The Relationship between the Extension of Religious Tourism and Social Trust: a Case Study of Shiraz (Iran)

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Article Info	Abstract
	Trust is a cornerstone of human interaction, underpinning cooperation and participation and functioning as an essential element in the fabric of social life. It facilitates broader collaboration and interaction across diverse social dimensions. In the context of religious tourism, where individuals travel for pilgrimage and spiritual enrichment, trust plays a significant role in fostering intercultural communication and mutual understanding. This article investigates the correlation between the expansion of religious tourism and social trust, specifically focusing on the city of Shiraz, a prominent destination for religious tourists. Employing an applied and descriptive-analytical research approach, the study utilizes both field and library research methods. The target population comprises religious tourists visiting Shiraz. Data analysis was conducted using SPSS software, with Cronbach's alpha values exceeding 0.7 for all variables, confirming the reliability of the research instrument. The study's findings indicate that a substantial majority (90%) of religious tourists exhibit a moderate to high level of social trust, with an even greater proportion (94%) expressing a moderate to high inclination to revisit Shiraz. Furthermore, a direct and significant correlation exists between social trust and revisit intention. Statistical analysis suggests that approximately 38% of the variance in revisit intention can be attributed to elevated levels of social trust. Social trust plays multifaceted roles in social and economic spheres, contributing to tourist attraction, community education, promotional program diversification, and the presentation of cultural, religious, and architectural heritage. The research underscores that heightened social trust has a direct, positive impact on tourists' willingness to return to religious sites in Shiraz. This research is innovative in addressing the role of social trust in attracting religious tourists, an area that has received limited scholarly attention. The study's findings can serve as a foundation for future investigations into the intersection of religious tourism and social dynamics, particularly the role of social factors in the industry's development.

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Introduction

Iran, with its rich history spanning thousands of years and its numerous tourist and pilgrimage sites, stands as one of the world's most significant tourism hubs (Naseri, 1996). The country's tourist attractions are immensely valuable, encompassing ancient relics, sacred religious sites, natural wonders, traditional handicrafts, therapeutic mineral springs, caves, deserts, and spiritual and literary landmarks. Among these, religious tourism holds a prominent position, with shrines and holy sites drawing vast numbers of visitors annually (Taghvaei et al., 2010). Tourism in many nations serves as a reflection of cultural identity and a vital economic driver. For developing countries grappling with challenges such as high unemployment, limited foreign currency reserves, and reliance on a single-product economy, the growth of the tourism sector is particularly crucial (Sabbagh Kermani & Amirian, 2000). Shiraz, a city renowned for its religious, cultural, historical, and natural attractions, is one of Iran's most appealing destinations for religious tourism. For a city like Shiraz, with its abundant potential in these areas, the development of the tourism industry holds great promise. However, realizing these benefits requires significant efforts in infrastructure development, such as improving welfare facilities, enhancing tourist reception capabilities, and educating locals on interacting with tourists, especially given cultural differences (Ebrahimzadeh, 2011). On the softer side of development, trust plays a pivotal role in human relationships and serves as the foundation for cooperation. Trust is a cornerstone of social life, and without it, sustaining a cohesive society becomes challenging. Social interactions and life cycles revolve around trust, making it an indispensable element that fosters collaboration and interaction across various spheres (Hezar Jaribi &Najafi, 2011). In contemporary societies, social trust is a fundamental issue, as modern life would be nearly impossible without it. Trust not only enables personal growth and the realization of potential but also transforms human relationships into creative and flourishing connections, fostering peace, security, freedom, and independence (Putnam, 1993). This study seek to investigate the relationship between the extension of religious tourism and social trust in Shiraz, aiming to enhance its functions and provide practical strategies for tourism development, with a focus on religious tourism. The research addresses key questions: What level of social trust do domestic tourists have in Shiraz? Which factors influence this trust? Additionally, it examines the willingness of tourists to revisit and the impact of trust on reciprocal tourist behavior. By analyzing these aspects, the study aims to contribute to the sustainable development of tourism in Shiraz.

