITORS AND THE COMPETITIVE ENVIRONMENT**

How can we bring to this issue that our destination has a good performance and whether the destination management organization effectively competes to gain the greatest possible amount of the market share?

You should compare your destination with competing destinations and identify their strategies to ensure that you are at the top of tourism destinations.

### **4.2 WHO ARE YOUR COMPETITORS?**

Although it can be said that all tourist destinations compete to get part of the global market, this is true that competition between some specific destinations is more intense according to various criteria. These criteria may include the same origin markets, similar products and experiences, same sections, target market, the same area of the key origin markets, similar growth performance in the origin markets and the same tourism seasons of high demand.

### **4.3 TOURISM DESTINATION**

By definition, the tourism destination is a physical location where a tourist stays at least one night. Tourist destination includes tourism products such as support services, attractions, and tourist resources during a one-day trip (Delbari, 2011).

### **4.4 THE MAIN COMPONENTS OF TOURISM DESTINATION**

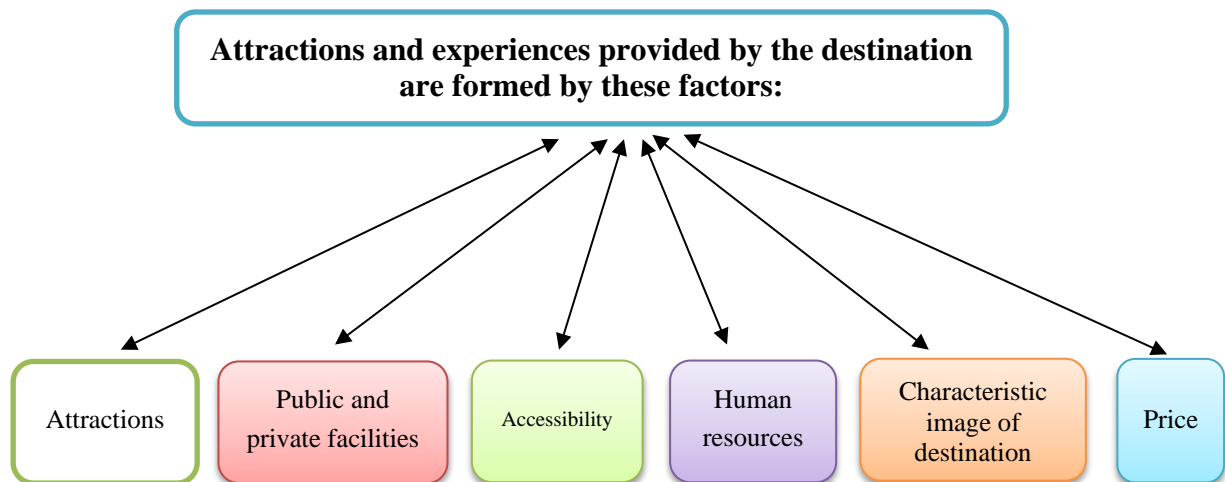
Destinations include some major components to attract visitors and to meet their needs on arrival. The main components can be divided into attractions (places that must be visited) and other components (ibid, 18).

## **5. DESTINATION EXPERIENCE**

Figure 6 shows the factors forming the attractions and experiences provided by the destination. Destination Management is the coordinated management of all components creating a destination (attractions, accommodations, marketing, and pricing). Destination Management adopts a strategic approach for linking these sectors that sometimes are

completely separated from each other to provide appropriate management at the destination.

Cochran's sample size formula can be used to obtain the sample size. Cochran is one of the most widely used methods to calculate the sample size is given of the following formula.



**Figure 6.** Factors forming the attractions and experiences provided by the destination.

## 6. TOURISM GEOPOLITICS

In geopolitics, the concept of territorial space includes all areas under the influence of humans and its geopolitics territory is extended with technological development and progress.

In other words, traditional economic sectors do not seem effective in the modern economy. However, in the postmodern economy, the traditional tourism sectors become revenue-generating units with the help of tourism. In the traditional economy, a windmill or watermill or a small forest hut have little economic profitability, but in the postmodern economy, the same water or windmill can be turned into a tourist center and a revenue-generating unit along with other factors of industrial production (Papli & Saghaei, 2003).

