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Residents' Attitudes towards Tourists Based on Tse and Tung's Interpersonal Communication Dimensions; an Emphasize on Stereotypes, Emotions, and Behaviors

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Article Info	Abstract
	The development of tourism in today's world can have various impacts, including economic, social and cultural impacts on the local community. Therefore, understanding residents' attitudes towards tourists is a key element in managing sustainable tourism. This study was conducted to find views, emotions and behaviors of Sanandaj residents towards tourists and how these views influence their behaviors. For this purpose, questionnaires containing scales on stereotypes, emotions and behaviors of residents towards tourists based on Tse and Tung's conceptual model were distributed among 400 residents of Sanandaj in November 2024 using convenience sampling. This research is applied and follows a quantitative approach, with data collected in a survey format. For analyzing the data, T-test, Regression, Mann-Whitney and Kruskal-Wallis Tests were used. The results indicate that while residents hold positive feelings and attitudes towards tourists, such as being "friendly" and "sincere", there are also negative concerns, such as being "immoral" and "rude", which may stem from increased traffic and disruptions in daily life. Furthermore, regression analysis shows that the components of "immoral" and "uncivilized" have a significant effect on reluctance to assist tourists. Individuals with higher education and men tend to be more inclined towards positive interactions with tourists. The research findings can assist in managing host-tourist relationships and designing spaces for better interaction between them.

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Introduction

Tourism is a complex and dynamic phenomenon that occurs in specific temporal and spatial contexts (Hartman, 2023; Li et al., 2024). Tourists engage with both the natural and constructed environment and interact with local communities. According to the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), urban tourism, which includes travel to densely populated areas (Esmaeili Mahyari et al., 2023; World Tourism Organization, 2020), urban tourism, which includes travel to densely populated areas, has grown significantly faster than tourism in non-urban regions (Bock, 2015; Rasoolimanesh et al., 2017). When a community becomes a tourist destination, the quality of life of its inhabitants can be profoundly affected by tourism development (Allen et al., 1988; Gannon et al., 2021; Kanwal et al., 2020). Transforming a place into a tourist destination requires extensive infrastructure development, which can have a significant economic, environmental and social impact on local communities. Sustainable tourism growth can be achieved by creating appropriate conditions that benefit both tourists and residents (Berbekova et al., 2022; Lai et al., 2021). In addition to the provision of key facilities and services for tourists, the attitude and perception of the host community towards tourists plays a crucial role in the success of tourism development (Chhabra, 2010; Gursoy et al., 2019; Selcuk et al., 2021). The attitude of the inhabitants can have a positive or negative influence on the tourism industry. A positive attitude towards tourism and tourists often leads to greater support for tourism development and encourages constructive behavior. Conversely, a negative view can diminish support and encourage anti-tourist sentiment (Cardoso & Silva, 2018; Çelik & Rasoolimanesh, 2023). Furthermore, the social impacts of tourism include both positive and negative elements (Archer et al., 2012; Mason, 2020; Woosnam & Ribeiro, 2023). The positive aspects include a greater respect for the local way of life, preservation of cultural heritage and the empowerment of communities strengthened by effective communication and cultural interactions (Soonsan & Jumani, 2024; Wu & Lai, 2024). However, there can also be negative consequences such as cultural conflict, increased crime and the erosion of traditional cultures (Arenas-Escaso et al., 2024; Ramkissoon, 2023). Consequently, negative attitudes towards tourists can lead to a decrease in support for the tourism sector and an increase in anti-tourist behavior. It is crucial to consider the social impacts of tourism, as these should be included in the planning of this industry (Kim & Park, 2023; Mariam et al., 2024).

The impact of tourism on local communities is profound and complex. Individual experiences with tourists, together with various cultural factors, can significantly influence the attitudes of local people towards visitors. Therefore, it is crucial for tourism managers to understand residents' views towards tourists and incorporate these insights into their strategic planning to ensure the sustainability and growth of the tourism sector in a given destination (Rastegar, 2019). Residents' attitudes can manifest themselves in their stereotypes, emotions and behaviors. Research shows that these stereotypes can

trigger emotional responses, which can then lead to positive or negative behaviors towards tourists (Tse & Tung, 2022). To effectively measure these attitudes, implicit association tests are used to uncover and analyze the underlying relationships between residents' feelings and their behaviors toward tourists. This area of research is particularly important for tourism research as it aims to understand the dynamics of interactions between hosts and guests and the reciprocal effects (Erul et al., 2024; Šegota et al., 2024; Tse & Tung, 2023).