Theoretical background

In discussing the theoretical foundations of the concept of trust, in general, three approaches can be used: micro approach, macro approach, and integrated approach. According to micro-level views, trust is an individual trait or characteristic and therefore is related to individual characteristics and behaviors,

so according to these characteristics, the level of trust can be measured. But according to the macro approach, social trust is not an individual characteristic, but a feature of the social system (Mohseni Tabrizi et al., 2011). From a macro-level viewpoint, trust is seen as a reflection of the stability and reliability of the social environment rather than merely an individual personality trait. Societies with stable social systems, where norms and rules are consistently observed, tend to foster higher levels of social trust among their members (Abdolmaleki, 2008). In such environments, trust is less about individual inclinations and more about the perceived reliability of the institutional and social frameworks. At the micro level, trust is viewed as a dynamic and evolving aspect of social relationships. Johnson emphasizes that trust in interpersonal relationships is built on elements such as openness, sharing, acceptance, support, and cooperative tendencies. Trust is not a fixed trait but rather a fluid and changeable aspect of social interactions, influenced by the actions and behaviors of individuals within their relationships (Ketabi et al., 2011). According to Johnson, creating an atmosphere of trust reduces fears of rejection and fosters hope for acceptance and support, making it a crucial component of healthy social connections. A more comprehensive understanding of trust emerges when micro and macro perspectives are integrated. This approach examines trust as a multifaceted phenomenon shaped by both individual actions and broader social structures. James Coleman, for instance, views trust through the lens of rational action theory, where trust is seen as a calculated expectation based on profit and loss. In this framework, individuals assess the reliability of others or institutions before placing their trust, making it a rational and strategic decision (Mohseni Tabrizi et al., 2011). Coleman also highlights the importance of three-part exchanges in social relationships, where an individual can simultaneously be a trustor and a trustee. These exchanges extend beyond simple two-part interactions, creating interconnected networks that enhance trust across political, economic, and social systems. Such networks are vital for fostering unity and social cohesion, particularly in modern societies where extra-group trust (new social capital) becomes more prevalent than intra-group trust (old social capital) (Hezar Jaribi & Najafi, 2011; Hyderabadi, 2011). From a structural-functional standpoint, trust is seen as a unifying force that enables individuals to believe in the collective pursuit of shared interests. It fosters a sense of obligation and responsibility, allowing individuals to understand and empathize with others' positions. In traditional societies, trust is often confined to close-knit groups (intra-group trust), while in modern societies, it extends to broader networks (extra-group trust), reflecting the evolution of social capital (Hyderabadi, 2011). The social trust system can be broken down into four subsystems: These subsystems work together to create a cohesive social fabric, where trust acts as a foundational element for cooperation, stability, and progress. By understanding the interplay between individual actions and societal structures, we can better appreciate the complexity of trust and its role in shaping social relationships and systems.

Table 1. Parsons quadruple subsystems and type of trust in society

Items	Cultural subsystem	Social subsystem	Personality subsystem (politics)	Economic subsystem (organic)
Task or function	Maintain the pattern	Social cohesion and solidarity	Determining and achieving the goal	Compatibility and compliance
Signs or symbols	L	I	G	A
Type of trust	Thought	Commitment	Power and force	Financial and monetary
Protector of order and security	Thought	Commitment and fulfillment of the covenant	Exercise	Money and capital
Trust system	Cultural trust system	Social trust system	Political trust system	Economic trust system

