



Designing the Development Model of Adventure Sports Tourism in Iran: Analysis of Requirements and Consequences

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ABSTRACT

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Strategic, Lifestyle, Sustainable Development, Adventure Tourism, Sports Economics

Adventure sports tourism has attracted the attention of the public as an important part of tourism. In addition to being effective in physical development, it also has a social function. There is not much comprehensive and applied research in Iran regarding adventure sports tourism, therefore the aim of the present study is to develop a model for the development of adventure sports tourism in Iran. The present study was conducted in a qualitative manner and by choosing a constructivist approach from a data-driven strategy. The data are exploratory-fundamental in nature in terms of purpose, and were collected through purposeful sampling with the snowball technique and based on in-depth semi-structured interviews with 19 sports management experts familiar with the discussion of professional adventure sports tourism. After conducting the interviews, 1352 key words were identified, which were then grouped into 111 core codes and finally, in the theoretical coding process, were categorized into 16 subcategories and finally into 11 main categories: key stakeholders, enabling factors, strategic requirements, contextual factors, surprises, drivers, uncertainties, goals, key players, strategies, and possible outcomes of adventure sports tourism. In general, it should be acknowledged that increasing attention to adventure sports tourism in Iran will have important consequences, including improving the various conditions of the local community, promoting up-to-date knowledge, and improving the level of health and social vitality, and increasing the productivity of the local economy.

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1. Introduction

One lifestyle that has received significant attention today is tourism; within this, sports tourism, with its athletic and recreational activities, has a positive impact on their physical, mental, and psychological well-being (Van de Zande et al., 2022). Today, tourism is regarded as a diverse industry, a primary source of income, job creation, private sector growth, and infrastructure development (Nazari, 2021). Sports tourism is considered an important and fundamental topic in the economic, social, and cultural transformations of countries. By expanding it, a path can be charted to increase revenues, reduce dependence on oil income, and consequently pave the way for achieving sustainable and comprehensive development (Aghili et al., 2023). It seems that integrating sports as a tool within development plans requires the presence of experts from the sports community in the planning and policymaking of major development programs. This step, alongside good governance in sports, will initiate sports-centric initiatives that, together with the enthusiasm and personal motivations of individuals in society, will lead to favorable outcomes for sustainable development (Mohamadiyan Moghadam & Nazari, 2023).

Adventure tourism has become one of the fastest-growing sectors of tourism in recent decades. Most research on adventure tourism has focused on the preferences of adventurous travelers as well as the specific benefits that travelers gain as a result of their tourism experiences (Xie & Schneider, 2004). Therefore, promoting sports and physical activity has become a strategy for improving quality of life. This can lead to a reduction in costs related to disease treatment and enhance individuals' efficiency in daily life (Liu et al., 2018). Consequently, research in the field of adventure sports tourism and physical activity is of great importance. Sports tourism encompasses various dimensions, including psychological, social, spiritual, and others. Sports tourism, as an evolving

concept, has also gained significant attention in Iranian society (Nikoabadi et al., 2024).

Although in the past and present, sports such as wrestling and soccer have been recognized as popular sports in the country, today a variety of sports, including cycling, hiking, mountaineering, and group activities, have attracted the attention of many people. Not only young individuals but also middle-aged and elderly generations are showing interest in sports tourism (Nazari & Shahvali, 2022). It seems that promoting physical and sports activities can help strengthen social connections. This concept can also lead to the development of the sports and recreation industry, create job opportunities, and enhance economic welfare (Acquah-Sam, 2021).

Among the diverse range of tourism styles, adventure tourism appears to offer opportunities for pioneering research on broad topics such as: the motivations behind human mobility; the individual economic valuation of low-probability and rare experiences; voluntary assumption of physical risk and its legal consequences; the positive and negative impacts of tourism on conservation; psychological models of human emotions; and the anthropology of interactions between vastly different human cultures (Buckley, 2014). This is because, within the concept of sport, the economic approach holds particular importance (Myburgh et al., 2019). Sport and physical activity, as an important part of this lifestyle, have significant impacts on various sectors of the economy and commerce. These include the production and sale of sports equipment and apparel, the provision of sports training and consulting services, and the organization of sports competitions and tours (Gagnon et al., 2017). Adventure activities are among the reasons tourists travel to a region and now constitute a thriving segment of tourism (Arquinez & Eyal, 2020). Accordingly, many countries have realized that by developing a suitable vision in this field, they can leverage its potential for job creation and income generation. However,

global indicators point to the weak status of adventure tourism in Iran (Abdoli, 2022).