According to tourism geopolitics, it is essential to pay special attention to tourism trends and patterns, i.e., the real value within national borders and to the approach to open tourism space in the territorial space. Tourism in the territorial space is highly dependent on the frequency and quality of tourism resources along with the adoption of efficient management in the tourism geopolitics. Tourism geopolitics is the art of balancing tourist attractions with competitors at the regional and global levels in line with economic policies for the development of territorial space and national interests leading to the well-being of residents and resource sustainability (Mojtahedzadeh, 2000).

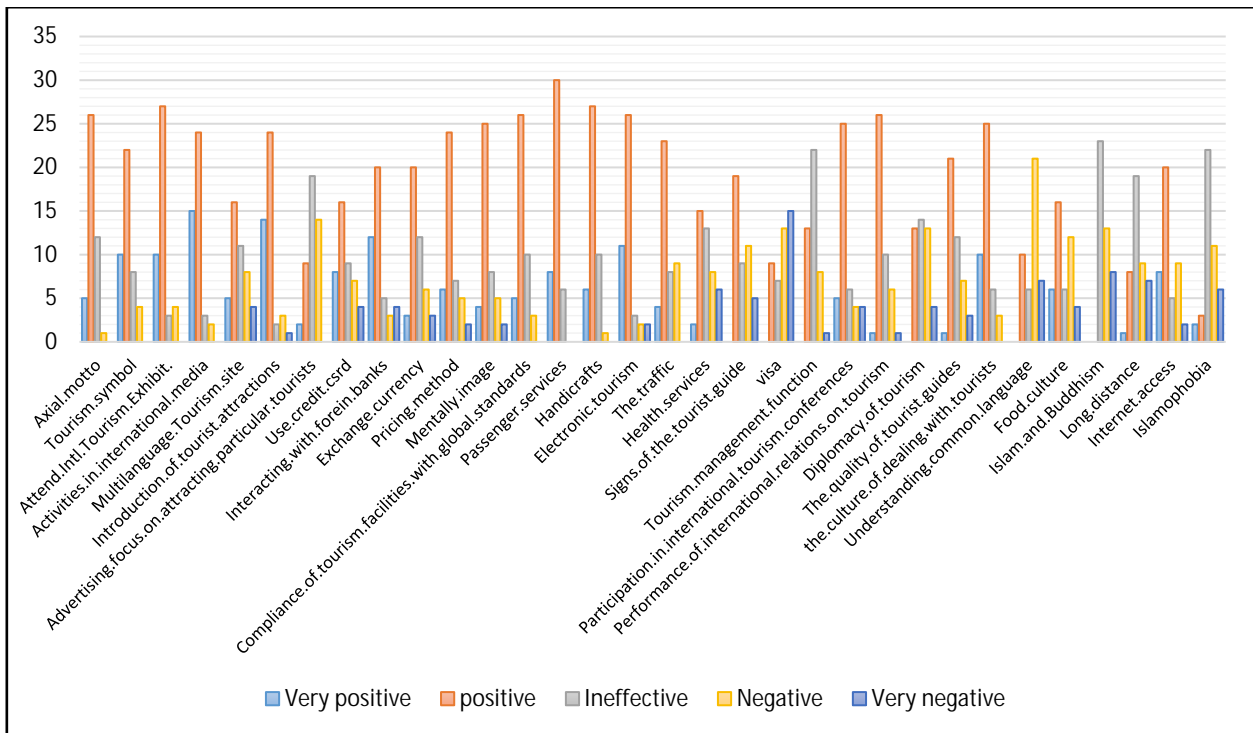
According to the Cochran's formula, the sample population for the 131 normal questionnaires was determined and the questionnaire sample population is 44 people.