Giddens divides social trust into four categories: 1- fundamental trust 2- interpersonal trust 3- abstract trust and 4- generalized trust. The first category is trust in people we know in face-to-face relationships, such as family, relatives, and friends. The second category is trust in social institutions and organizations and legal entities, such as police, judges, professors and teachers, artists, etc. The third category is trust in people we do not know, such as citizens with whom we live in our city and country or we feel like being in our homeland (Moeidfar & Jahangiri, 2009). Giddens, by placing security against danger and trust against danger and mentioning the characteristics of modernity, has considered trust as one of the characteristics of modernity (Ketabi et al., 2011). Giddens also argues that pure communication depends on mutual trust, and that mutual trust, in turn, is closely related to "intimacy." To build trust, one must trust both the other and oneself, at least within the scope of the relationship. Since trust is so much related to intimacy, maintaining the originality of the relationship requires that the same balance that is necessary in intimacy between self-determination and in resolving each other be observed here as well. The important point in building and cultivating trust in pure relationships is that everyone should "recognize" another person and be able to regularly deduce some "desirable answers" from his speech and behavior (Kafashi, 2011). Giddens's view seems to be a more appropriate framework for analysis due to the attention to the main existence of the modern world and the application of micro and macro levels that originate from his theory of structuring and also due to special attention to the issue of risk, along with personal distrust. Selected as the theoretical framework of this research.

Religious tourism, as one of the most significant forms of tourism, plays a crucial role in the economic, social, and cultural development of communities. This type of tourism involves traveling to sacred sites, participating in religious ceremonies, and engaging in spiritual activities, which hold particular importance for pilgrims and tourists. Studies indicate that religious tourism not only strengthens cultural and religious identity but also contributes to the sustainable development of destination regions through job creation, infrastructure improvement, and increased local income (Karoubi et al., 2022). On the other hand, religious tourism faces challenges such as crowd management,

environmental preservation, and ensuring the safety of pilgrims. Recent research highlights that creating lasting spiritual experiences for pilgrims, enhancing service quality, and developing appropriate infrastructure are key factors in attracting and satisfying religious tourists (Harun et al., 2024). Furthermore, addressing the psychological and social dimensions of tourists, such as reducing perceived risks and increasing feelings of security, can help strengthen social bonds and trust in the destination. In this regard, collaboration among governments, the private sector, and local communities is essential to create an attractive and secure environment (Wang, 2022).

Literature Reviews

There is very little research conducted on religious tourism and social trust. The most relevant research conducted is mentioned below.

Mzobe & Nyikana (2024) conducted a study focused on enhancing the resilience of the tourism sector, particularly religious tourism, in the face of external shocks, using the COVID-19 pandemic in South Africa as a case study. The research revealed that the sector experienced substantial financial losses during the pandemic, exacerbated by widespread closures. Many faith-based organizations struggled to sustain their traditional activities, travel, and commitments. The study underscores the need for stronger collaborations with stakeholders and the adoption of technological innovations to mitigate such challenges in the future. Alvarez et al. (2024) analyzed religiosity as a factor influencing perceptions of risk and hostility in conflict-prone destinations. Using samples from the United States and India, representing Western and non-Western cultural contexts, the study found that religiosity reduces perceptions of terror risk and hostility, indirectly boosting travel intentions to such destinations. The research also noted the evolving literature on safety and security in tourism, particularly in the wake of modern terrorism, which has significantly altered travel behavior and geopolitical dynamics. Cohen-Louck et al. (2023) explored the relationship between fear of terrorism and fear of crime, focusing on demographic factors, locus of control, and coping strategies. The study found that for women, beliefs in chance, fate, and powerful others were associated with higher feelings of insecurity and greater fear of terrorism. For men, beliefs in chance and fate similarly correlated with increased fear of terrorism. These findings highlight the gendered dimensions of fear and security perceptions. Korstanje & George (2021) examined the concepts of risk, security, and fear in religious travel, questioning whether large religious events create conditions for terrorism and local violence. The study emphasized that such events, while fostering social cohesion and spiritual connection, require careful management to ensure safety. The level of societal control over security and the likelihood of negative events recurring play crucial roles in shaping perceptions of risk. Collectively, these studies highlight the multifaceted challenges and opportunities in religious and cultural tourism, particularly in the context of crises like the COVID-19