Since adventure sports are considered fun, exciting, and also risky activities, one of their key concerns is safety and security (Nazari et al., 2023). The nature of adventure sports is such that risk is an inherent part of them, while the four motivations of pleasure, excitement, social interaction, and escape have a significant positive impact on attachment to adventure sports destinations (Gezeksafli & Ashori, 2019). It is evident that tourists in this field seek a higher level of risk-taking; however, the reality is that despite this group of tourists being challenge-seeking and thrill-seeking, they also do not wish to be exposed to unpleasant risks (Wang et al., 2020). Due to the provision of new and pristine experiences, immersion in nature, and environmental sensitivity, its appeal is constantly growing. This type of sports tourism typically includes activities such as mountaineering, cycling, paragliding, and the like, which are conducted in natural and remote locations such as mountains, seas, forests, or the sky, enabling interaction between tourists and nature (Rojo-Ramos et al., 2021).

Managers in the sports tourism industry must have a broad business perspective to be able to identify risk factors accordingly, thereby making the project or event more successful. The general risk issues identified in tourism include: safety, financial, environmental, technical equipment, human resources, tourist behavior, political, legal, operational, and stakeholder relations. Therefore, the diversity of risk categories proves that risk is not an isolated problem or issue, but rather has broad implications for planning (Kargar et al., 2019). The results of studies indicate that some participants in tourism activities seek a different and distinct lifestyle, which at times gives them a particular social identity (Tiyago, 2023).

Lifestyle is a broad and multifaceted concept that significantly influences human life (Mamurov et al., 2020). This concept encompasses individual habits, routines, choices, and values that determine how

each person lives. Lifestyle is profoundly influenced by various factors, including culture, economy, society, and the environment (Abdullayeva, 2023). Changes in lifestyle and human behavior are a natural and anticipated phenomenon in modern societies. Individuals are exposed to social, technological, economic, cultural, and environmental developments that have a significant impact on their daily lives. These changes may be observed in various areas, including consumption patterns, leisure activities, dietary habits, and ecological impacts (López et al., 2020).

Sustainable tourism development establishes a relationship among the three components of the tourism environment: tourists, the destination, and the host community (Azadi et al., 2023). Since the goal of sustainable tourism is to preserve natural resources for future generations (Wang, 2020), sports tourism is considered not merely an industry but a global socio-economic phenomenon. Many countries, through planning and investment in this industry, have created opportunities for improving their economic, social, and political conditions. In this regard, it must be acknowledged that the development of sports tourism activities can provide employment opportunities, which is particularly beneficial for developing countries like Iran with a young population and job seekers in the field of development (Heydari et al., 2020).

As researchers have noted, adventure tourism, as one aspect of sports tourism, possesses its own unique appeal (Mahmoodi et al., 2023). In designing a model for the development of adventure sports tourism, necessities and challenges including social and cultural factors, entrepreneurship-based employment, excitement management, communication management, and infrastructure must be considered. Simultaneously, obstacles such as administrative-managerial issues, facilities and equipment, individual factors, financial and economic constraints, security concerns, superstructure, and information dissemination should be addressed. Therefore, it is recommended that to develop adventure sports tourism,

management policies aligned with the identified factors be established and implemented to advance adventure sports tourism (Karimi et al., 2020).