The historic city of Sanandaj, with its rich cultural and historical heritage, offers numerous opportunities to attract tourists from home and abroad. As the cultural center of Kurdistan Province, Sanandaj has museums, historical sites and cultural activities that together increase the city's appeal to tourists. However, despite these attractions, the lack of diversity in Sanandaj's tourism offerings is often cited as the main reason for the low number of visitors to the city (Habibi et al., 2024). This problem not only diminishes the economic benefits that tourism can provide, but also limits the community's access to diverse cultural experiences. In this context, the attitude and behavior of residents towards tourists play a crucial role in determining whether visitors will come and return to Sanandaj. Without strong community support and positive engagement, the potential for tourism development remains untapped. Therefore, this study aims to clearly define the problem by examining how residents' perceptions of tourism can either help or hinder the growth of this sector. Understanding these attitudes is crucial as they have a direct impact on the overall tourism experience and visitor satisfaction. In environments with few attractions, social dynamics shaped by the interactions and hospitality of locals become increasingly important. A positive community attitude can foster memorable experiences for visitors and encourage repeat visits, while a negative attitude can deter tourists, exacerbating the challenges associated with a lack of diverse attractions. To address this issue, the study focuses on three relational-individual indicators (stereotypes, emotions, and behaviors) and examines how each element influences Sanandaj residents' attitudes towards tourists. Furthermore, the study highlights the need to promote positive interactions between residents and tourists, emphasizing their role in enhancing the visitor experience and ensuring the sustainability of tourism in the city. By examining these dynamics, this study seeks to shed light on the underlying factors that shape social interactions between residents and tourists in Sanandaj, contributing valuable insights to both academic literature and practical tourism management strategies.

Furthermore, this research highlights the importance of positive interactions between residents and tourists as a key factor in enhancing visitors' experiences and promoting tourism in Sanandaj. Based on the conceptual framework of Tse and Tung (Tse & Tung, 2022), this study aims to answer the following questions: What are the views, feelings and behaviors of Sanandaj residents towards tourists and how do these views influence their behaviors? In addition, the study examines the impact of individual factors

on the host community and analyzes how the characteristics of tourists affect the behavior of locals. This study elucidates the factors that influence the social interactions between residents and tourists in Sanandaj, thus enriching the existing academic literature in this field.

Literature review

The attitude of locals towards tourists is a decisive factor in the success and sustainability of tourism. Since the 1970s, research has examined these attitudes in depth, identifying various social and economic influences on residents' perceptions of tourism development (Allen et al., 1993; Sharma & Gursoy, 2015). Numerous international studies (Chen et al., 2018; Hsu & Chen, 2019; Tung et al., 2020; Zhang et al., 2021) and research in Iran (Azadkhani & Rad, 2021; Nahidi Azar & Mahmoudnejad, 2018; Nadalipour & Roozrokh, 2017; Niazi et al., 2023; Sālehi & Mirzākhāni, 2021; Zhahirinia & Nikkhah, 2016) have investigated this relationship. The results indicate that residents' support for tourism is significantly influenced by their general attitudes towards tourists and tourism (Linderová et al., 2021; Šegota et al., 2024).

Chen et al. (2018) investigated the attitudes of Hong Kong residents towards Chinese tourists and came to the conclusion that the negative perceptions clearly outweigh the neutral and positive ones. In their study, they found two intertwined mindsets among Hong Kong residents: a sense of superiority and a sense of disadvantage, which together create a cyclical psychological mechanism framed by social identity theory. This theory emphasizes the importance of social categorization, identity and comparison processes. Hsu (2019) explored the theoretical value of attribution in explaining and predicting residents' perceptions and reactions to tourists and found that there are still gaps in the understanding of this framework in tourism research. He proposed a comprehensive model to describe the interactions between residents' attribution processes and tourists' stereotypes and pointed out possible directions for future research. Tung et al. (2020) introduced a model to assess tourism stereotypes and examined both the positive and negative aspects of Hong Kong residents' stereotypes of Chinese tourists. Their study identified six positive stereotypes and six misconceptions that have significant implications for destination management and policy. In another study, Zhang et al. (2021) examined residents' emotional reactions to tourists, distinguishing between implicit reactions (expressed through facial movements) and explicit reactions (self-disclosures). Their findings suggest that emotions resulting from desires are often reflected in facial expressions, while self-reported emotions are more strongly influenced by stereotypes and often reveal feelings of disgust. This research contributes to the ongoing theoretical development of emotions in tourism research.

A study by Zahiri Nia and Nikkhah (2015) examined the attitudes of Bandar Abbas residents towards the impact of tourism. It was found that economic factors are the most important from the

residents' perspective, followed by cultural aspects. The study also found that women generally have a negative attitude towards the social dimensions of tourism. Similarly, Nahidi Azar and Mahdunejad (2018) focused on residents of Sanandaj and concluded that only age and gender correlate with social attitudes. Nadali Pour and Roozrokh (2018) examined attitudes within the Toyserkan community and found a predominantly positive attitude towards tourism development, although some demographic variables significantly influenced perspectives. In addition, Azadkhani and Javadirad (2020) emphasized the importance of economic and social dimensions for urban tourism development in their study of Ilam residents. Salehi and Mirzakhani (2021) investigated local people's attitudes towards marine tourism development in Mazandaran province and found that social support for this form of tourism is lower, emphasizing the need to gain the support of the local community. Finally, Niazi et al. (2023) examined the attitudes of Kashan residents and found that men and those working in tourism-related occupations were more likely to be positive towards the industry, while the general public reported more positive than negative impacts.