pandemic and geopolitical conflicts. They underscore the importance of resilience, technological adaptation, stakeholder collaboration, and the role of socio-cultural and psychological factors in shaping travel behavior and destination recovery.
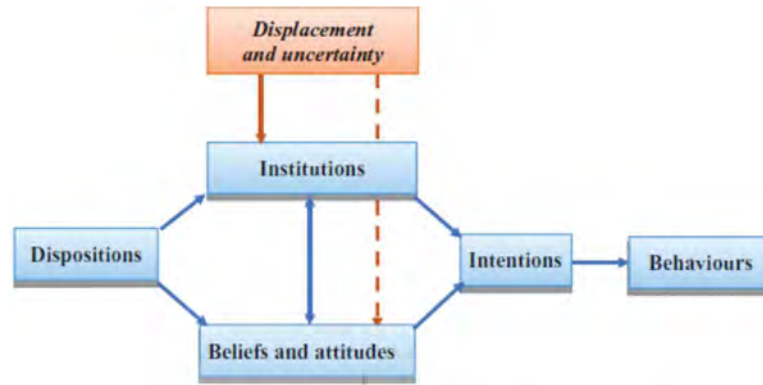
Figure 1. Stage development model of trust in tourism (McKnight & Chervany, 2001)

Strzelecka & Okulicz-Kozaryn (2018) explored the link between tourism growth and social trust using large-scale data. Their study found that: (1) tourist arrivals per capita have a more pronounced positive effect on social trust in less affluent regions compared to wealthier ones, and (2) domestic tourism, unlike international tourism, fosters trust. The research also suggested that tourism in wealthier areas might erode social trust due to limited economic incentives and potential disruptions to trust-dependent social and political processes.

Gao et al. (2024) examined how geographical, environmental, and tourism-related factors collectively shape public social trust. By leveraging big data, the study revealed that: (1) the interplay between rice cultivation ratios and tourist reception levels influences social trust in destinations, (2) pathogen stress and tourist supply levels affect trust in tourist-originating regions, and (3) economic development and tourist reception jointly shape trust in destination areas.

Rahmi et al. (2021) analyzed the role of social capital in tourism development, emphasizing its importance for sustainable urban tourism and regional economic growth. Using data from 53 journals and tools like PoP and VOS Viewer, the study identified key themes, including tourism development, relationships, and social capital. The findings underscore the need to integrate social capital into tourism strategies to boost community engagement, foster sustainability, and create favorable conditions for tourism growth. Karoubi et al. (2022) employed structural equation modeling to study factors affecting the social bonds of religious tourists in Mashhad. The results identified secure and intimate bonds as critical for strengthening social connections. The study also stressed the importance of infrastructure

development, risk mitigation, innovative marketing, data protection, and creating safe, appealing environments to enhance tourist experiences.

Harun et al. (2024) filled a research gap in Umrah tourism by conducting a systematic review of 20 articles from Scopus and Web of Science (2013–2023). The study identified seven factors influencing Umrah travel behavior: personal factors, destination image, demographics, psychological factors, travel accommodation, experiences, and perceived risks. It also provided actionable recommendations for policymakers and destination managers to improve the pilgrimage experience. Woosnam et al. (2023) offered a fresh theoretical perspective on the social impacts of tourism. Published as a special issue in the Journal of Sustainable Tourism, the article enriches the theoretical foundations of tourism research. It serves as a valuable resource for students and researchers, providing innovative insights into the social dimensions of tourism and advancing understanding and application in tourism, planning, and related fields.

Wan (2022) studied tourists' trust in government-led tourism brands, focusing on economic sustainability. The research examined antecedents such as visit motivation, experience perception, and revisit intention, with believers and non-believers as moderators. The findings highlighted differences in motivations and experiences between religious and regular tourists, emphasizing the brand's impact on environmental consumption (e.g., food, religious items). Revisit intention, service value, and spiritual experiences were found to significantly influence brand trust.