Although in recent years, adventure sports in Iran have been growing like in other countries, a knowledge gap for sustainable development in this domain is still evident. It is worth noting that since adventure sports are new and attractive activities, typically involving a degree of physical and mental challenges and a relative presence of nature, they have introduced new pathways in sports activities and are sometimes considered competitors to conventional sports (Majidi et al., 2020). Therefore, the importance and necessity of properly understanding and addressing this field, which is likely to become a main sector of sports in the future, necessitates more scientific research in this area. These studies and their findings show that the connection between adventure sports tourism is of particular importance and reveals the impacts of this lifestyle on the economy, health, and productivity of individuals and society. By reviewing the literature on adventure sports tourism in past research, a fundamental knowledge gap is evident in domestic studies within the field of sports management. Therefore, the main issue of this research is to propose a model for the development of adventure sports tourism in Iran. This issue essentially examines how increasing sports and recreational activities in society can lead to economic growth and reduced healthcare costs. As a reflective and analytical socio-economic study, this research seeks to answer key questions such as: how can adventure sports tourism in Iran increase the contribution of sports to the national GDP and help improve the quality of life for individuals and society? This

2. Methodology

The present study is a qualitative research conducted using the Grounded Theory method. In this study, to present a schematic model of the findings derived from the coded data, the constructivist approach of Charmaz's (2006) Grounded Theory was employed. This

research not only helps us understand the positive and negative impacts of adventure sports tourism on the economy and local communities but may also contribute to improving important issues such as public health, quality of life, and economic sustainability.

One of the important aspects of this research is that it can assist policymakers and officials in making decisions in the fields of public health, sports and recreation, and the economy. At the same time, the information gathered can improve decision-making and policy formulation in promoting adventure sports tourism and increasing investment in related sports and recreational industries. Additionally, this research can help raise public awareness regarding the importance of adventure sports tourism and its effects on human health and well-being.

Therefore, as a multidisciplinary study addressing economics, health, and society, its results can potentially contribute to improving the overall lifestyle of Iranians interested in tourism. It also helps policymakers and decision-makers develop more effective policies for promoting adventure sports tourism and expanding related sports and social recreation industries. Overall, proper management, the selection of qualified managers and phenomena, the establishment of hardware and software infrastructure, the availability of strategic plans, and financial, physical, and technological resources must be integrated into the business structure of adventure tourism. This goal can be achieved by fostering a creative and forward-thinking vision and perspective.

constructivist approach guides researchers to focus on what occurs within the research context. Therefore, researchers are considered part of the phenomenon under study and must remain flexible (Charmaz, 2020). The number of participants in the study, determined based on the theoretical



saturation criterion, reached 19 individuals. The demographic characteristics of the participants, the selection criteria for participants, and the topics covered in the interviews are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Demographic Information, Participant Characteristics, and Inclusion Criteria

Demographic Information					
Education	Quantity	Field of Study	Number (persons)	Field of Activity	Quantity
Bachelor's Degree	1	Sport Sciences	11	Academic	11
Master's Degree	4	Economics	6	Executive	5
Doctorate	14	Other	2	Other	3
Topics Covered in the Interviews			Participant Selection Criteria		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Lifestyle . Economy . Active Living . Tourism . Public Sports . Health-Oriented Approach 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Individuals familiar with the literature on adventure sports tourism and sports. - Possessing at least 3 scientific articles or one book in the field of sports tourism. 		

The exclusion criteria for the study included participants who, during the implementation of the research or interview, refused to proceed with the interview or answer questions in any way and were unwilling to participate in the study. In the present research, throughout the entire sampling process, three stages of sampling—open, relational, and theoretical—which form the basis of the constructivist grounded theory approach, were adhered to (Charmaz, 2006).

The interviews lasted approximately 45 to 60 minutes. These sessions were conducted by prior arrangement at the participants' workplaces, and in cases where physical presence was not possible, the interviews were carried out via audio call. Data collection was discontinued after 19 interviews due to data saturation. On the day of the interview, explanations regarding the research objectives were provided to the participants, which were shared solely based on their abilities related to the research topic. They were assured that they had been selected

only for academic research purposes, that their information would remain strictly confidential, and that their identities would not be disclosed.