Overall, previous research has not sufficiently investigated the attitude of the inhabitants towards tourism and its effects. Much of the existing literature has focused primarily on the economic dimensions of tourism's impact, often neglecting cultural and social perspectives. Furthermore, some studies have only looked at the direct impact of attitudes on the social and cultural dimensions and have failed to analyze in detail the complex relationships that arise from the interactions between residents' attitudes and concerns. Many studies have examined stereotypes and emotional responses in isolation; however, understanding the interrelationships between these dimensions requires further investigation. In assessing demographic characteristics and their influence on resident attitudes, most research have limited themselves to specific variables such as age and gender and overlooked the impact of other factors. These gaps point to an urgent need for more in-depth, comprehensive studies aimed at better understanding residents' attitudes and the impact of tourism on local communities and developing integrated models in this area.

The Influence of Residents' Cultural-Behavioral Perceptions on Their Attitudes Towards Tourists

Residents' perceptions, reflecting their cultural and behavioral tendencies towards different tourist groups, are fundamental to understanding the interactions between local communities and the tourism industry (Brankov et al., 2019; Gogitidze et al., 2022; Stevic et al., 2024). Emotional reactions and behaviors of locals often stem from these perceptions and can significantly influence tourists' experiences and the quality of interactions with the local community (Hsu & Chen, 2019; Talebzadeh et al., 2024). In essence, stereotypes, emotions, and behaviors together form a triadic framework for

understanding the attitudes of different social groups (Cuddy et al., 2008; Zhang et al., 2021). The emotional attachments and behaviors exhibited by residents in their interactions with tourists can either positively or negatively influence tourism development. When residents feel that their culture and identity is recognized and respected by tourists, they tend to be more positive about their presence (Bakhshi & Hashemian, 2020). In this context, Figure 1 represents the conceptual model of this study, which illustrates the different dimensions of perceptions, reactions and interactions between residents and tourists. This model aims to improve residents' understanding of tourism and its impacts while supporting local policy initiatives and tourism planning.
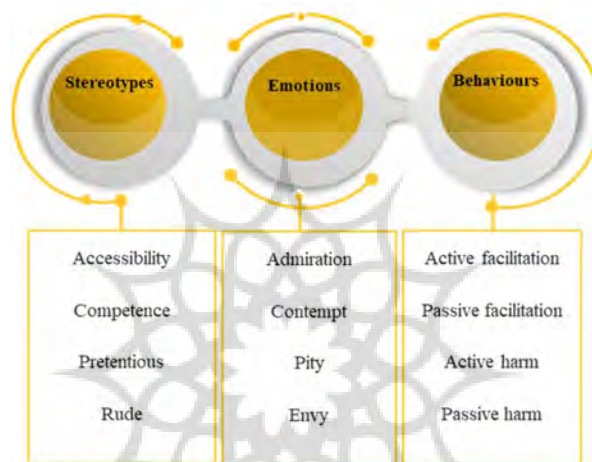

Figure 1. The conceptual model of Tse and Tung (14)

Stereotypes

Stereotypes are cognitive prejudices that categorize and differentiate people based on certain characteristics (Hamilton, 2015). These prejudices can quickly become ingrained in people's minds and influence their social interactions and behaviors. In the context of tourism, residents may develop stereotypes towards tourists due to their close contact and interactions in destinations. Such stereotypes can significantly influence residents' attitudes and behaviors towards visitors (Tse & Tung, 2022). Stereotypes play a crucial role in shaping travel experiences. For tourists, travel involves overcoming challenges and adapting to new expectations as they leave familiar, safe environments and enter unfamiliar areas (Fan & Jia, 2023; Wan & Apritado, 2024). In these new environments, tourists seek experiences that deviate from their everyday reality, which may expose them to local cultural symbols and signs that are unfamiliar to them. While this quest for new experiences can increase the attractiveness of a destination, it can also lead to tensions and misunderstandings between locals and tourists, especially when tourists' expectations conflict with local realities (Bender et al., 2013;

Kokkranikal & Carabelli, 2024; Zhu et al., 2024). Stereotypes include both evaluations of other groups (outgroup stereotypes) and self-evaluations within the community (in-group stereotypes). In this context, residents may emphasize their history, traditions, local rituals, dances and traditional dress to meet tourists' expectations. While such measures can convey an appealing image of the destination, they can also distort reality and undermine credibility and mutual trust (Tse & Tung, 2021). Tung et al. (Tung et al., 2020) developed the Tourism Stereotype Model (TSM) to examine the relationship between hosts and guests. This model includes two positive dimensions (approachability and competence) and two negative dimensions (arrogance and rudeness) that residents associate with tourists. The TSM model refers to formal organizational efforts to promote tourism by raising the profile of a country or region and creating a recognizable image of tourist attractions and services for visitors.