Methods

This study is a survey-based correlational research that examines the relationship between religious tourism and the social trust of tourists. Data were collected through questionnaires. In this study, individual scores were calculated based on a five-point Likert scale, and a total score was determined for each participant. To assess the validity of the items, methods such as face validity, construct validity, and convergent validity were employed. The research was conducted in 2022, and the statistical population consisted of domestic tourists who traveled to the city of Shiraz for pilgrimage and religious purposes. The sample size, determined using Morgan's table, was set at 200 participants. The face validity of the questionnaire was confirmed through expert evaluation. Factor analysis was used to validate the constructs related to social trust. This method was applied to identify underlying factors of the variables, examine relationships between structures, and evaluate theoretical expectations. Additionally, Cronbach's alpha was utilized to measure the internal consistency of the questionnaire. The Cronbach's alpha coefficients for the dimensions of social trust are presented in the table below, indicating relatively high validity for the items within these dimensions.

Table 2. Social trust, its dimensions and indicators

Construct	Component	Indicators
social trust	Tourists' trust in the people of Shiraz	- Trust in the people of Shiraz (in its general form). - Trust in Shiraz businessmen when trading and buying in Shiraz; - Confidence in the general condition of roads and entrances to the city of Shiraz (land transport status) - Trust in the performance of Shiraz hospitals and emergencies - Trust in the performance of Shiraz physicians in diagnosis and treatment - Confidence in the health of the food of hotels and inns - Confidence in the health of restaurant food Trust in tourism operators to support tourists
	Tourists want to travel to Shiraz again	- Expressing desire to travel to Shiraz again - The level of interest in the city of Shiraz - Feeling happy to be in Shiraz - Prefer some difficulties in Shiraz easily and comfortably over other cities - Offer to travel to Shiraz to friends or acquaintances if you intend to travel to other cities in Iran and the world; - The possibility of choosing another city to travel instead of Shiraz

Table 3. Alpha coefficient of items related to social trust

Indicators	Tourists' trust in the people of Shiraz	The desire of tourists to travel to Shiraz again
Alpha value	0.941	0.897
Number of items	8	6

Results

According to the research findings, 47% of the respondents are women and 53% are men. In terms of age, 32% of respondents were in the age group of 15-30 years, 27% were 31-45 years old, 11% were 46-60 years old, and 30% were 61 years old. In terms of education, 37% of them have a diploma, 22% of them have a master's degree, 18% of the respondents have a bachelor's degree, 7% of them have a master's degree and 2% of them have a doctorate. About 14% also had primary and secondary education.

The first question of the study was: To what extent do religious tourists trust the people of Shiraz? In response to this question, it should be noted that the data in Table 4 show that 33.5% of respondents had a high level of trust in local hosts, while 9.5% reported a low level of trust, and 57% had a medium level of trust. These results indicate that the overall level of tourists' trust is in the medium to high range. Table 5 also shows the percentage distribution of each dimension of the tourist trust index separately.

Table 4. Frequency distribution of respondents according to the level of trust

The level of trust	Abundance	Percentage
Low	19	9.5
Medium	114	57
Much	67	33.5
Total	200	100

Table 5. Frequency distribution of respondents according to their sense of trust in the items

Item		Level				
		very much	Much	Medium	Low	very little
Trust in the people of Shiraz (in its general form):	Abundance	102	78	17	2	1
	Percentage	51	39	8.5	1	0.5
To Shirazi businessmen while buying and trading in Shiraz	Abundance	47	66	57	24	6
	Percentage	23.5	33	28.5	12	4.7
The general condition of the entrances and roads of Shiraz	Abundance	14	62	89	31	4
	Percentage	7	31	44.5	15.5	2
The performance of Shiraz hospitals and emergencies	Abundance	17	89	85	8	1
	Percentage	8.5	44.5	42.5	4	0.5
To the performance of Shirazi physicians in diagnosis and treatment	Abundance	24	99	72	4	1
	Percentage	12	49.5	36	2	0.5
To the health of the food of Shiraz hotels	Abundance	42	103	51	4	2
	Percentage	20	51.5	25.5	2	1
To the health of the food of Shiraz restaurants	Abundance	33	91	61	12	3
	Percentage	16.5	45.5	30.5	6	1.5
To tourism officials to support tourists	Abundance	53	79	55	6	4
	Percentage	26.5	39.5	27.5	3	2