In this study, the interviews were analyzed based on the constructivist approach of grounded theory. The four overlapping processes in the constructivist analysis of grounded theory are: initial coding, focused or selective coding, axial coding, and theoretical coding. The first stage in data analysis, i.e., initial (open) coding—which involves the process of breaking down, comparing, conceptualizing, and categorizing data—was carried out with an emphasis on conceptualization. In the next stage (focused coding), codes with similar phenomena were grouped together, effectively forming categories. In the subsequent stage (axial coding), core codes emerged from the categorization of concepts. Finally, theoretical coding was performed. In the constructivist method, theoretical coding involves arranging core codes alongside each other based on logic, connecting them with other focused codes, validating relationships, and filling gaps with categories that require refinement and expansion (Charmaz, 2006). This stage is, in fact, the most abstract level of coding, through which the relationships between the created categories are explained. To achieve the desired coherence at this stage, the researcher must define the core phenomenon and commit to it. The output of this stage is nothing other than the theorization that has been developed (Amiri & Niwrozi, 2019).

To assess face and content validity, the research findings were presented to the participants, who reviewed the theoretical text, after which their feedback was incorporated. The method used to examine reliability was the intra-subject agreement method. The average intra-subject agreement was reported as 0.85. In this study, to confirm the results, ensure robustness and accuracy, and to validate and substantiate the findings and analyses, a method known as "trustworthiness," which pertains to qualitative studies, was employed. Accordingly, four criteria—credibility, dependability,

confirmability, and transferability—were utilized to ensure the rigor and strength of the qualitative data.

Based on this, to examine the credibility of the data, in addition to the principal researcher, other members of the research team actively supervised and participated in the data collection, analysis, and interpretation stages. Moreover, prolonged engagement with the participants helped gain their trust, better understand their experiences, and ultimately enhance the validity and credibility of the data. The researcher used the constant comparative analysis method to ensure dependability (consistency). This involved repeatedly reviewing the codes for similarities and differences. To determine confirmability, a member-checking method was employed. Specifically, the codings

and final model were shared with four participants, who provided their feedback, and the research model was ultimately confirmed. To assess transferability, efforts were made to ensure greater diversity among the participants, a process that continued until data saturation was achieved.

3. Research Findings

After transcribing the 19 interviews, 1352 primary statements (or meaning units) were identified. Through consolidation, these were refined into 111 axial codes. Finally, during the theoretical coding process, they were organized into

16 subcategories and ultimately into 11 main categories. An example of the data analysis process using the constructivist method in this study is shown in Table 1.

Table 2. Categories, Focused Codes, and Axial Codes of the Adventure Sports Tourism Development Model

P	Concepts	Categories
P10	*Organizers of Sports Tourism Programs Adventure Tourism Tours	Key Actors
P18	*Participants in Sports Tourism	
P1	*Local Communities	
P2	*Government and State/Governmental Institutions	
P8		
P9	*Existence of tourist attractions	Enabling Factors
P6	*Existence of educational and responsible organizations	
P6	*Training of instructors and coaches	
P18		Influential Contextual Factors
P18	* Local community participation	
P9	* Issues of accommodation, basic health, and living necessities	
P11	* Ecological (environmental) issues	
P6	* Welfare facilities for the comfort of tourists * Safety and security in sports tourism	
P6	* The nature of tourist attractions	Drivers / Propelling Factors
P18	* Repetition of programs related to tourist attractions and tourism history/background	
P10		
P9	* Economic dimensions and cost evaluation for tourism * Organizers (Federation, Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts, governmental organizations)	
P15	* Government policies in engaging with the global community (local, national, international)	Uncertainties
P5		
P13	* Utilizing foreign tourists at attraction sites for revenue generation * Policies of countries for advertising and promoting tourism to visit destinations for adventure tourism	