Emotions

Emotions are conscious mental reactions that are typically experienced as strong feelings associated with certain objects or situations. These reactions go beyond a person's internal and subjective experience; they also include facial expressions and physiological reactions and represent multifaceted experiences (Machleit & Eroglu, 2000). Several studies have examined emotions as group-based phenomena that depend on the social identities with which individuals are associated (Mackie & Smith, 2017). From this perspective, emotions may be influenced by identification with social groups, causing individuals to display emotional reactions toward outgroup members and associated stereotypes (Williams et al., 2012). Building on Fiske's research, four distinct emotions — admiration, contempt, pity and envy — have been identified based on perceptions of warmth and competence (Fiske, 2018). According to the Tourism Stereotype Model (TSM), the interplay of warmth and competence leads to these emotions. People who are perceived as both warm and competent evoke admiration, while people who are perceived as low in both dimensions can evoke pity. Conversely, individuals who are high in competence but low in warmth may evoke envy, whereas individuals who are high in warmth but low in competence often evoke contempt (Cuddy et al., 2008). Understanding these differences in emotions and emotional responses underscores the importance of interpersonal relationship dynamics, particularly in contexts such as cross-cultural interactions and social relationships.

Behaviors

Behaviors are actions that individuals perform in relation to others, often influenced by their identity and associated stereotypes (Stout et al., 2016). The impact of positive and negative behaviors on tourism is a complex and multi-layered issue that requires in-depth analysis from different social and cultural perspectives. Research shows that positive behaviors can contribute significantly to the goals of sustainable tourism. In contrast, negative behaviors, such as the rejection of tourism services as a public

good, can negatively impact the tourism industry. In addition, tourism-related behaviors can lead to negative outcomes, such as provocations resulting from disregard for local customs and moral values, which can significantly disrupt cultural and social dynamics within local communities (Adam, 2021). On the other hand, a positive attitude of residents towards tourists and tourism can lead to supportive and tourist-friendly behavior and thus improve the interaction between tourists and residents (Shen et al., 2022; Woosnam et al., 2024). According to the studies by Tse and Tung (Tse & Tung, 2022), behaviors toward tourists can be divided into four groups: active facilitation, passive facilitation, active harm, and passive harm. Active facilitative behaviors include initiatives such as initiating conversations and engaging with tourists. In contrast, passive facilitating behavior includes accommodating actions such as acceptance and tolerance towards visitors. Active detrimental behavior reflects hostility from residents that manifests itself in ridicule, threats or unfriendly actions towards tourists, while passive detrimental behavior indicates resistance or reluctance to support the tourism offer.
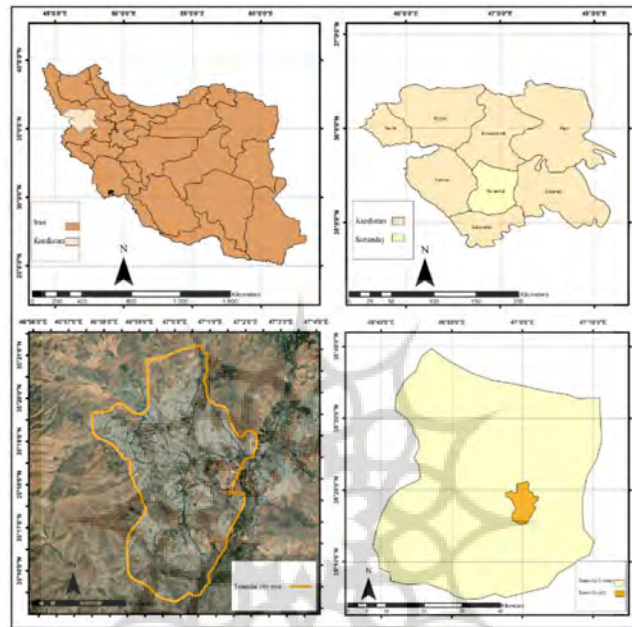
Study Area

Sanandaj is located at an elevation of 1500 metres above sea level in the mountainous region of the Zagros. It has a cold and semi-arid climate. According to the 2016 national population and housing census, the city has a population of 412767. The distance from Sanandaj to Tehran varies between 490 and 568 kilometres. This city attracts many tourists from both within and outside Iran annually, due to its historical and religious sites (such as the Asef Mansion (Kurd House), the Sanandaj Anthropology Museum (Salar Saeed Mansion), the Mosheer Divan Mansion, the Khan Bath Museum, the Grand Mosque of Sanandaj, Hajar Khatun, and Imamzadeh Pir Omar), recreational attractions (such as the Abidar Recreational Park), and its diverse handicrafts and souvenirs (including carpets and kilims, Gava (traditional footwear), wooden products, music (as Sanandaj has become a UNESCO Creative City of Music), various sweets, local Kurdish clothing, burnt almonds, and gum). Additionally, its central position in Kurdistan Province and its location on the route to cities like Marivan and Baneh, which border the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, contribute to its popularity among tourists (Habibi et al., 2015).