## 7. FIELD FINDINGS

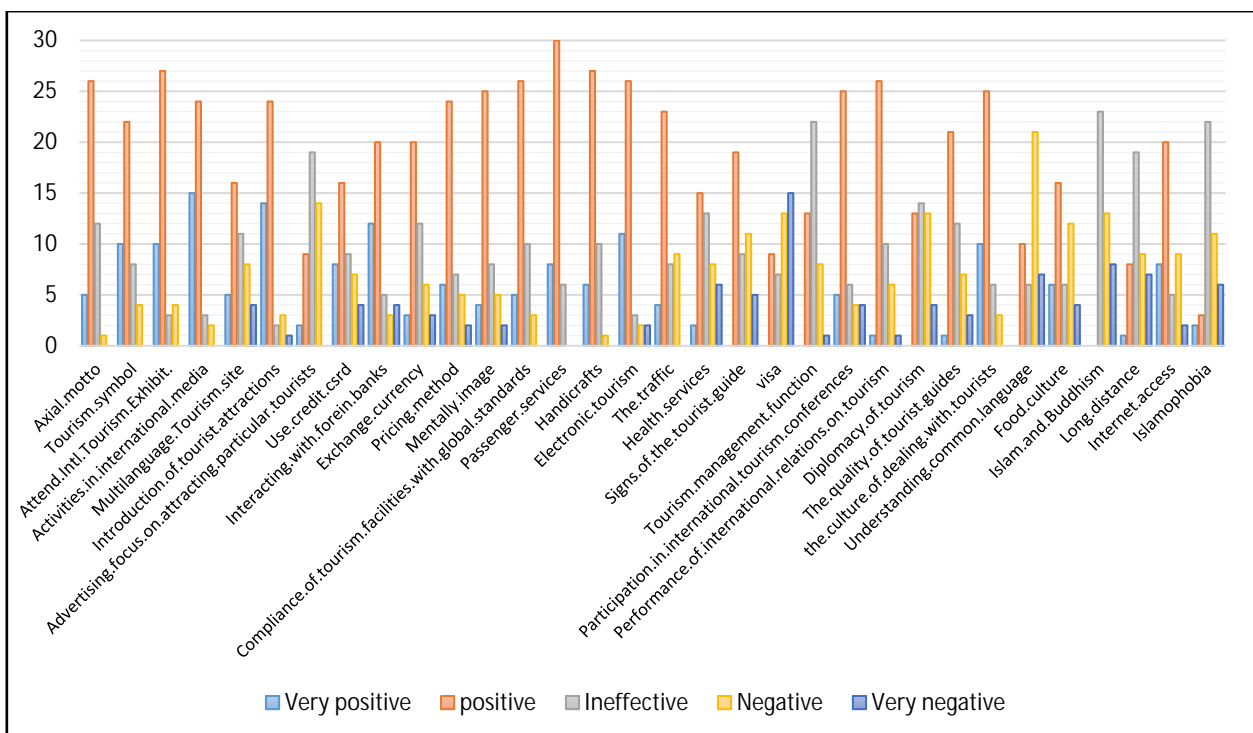
In total, 175 questionnaires were answered by groups of experts and tourists. The questionnaires have 63 questions, of which 32 are specials in Iran and 32 are specific

questions in China and 1 shared common between the two countries. In analyzing the completed questionnaires, the frequency of replies collected from the questionnaires was first multiplied by the weight of the Likert scale options; the sum of the weights obtained for each question raises the score for that question. Finally, the scores obtained are calculated in percentage terms.

The frequency of answers collected from the experts' questionnaire and the score of each of the variables are presented. Figures 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, and 12 show the experts, general tourists, and all opinions from the Iranian and Chinese.