The data presented in Table 5 regarding tourists' trust in the people of Shiraz (in general terms) reveal that 45% of tourists expressed a high level of trust in the people of Shiraz, while only 1.5% reported a low level of trust. In terms of trust in Shirazi businessmen during transactions and purchases, 28.2% of respondents indicated a high level of trust, whereas 8.3% reported a low level of trust. Regarding trust in the entrances and roads leading to Shiraz, 19% of respondents demonstrated a high level of trust, while 8.75% expressed a low level of trust. In relation to trust in Shiraz hospitals and emergency services, 26.5% of respondents reported a high level of trust, compared to 2.2% who indicated a low level of trust. Concerning trust in Shiraz physicians for diagnosis and treatment, 30.7% of respondents expressed a high level of trust, while only 1.2% reported a low level of trust in the diagnostic abilities of Shiraz physicians. With respect to the hygiene and safety of food in Shiraz hotels, 35.7% of respondents stated that they had a high level of trust, whereas only 1.5% reported a low level of trust. Similarly, regarding the hygiene of restaurant food, approximately 31% of tourists expressed a high level of trust, while 3.7% reported a low level of trust, and 30.5% indicated a moderate level of trust in the food served at Shiraz restaurants.

Finally, 33% of respondents reported a high level of trust in tourism authorities to support domestic tourists, while 2.5% expressed a low level of trust in these authorities.

The second research question aimed to assess the extent of tourists' willingness to revisit Shiraz. The data presented in Table 6 indicate that 51.5% of respondents expressed a strong desire to revisit Shiraz, while 5.5% reported a slight inclination to return. Additionally, approximately 43% of

participants held a neutral or moderate stance. Overall, the findings suggest that tourists exhibit a significant tendency to revisit Shiraz after their initial travel experience.

Table 6. Distribution of frequency of respondents according to the desire of tourists to travel again

The degree of desire	Abundance	Percentage
Low	11	5.5
Medium	86	43
Much	103	51.5
Total	200	100

Table 7. Frequency distribution of respondents according to their desire to travel again by items

Item		Level				
		very much	Much	Medium	Low	very little
How much would you like to come to Shiraz again?	Abundance	99	80	18	2	1
	Percentage	49.5	40	9	1	0.5
How much are you interested in Shiraz?	Abundance	42	78	56	16	8
	Percentage	21	39	28	8	4
How good do you feel about being in Shiraz?	Abundance	28	64	71	31	6
	Percentage	14	32	35.5	15.5	3
How satisfied are you with preferring some of the hardships of traveling to Shiraz to the comfort and convenience of another religious city?	Abundance	17	89	80	11	2
	Percentage	8.5	44.5	40	5.5	1
If one of your friends or compatriots intends to travel, how likely is it that you will suggest the city of Shiraz to her?	Abundance	32	99	52	6	11
	Percentage	16	49.5	26	3	5.5
How much do you feel now that it would have been better if you had chosen another city instead of Shiraz?	Abundance	1	6	49	93	51
	Percentage	0.5	3	24.5	46.5	25.5

The data presented in the table above indicate that 89% of tourists expressed a strong desire to revisit Shiraz, while 1.5% reported a lesser inclination to return. In terms of the level of interest in the city of Shiraz, 60% of respondents demonstrated a high level of interest, whereas only 12% exhibited minimal interest. Regarding tourists' emotional perceptions, the findings reveal that 46% of respondents held a positive sentiment toward being in Shiraz, while 18.5% reported low sentiment and 35.5% expressed moderate sentiment. Concerning the willingness to endure certain travel inconveniences to visit Shiraz over choosing the comfort and convenience of another religious city, 53% of respondents indicated high satisfaction, while 6.5% reported low satisfaction. When asked about the likelihood of recommending Shiraz to friends or compatriots planning to travel, 65.5% of respondents stated they would most likely suggest Shiraz. Regarding the perception that it might be preferable to choose another city over Shiraz,

3.5% of respondents strongly agreed with this sentiment, compared to 72% who slightly or moderately agreed, and 24.5% who considered selecting another city.