Method

This study is designed with a quantitative approach towards a practical objective and was conducted in a descriptive cross-sectional study for data collection. The data was collected using a questionnaire and the variables used were ordinal coded on a Likert scale. T-tests, multiple regression, Mann-Whitney, and Kruskal-Wallis H-tests were used for data analysis with SPSS® version 27. The statistical population of this study consists of the residents of Sanandaj with a population of 412767. A total of 398 questionnaires were initially identified for data collection using simple random sampling. However, in order to increase accuracy, 410 questionnaires were distributed, of which only 400 were ultimately

considered analyzable due to inaccuracies in the responses. These questionnaires were collected in November 2024. The aim of this study is to use scientific methods and accurate data analysis to provide effective results for the improvement of tourism in Sanandaj, enabling positive interactions between residents and tourists.

Figure 2. Location of the study area

Measuring instrument

The research questionnaire, adapted from the study by Tse and Tung (Tse & Tung, 2022), consisted of four sections. The first section collected personal information (including gender, age, education level, native language, and place of residence). The subsequent sections focused on three components: "stereotypes"," "emotions" and factors influencing "the host community's "behavior" towards tourists. These components were assessed using three general points of view questions (using a 7-point Likert scale from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree"), emotional reactions (using a 7-point Likert scale from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree") and behaviors (using a 7-point Likert scale from "often" to "never") of Sanandaj residents towards tourists.

Internal consistency of the research instrument

The results of the Cronbach's alpha test regarding the reliability of the scales used in the study are shown in Table 1. According to these results, the internal consistency of all the scales used in the questionnaire was above 0.7, indicating that all these scales have at least an acceptable level of internal reliability.

Table 1. Results of the Cronbach's Alpha Test for Various Subsections of the Questionnaire

Subcomponents	Number of Items	Alpha Coefficient
Stereotypes	12	0.778
Emotions	11	0.938
Behaviors	11	0.986

Result and Discussion

Of the 400 people who answered the questionnaires correctly, only 77% were from Sanandaj, while the remaining participants had only lived in the city for a short time. Furthermore, 94% of the respondents were Kurdish-speaking, while the rest were Persian-speaking. The age of the respondents ranged from 18 to 70 years old, and as can be seen from the bar chart (Figure 3), the majority of the population tends to be young and under 30 years old. In addition, the majority of respondents had a university degree at the bachelor's (55%) or master's (29%) level.

Figure 3. Age Distribution of the Respondent Population

Investigating the stereotypes of citizens towards tourists

The results of a one-sample t-test examining citizens' views on the characteristics of tourists indicate significant levels of significance. The significance level for the subcomponents of stereotypes, with a p-value of <0.05 and a positive t-statistic, confirms the null hypothesis (H0) and shows a 95% confidence interval, reflecting a positive evaluation of these characteristics. In particular, the significance level for the characteristic " Sincere" was 0.000, indicating a positive attitude and a high evaluation of this characteristic by citizens. In addition, the traits "good" and "friendly" had mean differences of 5.270 and 5.340 respectively, with a significance level of 0.000, indicating a positive and desirable status. Although some mean differences, such as "rude" and "uncivilized" (mean differences of 2.870 and 2.690 with a significance level of less than 0.05), reflect negative attitudes towards these traits, it should be noted that these characteristics remain generally rated positively. Overall, the results suggest that while citizens recognise the positive attributes of tourists, there are also concerns about negative stereotypes about certain tourists that require attention and management to improve the tourist experience.