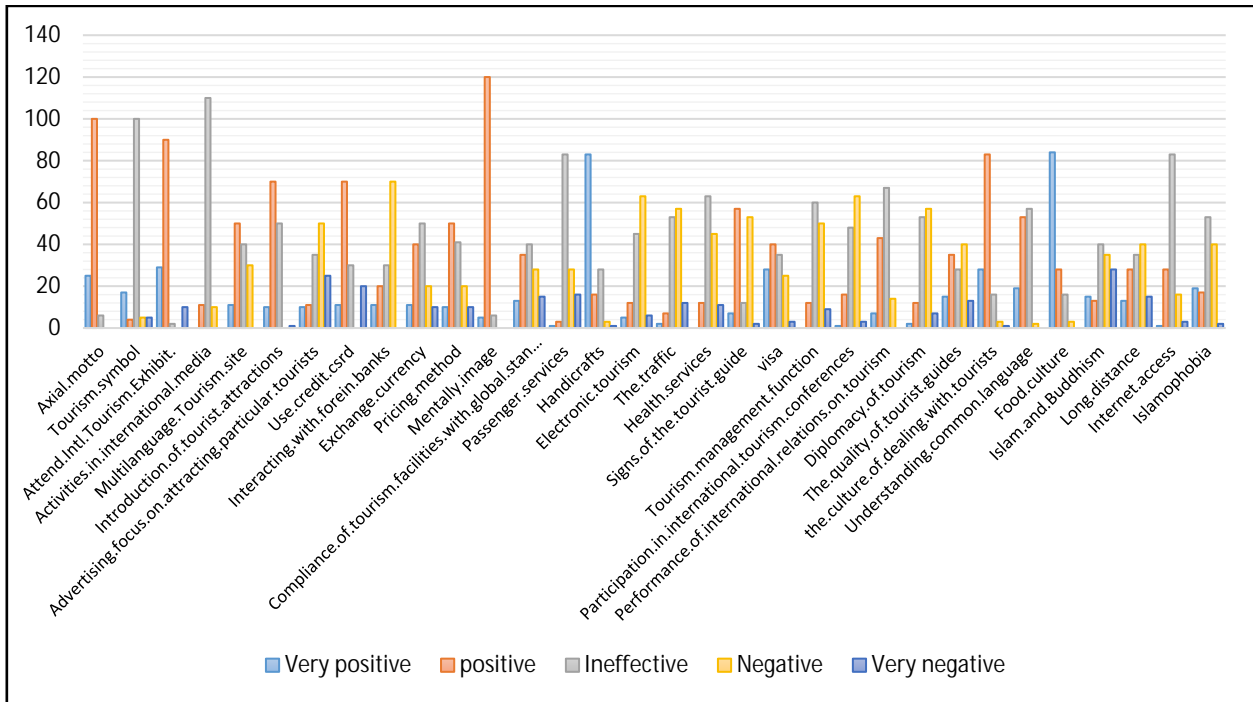


**Figure 7:** Questionnaire results answered by China experts.

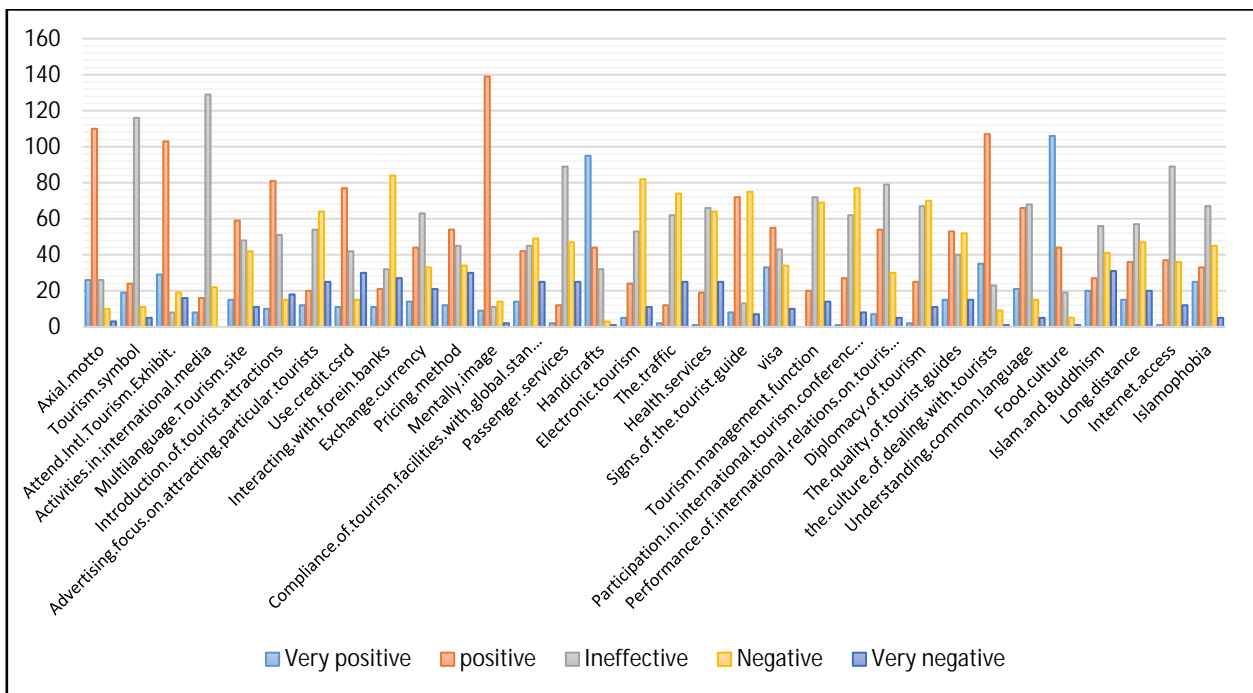


**Figure 8:** Questionnaire results answered by Chinese tourists.





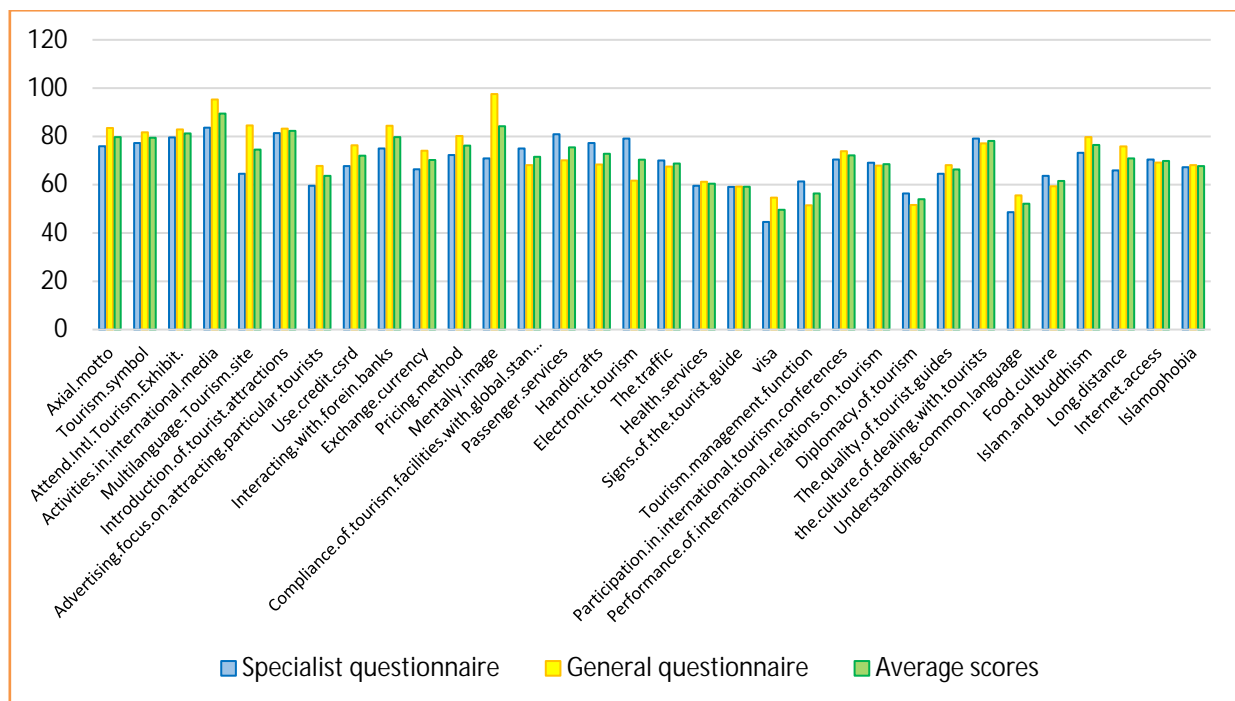
**Figure 9:** Questionnaire results answered by Iranian tourists.



**Figure 10:** Frequency of answers by all Iranian experts and tourists.

According to Figures 11 and 12, among China's influential factors in supply and demand for tourism, China's international media have won the highest score, which means that China's media activities in tourism have had a great impact on attracting Iranian tourists. The second place belongs to the mental image that China has made in the minds of foreigners. Other factors, in order of weight gain from the highest to the lowest, are: China Tourism Attractions, Participation in International Exhibitions, Chinese Banks Interaction with Foreign Banks, Key Axis of Tourism, Tourism Symbol, Cultural Encounters with