The third research question examined whether there is a relationship between the trust of domestic tourists and their willingness to travel again. Given that the research questions were measured using a Likert scale, it was necessary to first assess the data distribution before conducting regression analysis. The results of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test indicated that the distribution of scores for the independent variable (trust) did not significantly deviate from a normal distribution, thus justifying the use of parametric tests.

Table 8. Normal distribution of data on two variables of trust and willingness to travel

Trust	Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z	1.32
	The significance level	0.9
Willingness to travel	Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z	1.54
	The significance level	0.08

According to Table 9, the correlation coefficient between these two variables is $R=0.64R=0.64$, which is statistically significant at a very high level ($P=0.000P=0.000$). Since this value is positive, it indicates a direct relationship between the two variables; that is, as the level of trust increases, tourists' willingness to travel again also increases. Consequently, the research hypothesis, which posits a positive relationship between the two variables, is supported. With a coefficient of determination of $R2=0.38R2=0.38$, approximately 38% of the variation in tourists' tendency to travel again can be explained by their trust in the people of Shiraz.

Table 9. Regression coefficient of trust and willingness to travel again

Statistical index of the model	Regression coefficients	standard error	Standard beta	T	The significance level
Fixed coefficient	6.61	1.019	-	6.419	0.00
Trust	0.23	0.02	0.64	14.66	0.00

R=0.64 R^2=0.38   F=214.912   Sig= 0.00

Discussion

Trust is one of the most critical aspects of human relationships and serves as the foundation for participation and cooperation. Life cycles are built on trust, and its importance in social bonds is such that it can be considered an essential element of social life, expanding the scope of cooperation and interaction across various dimensions of society. Conversely, a decline in social trust leads to feelings of insecurity among individuals, causing them to withdraw from cooperation and limit their interactions due to fears and anxieties. This results in the prevalence of individualism and, consequently, utilitarianism in society. In such cases, social relations, both within and outside the country, diminish.

Therefore, one of the fundamental principles of social life is mutual trust. If a society fosters a high level of trust among tourists, attracting more tourists becomes an investment that can generate future income for that country. However, despite tourism being a profitable and employment-generating industry that plays a vital role in balancing foreign exchange payments, Iran's tourism sector has yet to realize its full potential, despite its natural, cultural, and human-made assets. Therefore, based on the findings of this study, conducted as a case study in Shiraz, religious tourism and its expansion lead to greater social trust between tourists and the local community. Tourists' trust in the local community results in higher satisfaction. Increased satisfaction leads to longer stays and a greater likelihood of repeat visits. The findings also indicate that tourists who trust the local community are more likely to recommend the destination to others.

To establish and gain the trust of tourists, certain preconditions are necessary across various domains. These are addressed in alignment with the objectives of the article as follows:

- **Educational and awareness programs**: Educate and inform the local community about how to interact with tourists and participate in tourism activities.
- **Enhancement and diversification of promotional programs**: Promote religious, cultural, and local customs through social media and other advertising platforms.
- **Organization of religious tourism events**: To expand religious tourism, local, regional, and national events should be organized alongside existing pilgrimage sites to attract more tourists.
- **International marketing**: Given the geographical location of Fars Province and Shiraz in the field of health tourism, marketing efforts should target regional and international tourists from neighboring countries.
- **Improvement of service quality and diversity**: Providing high-quality and diverse services is crucial for ensuring tourist satisfaction. Necessary planning should be undertaken in this regard.
- **Quantitative and qualitative improvement of infrastructure**: To achieve tourist trust and satisfaction, planning should focus on enhancing accommodation, service, and transportation infrastructure to cater to a wide range of tourists with diverse social, cultural, and economic backgrounds.

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