Table 2. Description of citizens' views towards tourists

	t	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
				Lower	Upper
Sincere	95.568	.000	5.330	5.22	5.44
Intelligent	93.432	.000	4.910	4.81	5.01
Rude	42.812	.000	2.870	2.74	3.00
Materialistic	52.626	.000	3.930	3.78	4.08
Good	112.402	.000	5.270	5.18	5.36
Industrious	89.108	.000	5.090	4.98	5.20
Unreasonable	55.740	.000	3.280	3.16	3.40
Loud	54.134	.000	3.690	3.56	3.82
Friendly	106.433	.000	5.340	5.24	5.44
Competent	87.387	.000	5.140	5.02	5.26
Uncivilized	41.044	.000	2.690	2.56	2.82
Immoral	39.740	.000	2.670	2.54	2.80

Investigating the emotions of citizens towards tourists

The significance level in relation to the subcomponents of the emotions, with a p-value < 0.05 and the presence of a positive t-statistic, supports the null hypothesis (H0) and indicates a desirable status in the evaluation of these emotions. In particular, the component "respect" shows a mean difference of 5.470 and a significance level of 0.000, indicating a very positive attitude of citizens. In addition, positive emotions such as "compassion" and "admiration" reflect a strong positive influence on social interactions between tourists and citizens with mean differences of 4.660 and 4.960 respectively and a

significance level of 0.000. At the same time, some negative emotions such as "contempt" and "hate" with mean differences of 2.540 and 2.600 and a significance level of less than 0.05 indicate the presence of negative attitudes towards certain behaviors of tourists.

Investigating the behaviors of citizens towards tourists

The significance level in relation to the subcomponents of behavior, with a p-value of less than 0.05 and the presence of a positive t-statistic, supports the null hypothesis (H0) and indicates a desirable status in the evaluation of these behaviors. In particular, the component "Start a conversation with tourists", with a mean difference of 4.820 and a significance level of 0.000, indicates a significant willingness on the part of citizens to engage in conversation with tourists. The expectation to accept the behavior of tourists also reflects a positive attitude towards social interactions with a mean value of 4.670 and a significance level of 0.000. Other positive behaviors such as "Socialise with the tourist" and "Endure the tourist behaviors," with mean differences of 4.500 and 4.800 respectively show that citizens generally seek positive interactions with tourists. This underscores the positive social behavior of Sanandaj residents towards tourists and could pave the way for increased visitor presence and tourism development in the city. Due to the positive and constructive behavior of the host community, information about the historical, cultural, and natural heritage of Sanandaj can be used through educational tours and the establishment of joint artistic and cultural projects, and local and international communication can be improved. In addition, creating public spaces with beautiful and appealing designs to encourage interaction between locals and tourists, providing recreational and social services, and promoting intercultural communication to introduce Kurdish culture can help attract tourists to Sanandaj.

However, there are also some negative behavioral components. For example, the sub-component "Reluctant to help the tourist" with a mean difference of 2.820 and a significance level of 0.000 indicates a relative resistance to helping tourists. In addition, feelings such as "Express unfriendliness to the tourist" and "Resist helping the tourist" with a mean difference of 1.840 and 1.930, respectively, reflect a negative attitude of some citizens towards tourists. These attitudes can be a serious obstacle to building positive interactions between residents and tourists. Therefore, it is necessary to develop and implement educational and cultural programmes to enhance empathy and promote positive behaviors between these two groups (Tse & Tung, 2022). In addition, strengthening the sense of empathy and friendship can help to break down these psychological barriers. If citizens feel that they do not benefit from the presence of tourists, negative attitudes and behaviors may increase. Therefore, creating jobs and economic opportunities through tourism development can help foster positive behaviors and a sense of cooperation, ultimately leading to sustainable growth and success in the tourism industry in Sanandaj.

Table 3. Description of citizens' emotions towards tourists

	t	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
				Lower	Upper
Respect	88.360	.000	5.470	5.35	5.59
Contempt	36.163	.000	2.540	2.40	2.68
Pity	64.474	.000	4.660	4.52	4.80
Admiration	73.472	.000	4.960	4.83	5.09
Envy	44.007	.000	3.120	2.98	3.26
Disgust	39.783	.000	2.570	2.44	2.70
Sympathy	72.272	.000	4.800	4.67	4.93
Pride	44.020	.000	3.940	3.76	4.12
Hate	34.856	.000	2.600	2.45	2.75
Inspiration	88.770	.000	5.060	4.95	5.17
Resentment	39.351	.000	3.220	3.06	3.38

Table 4. Description of citizens' behaviors towards tourists

	t	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
				Lower	Upper
Start a conversation with tourist	68.638	.000	4.820	4.68	4.96
Accept the tourist behaviors	76.137	.000	4.670	4.55	4.79
Reluctant to help the tourist	29.907	.000	2.820	2.63	3.01
Socialize with the tourist	61.590	.000	4.500	4.36	4.64
Endure the tourist behaviors	63.221	.000	4.800	4.65	4.95
Express unfriendliness to the tourist	26.990	.000	1.840	1.71	1.97
Resist to help the tourist	27.785	.000	1.930	1.79	2.07
Interact with the tourist	62.479	.000	4.840	4.69	4.99
Mock at the tourist	30.552	.000	1.440	1.35	1.53
Act in a threatening manner towards the tourist	30.781	.000	1.350	1.26	1.44
Refrain to help the tourist	28.418	.000	1.720	1.60	1.84

Evaluating the influence of stereotypes on host community behavior towards tourists using regression analysis