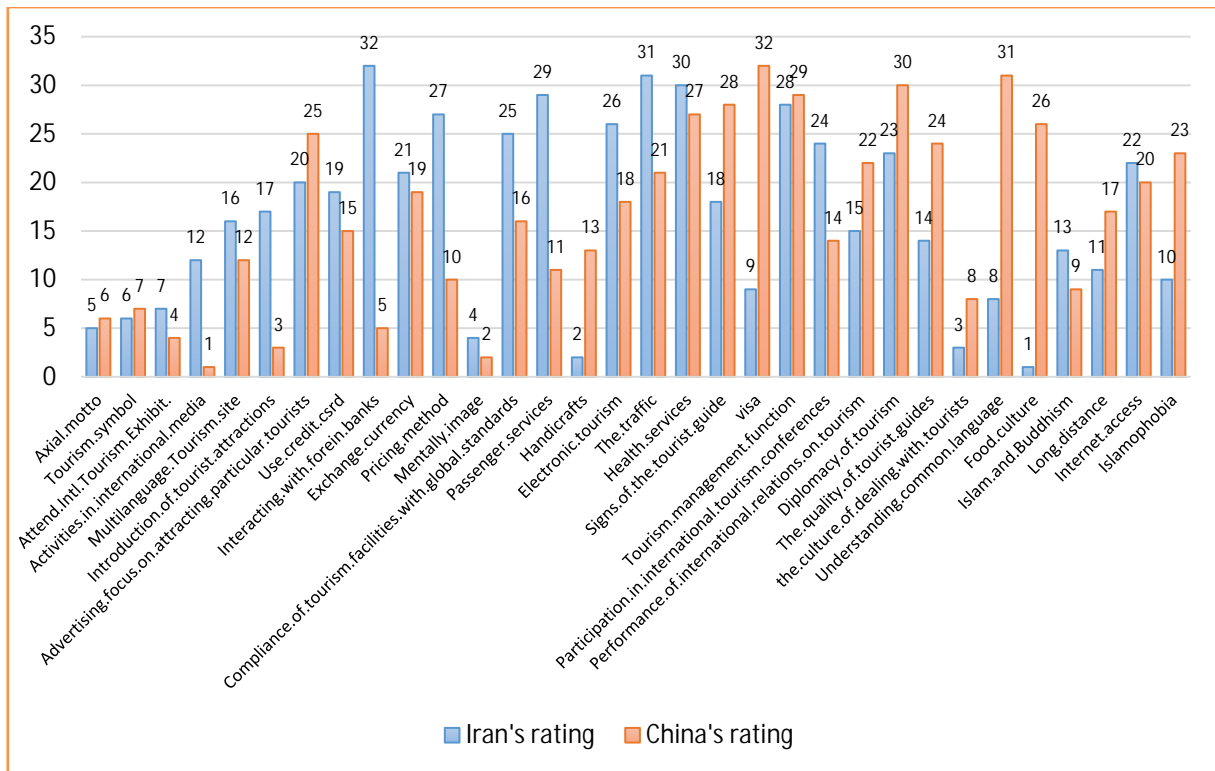
Tourists, Buddhism, Pricing Methods, Passenger and Transportation Services, Sites Multilingual Tourism, Chinese Handicrafts, China International Tourism Conference, Using International Credit Cards, Coordination and Adaptation of China's Tourist Services to World Standards, Long Distance between Iran and China, Electronic Tourism Facilities, China's Currency Transit Network, Internet Access, Traffic, Relationship Functionality Chinese Tourism in China, Islamophobia, the Quality of Tourism Guides in China, The Focus of China's Tourism Promotion on Attraction of Iranian Tourists, China's Food Culture, Health Services, Particularly In Public Places, The Significance of the Tourism Guide in China, China Tourism Management Performance, Tourism Diplomacy Between Iran and China, The Level of Chinese Mastery in English (Common Language), How to Issue a China Visa for Iranian Tourists.



**Figure 11:** Weight score of factors in China.

Note: As much as the weighting factor is less, the factor will act as a barrier to tourism.

Accordingly, we have ranked the factors in both countries. Rank 1 represents the highest scoring and 32 ranks the lowest scoring weight. Figure 12, the lower the rating factor, the more it is weighed, which indicates that this factor plays a greater role as a motivator of travel for tourists. On the contrary, the higher the rating factor, the weaker is, and this shows that the factor serves as a barrier to the supply and demand of tourism between the two countries. One noteworthy point is that, for example, a factor ranked 5th in China and 6th rank in China does not necessarily mean that there is a better performance in China than in China, But the weighting factor in China could be better than that of Iran. These rankings are compared only among the individual factors of each country.



**Figure 12.** Rating of factors in Iran and China.

## 8. CONCLUSION

From the studied results, what are considered as weaknesses in the development of tourism industry between Iran and China in Iran and preventing the attraction of Chinese tourists to Iran are Interacting with foreign banks, Traffic and transit status, How to provide health services and its types and quality, Passenger services, including ground and air vehicles and passenger terminals, The performance of tourism management at high levels, Electronic Tourism, Degree of conformity of quality of tourism facilities of Iran with international standards including hotels, restaurants.

Iran has not been able to make strong international tourism competitions in these areas, and in this field, competition has been lagging behind many countries; Therefore, Chinese tourists are faced with much better options than foreigners when choosing a destination for foreign tourists and often choose countries other than Iran.

Among these limitations, the first three cases, namely, how Iranian banks interacted with foreign banks, traffic and traffic conditions, and the manner and quality of health services, are very weak and have been identified as weak points of Iran and serious barriers to attracting Chinese tourists in Iran. Part of these obstacles arose due to global political and economic sanctions against Iran, partly due to the lack of law and bad culture and respect for others' rights, and the poor enforcement of traffic laws, the inadequacy of these laws and poor monitoring of compliance by citizens, and partly due to poor and inefficient tourism management in Iran. Also, what are considered as weaknesses in the development of the tourism industry between China and Iran that prevent attracting tourists to China are How to issue a tourist visa for Iranians, the degree of mastery Chinese to English, China's tourism diplomacy with Iran, tourism management function, signs of the tourist guide,

health Services, food culture.

Among the above-mentioned restrictions, the issue of visas for Iranian tourists has been identified as the most important obstacle to the development of tourism between Iran and China. Among the above, items 1, 3 and 4 relate to the management of tourism in China and its decisions and policies. China thinks about making money more than anything. For this reason, attracting foreign tourists focuses on countries that are rich in people and, consequently, open-minded tourists. For this reason, visas are issued to tourists from countries such as Iran, certain laws, and some rigors. For example, if the person applying for a Chinese tourist visa is less than a certain amount of currency, then the visa will not be issued to him.

Since foreign tourists arriving in each country to meet their needs inevitably have to communicate with the citizens of that country, this could be an obstacle to attracting tourists to China. China's health and food culture are very different from that of Iran. In the field of health, things like health services in Iran are contrary to Iranian habits and culture. In the field of food, in China, a variety of insects, marine animals and animals such as snakes are consumed as food, which is highly controversial with the taste of the Iranian people. Also, most Iranians refuse to eat meat made in a way other than Islamic slaughter because of the Islamic religion. Therefore, in China, Iranian tourists are confronted with very limited options to prepare their meals, which is a significant obstacle to attracting tourists to China. Increasing tourism awareness through education (Jaber and Marzuki, 2019) is also compulsory.

## 9. SUGGESTIONS

Considering the issues that have been identified as barriers to the development of the tourism industry between Iran and China, The researcher proposes the following as a solution to remove these barriers and to increase the supply and demand of tourists between Iran and China:

1. Both countries should develop their tourism diplomacy and conduct joint and coordinated policies;
  2. Both countries must plan and take effective measures to introduce their attractions to the country;
  3. Both countries should strive to encourage their citizens to travel to the other country in order to increase the exchange of tourists between the two countries;
  4. Both countries should consider the culture of the country of origin in order to attract tourists from the country of origin and include their facilities, hobbies, and interests in their tourism programs in order to increase the satisfaction of tourists. In this regard, attention is drawn to the following:
- Iran should:
    1. Establish health care services at reasonable intervals
    2. Offer Chinese food and specialties in the style of chic Chinese restaurants;
    3. Have fun and entertaining in the interests of the Chinese and include the tours in Iran;
    4. Provide Chinese tour guides who will be fluent in Chinese;
    5. In the form of electronic tourism, all programs, and activities required for tourists from China to tourists from zero to one hundred before the start of the trip;
    6. In the field of banking, it is possible to provide tourists and activists of the tourism industry in Iran with the ability to easily connect with banks in their own country or other countries in the world and make their finances easy;
    7. The status of traffic and pedestrian traffic, transport infrastructure and road network improve internal roads;

8. Improve scheduling of air and ground trips;
  9. Improve the quality of its tourism facilities including hotels, hotels, and restaurants, at the global standards level.
- China should:
    1. Facilitate the visa issuance process for Iranian tourists;
    2. Establish health services of Iranian type at appropriate distances
    3. Provide Iranian favorites and dishes in the style of stylish and attractive Iranian restaurants;
    4. Have fun and entertain the interests of the Iranians and integrate into the program of China tours;
    5. Educate guides fluent in English or Persian language and provide it to Iranian tourists.

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