To understand the reasons for Sanandaj residents' reluctance to assist tourists, a linear regression analysis was conducted to examine the relationship between locals' perspectives and their willingness to offer assistance. The results of the regression analysis show that different social and psychological characteristics of individuals categorized under stereotypes have different effects on the host community's behavior towards tourists. Based on the results (Table 5), significant differences were found for the subcomponents of social perspective of Sanandaj residents in terms of dislike towards

tourists. With a confidence level of 95%, the components 'immoral' and 'uncivilized' were found to have the greatest influence on dislike towards tourists with standardised regression coefficients of 0.351 and 0.262 respectively. In other words, for each standard deviation by which the perception of some tourists as 'immoral' and 'uncivilized' increases, the willingness not to help tourists increases by 0.351 and 0.262 standard deviations, respectively. In addition, components such as 'Rude' (Beta = 0.237) and 'Sincere' (Beta = 0.119) also have a significant impact on the reluctance to help tourists, indicating a negative attitude of some residents towards the personal and social characteristics of tourists. Among the components examined, "Competent" and "Materialistic", with influence coefficients of -0.323 and -0.119 respectively, indicate that these two components have opposite effects on hosts' refusal to help tourists. On the other hand, components such as 'Intelligent', 'Friendly' and 'Industrious' did not have a significant influence on the willingness to help tourists, as they showed a significance level (sig) of over 0.05 in this study. These results suggest that social factors, such as negative perceptions of tourists' moral and personal characteristics, are a serious barrier to willingness to help and therefore require more attention from experts and tourism managers to improve these attitudes. It is important to note that social behavior is complex and can be influenced by various factors, including cultural norms, individual attitudes, and social expectations (Chidambaram & Scheiner, 2023). Thus, social interactions are influenced by a variety of variables and generalizations may not do full justice to the complexity of human behavior.

Table 5. Linear regression and significance levels of the indicators for the perspective of the host society

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	Std. Error	Beta	B		
(Constant)	0.598		-2.127	-3.554	.000
Sincere	.057	.119	-0.129	-2.265	.024
Intelligent	.057	-.089	-.083	-1.447	.149
Rude	.044	.237	.211	4.832	.000
Materialistic	.043	-.119	-.096	-2.247	.025
Good	.071	.157	.202	2.841	.005
Industrious	.053	.052	.047	.888	.375
Unreasonable	.059	.201	.207	3.530	.000
Loud	.056	.169	.179	3.170	.002
Friendly	.070	.148	.178	2.539	.012
Competent	.060	-.323	-.333	-5.553	.000
Uncivilized	.060	.262	.302	5.025	.000
Immoral	.060	.351	.316	5.305	.000

The role of individual factors in host community behavior

The results of the Mann-Whitney test, which was conducted to examine the differences in positive and negative behaviors as a function of gender, show a significant trend in the mean differences between men and women (Table 6).

When analyzing the positive behaviors based on the collected data, the mean scores for men for the two behaviors "Start a conversation with a tourist" and "Accept the tourist's behaviors" were 200.26 and 203.62, respectively. In contrast, women exhibited these behaviors with mean ranks of 200.62 and 198.89. Men also scored better on other behaviors such as "Socialise with the tourist" and "Endure the tourist's behavior" with 214.85 and 237.50 points respectively. These results show that men perform better than women in positive behaviors.

On the other hand, the analysis of negative behaviors also yields significant results. For behaviors such as "Resist helping the tourist" and "Act in a threatening manner towards the tourist," men showed more negative behaviors with mean ranks of 198.03 and 205.38. Conversely, women achieved mean ranks of 201.77 and 197.98 for these behaviors. For the behavior "Refrain from helping the tourist"," men had a mean rank of 180.50, while women achieved a mean rank of 210.80, showing that women tend to avoid cooperation in this area.

These results clearly show that men score higher on positive behaviors, while women tend to score higher on negative behaviors. Several studies support these findings. For example, the study by Zahirinia and Nikkhah (2016) indicates that women have a relatively negative attitude towards the social dimensions of tourism. In addition, the study by Nahidi Azar and Mahmoudnejad (2018) shows that the influence of gender on the social attitudes of residents is clearly recognisable. In addition, the results of Niazi et al. (Niazi et al., 2023) clearly show that men and people working in tourism-related occupations generally have a positive attitude towards this industry and generally experience more positive than negative effects.

Table 6. Mann-Whitney test between gender and host community behavior

Type of Behavior	Dependent Variable	Gender	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
Positive Behaviors with Tourists	Start a conversation with tourist	Male	200.26	27236
		Female	200.62	52964
	Accept the tourist behaviors	Male	203.62	27692
		Female	198.89	52508
	Interact with the tourist	Male	207.15	28172
		Female	197.08	52028
	Socialize with the tourist	Male	214.85	29220
		Female	193.11	50980
	Endure the tourist behaviors	Male	237.50	32300
		Female	181.44	47900

Type of Behavior	Dependent Variable	Gender	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
Negative Behaviors with Tourists	Express unfriendliness to the tourist	Male	215.38	29292
		Female	192.83	50908
	Resist to help the tourist	Male	198.03	26932
		Female	201.77	53268
	Reluctant to help the tourist	Male	176.68	24028
		Female	212.77	56172
	Mock at the tourist	Male	189.21	25732
		Female	206.32	54468
	Act in a threatening manner towards the tourist	Male	205.38	27932
		Female	197.98	52268
	Refrain to help the tourist	Male	180.50	22548
		Female	210.80	55652

One of the most important dimensions examined in this study is the influence of the education of individuals in the host community on their behavior towards tourists. Education as an individual factor can have profound effects on the attitudes and social behaviors of residents. In this context, the influence of education on the behavior of residents towards tourists is of particular importance. The results of the Kruskal-Wallis test conducted to examine the relationship between the level of education and the factors influencing host community behavior show a significant trend in the mean differences between the different educational groups (Table 7). Based on the information obtained, the "Master's Degree" group has the highest mean score of 55.85, indicating a remarkable influence of higher education on improving social behaviors and active participation in the community. In contrast, the "Secondary school and below" group has the lowest mean score of 1.50, confirming that those with lower levels of education may have less influence on community behavior. The results of this study are in line with those of several researchers (Abdallah, 2023; Ali et al., 2021; Tomasi et al., 2020).They found that educated people generally have a greater awareness of communication, cultural and social concepts. This awareness helps them to better understand the cultures and backgrounds that tourists come from, as well as their needs. Their ability to communicate with people from different perspectives, including cultural and linguistic ones, also enables them to interact with tourists in a way that promotes respect and understanding. In addition, their educational knowledge allows them to gain easier access to information about destinations, culture and the history of places of interest, which they can then pass on to tourists.

Table 7. Results of the Kruskal-Wallis test between education level and "general factors" affecting host society behavior

Education Level	Secondary School and Below	Diploma or Associate Degree	Bachelor's Degree	Master's Degree	Ph.D
Mean Difference	1.50	49.31	52.67	55.85	81.50

Conclusion

This study provides important insights into the attitudes of Sanandaj residents towards tourists and their impact on social interactions related to tourism. Specifically, the study shows that 95% of residents maintain positive stereotypes about tourists, specifically rating traits such as "sincere" and "friendly'," with a significance level of $p < 0.05$. These findings contrast with existing literature that often ignores the perspective of the host community, thus contributing new insights into how residents' attitudes can influence tourist experiences.

However, the study also highlights an urgent problem: Negative stereotypes, such as "rude" and "uncivilized," persist among some residents, suggesting barriers that could hinder the growth of tourism. Emotional ratings also show a mean score of 5.470 for "respect"," indicating an overall positive attitude. Nevertheless, feelings of "contempt" and "hate" point to the need for targeted action to combat these negative perceptions and create a more welcoming environment.

The behavioral analyzes confirm that citizens are generally willing to engage positively, as shown by a mean score of 4.820 for "Start a conversation with tourists" However, there are still obstacles that need to be considered, such as unwillingness to help tourists or unfriendliness. The influence of individual factors, especially education and gender, is also significant. Higher education correlates with more favorable interactions, while gender differences indicate that men tend to exhibit more positive behaviors compared to women.

The limitations of this study include the context-specific findings, which may not be readily transferable to other regions. Furthermore, the complex social dynamics in Sanandaj suggest that the interplay of cultural norms and individual attitudes may further complicate interactions between residents and tourists.

Ultimately, it is recommended that educational and management measures be taken at local level to strengthen positive interactions and reduce negative attitudes. Therefore, various measures can be taken to create a positive and harmonious environment between tourists and the citizens of Sanandaj, including: 1. Educating tourists about the local culture and behaviors can help reduce misunderstandings and breakdowns in communication with the host community. 2. Creating jobs and developing local industries can add value to the local population and promote positive interactions with tourists. 3. Implementing appropriate policies and programmes for traffic management, restoration and preservation of historical sites, environmental protection and maintaining a balance between tourism and local life can increase community satisfaction. 4. Organising cultural events and joint activities between tourists and the host community in an environment with Iranian design and patterns can broaden perspectives and strengthen cultural ties. 5. Promoting dialogue and direct communication between tourists and the local population can help resolve conflicts and reach mutual agreements. These approaches can not only

improve the image of tourism in Sanandaj, but also enhance the sense of belonging and social identity of the residents in their interactions with tourists, ultimately leading to the sustainable development of the tourism industry in the city.

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Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that there was no conflict of interest in this study.

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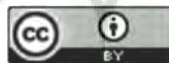
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