P7	*Prominent presence of the private sector in the adventure tourism field	Wiled Cart/ Surprises / Game-Changers
P10	* Exploration and development of new sports tourism attractions	
P18	* Involvement of the private sector in producing clothing and equipment needed	
P1 P2		
P19	* Improving various conditions of the local community	Potential Outcomes of Tourism Development
P2	* Updating knowledge and enhancing the level of health and social vitality	
P5	* Increasing the productivity of individuals in their workplace due to engagement in tourism * Creating joy and vitality for individuals through adventure tourism	
P6	* Increasing the number of enthusiasts interested in adventure tourism	Preferred Future
P6	* Proper management in the tourism sector	
P14	* Unified command and administration under a single statute and organization	
P16	* Positive cultural, social, and economic effects	
P9		
P11	* Preservation of attractions	Factors Influencing Development
P15	* Development of infrastructure and welfare facilities	
P17	* Justification and education of the local community * Appropriate relations with other countries for sending individuals to those countries * Attention to the transportation system for foreign tourists * Existence of tranquility and security at the destination * Attention to hygiene, cleanliness, sanitation, and medical services * Attention to accommodation facilities for tourists * Welcoming of adventure sports tourists by the host community * Suitable climate and the existence of beautiful landscapes and scenery * Attention to the components of security, transportation industry, attractions, equipment, and facilities * Existence of nature, coastline, and historical and cultural heritage to attract tourists	
P8	* Creating happiness and joy in society	
P19	* Greater public inclination toward sports in promoting community health	
P13	* Expansion of cultural exchanges and interactions * Creating a positive image of the host city * Quantitative and qualitative development of facilities * Increased income for destination residents and job creation * Growth and spread of a culture of conservation and sustainable use of natural resources * Expansion of mutual understanding and social participation * Presence of specialized professionals in the adventure sports tourism sector * Quantity and quality of specialized websites for adventure sports tourism	
P16	* Lack of planning by organizations to attract adventure sports tourism	
P19	* Insufficient attention to adventure tourism attractions	
P7	* Low level of knowledge, culture, and general information about adventure sports tourism	
P6		
P8	* Very poor coordination among organizations related to adventure sports tourism * Inadequate welfare facilities and accommodations in adventure sports tourism locations * Weak information dissemination and insufficient knowledge of adventure sports tourism attractions	
P16		Barriers and Limitations
P19		
P15	* Empowering the local community	Goals
P11	* Economic growth and development	
P12	* Enhancing the health and well-being of tourists	
P10	* Interactions between local people and tourists * Creating employment opportunities through tourism * Preserving natural resources and exploring the unseen * Transformation in the nature of employment * Increasing the standard of living * Enhancing the livability of potential areas * A happy society and its impact on tourist acceptance	

P14	* Providing appropriate sports equipment for adventure sports tourism	Strategies
P13	* A happy local community and its influence on tourist acceptance	
P1	* Strong planning and management	
P7	* Technological advancements in the field of communications and information	
P15	* Privatization	
P11	* Policy-making tailored to each region/climate	
P12	* Innovation in the adventure tourism industry	
P10	* Activating tourism development capacities	
P13	* Proper safety and preservation management	
P1	* Examining competitive advantages and marketing diverse regions/climates	
P2	* Supporting private sector investment	
P12	* Efficient competition among agencies for development and excellence	
P9	* Utilizing modern marketing methods in adventure sports tourism	
P19	* Efforts to strengthen adventure-related advertising and information dissemination	
P13	* Specialized and professional activities of tourism enterprises	
P16	* Leveraging unique competitive opportunities in certain provinces and specific areas	
	* Tourists' desire to experience both positive and negative excitements in tourism	
	* Changes in tourism environment components	
	* Creating more exciting activities for tourists	
	* Empowerment in social, economic, political, and personal dimensions	
P10	* General infrastructure (roads, airports, accommodation facilities)	Strategic Requirements
P19	* Soft infrastructure (route maps, road information)	
P13	* Attitude towards how to spend leisure time	
P16		
P11	* Easy access to forests, coastal areas, and tourist sites	Natural Components
P14	* Weather conditions of the tourist location	
P3	* Climatic diversity in some adventure tourism locations	
P5	* Possession of natural potentials such as mountains and plains	
P17	* Existence of a young and interested segment in adventure sports tourism	
P3	* Tourism Operators and Agencies	Key Stakeholders
P13	* Participants	
P1	* Local Communities	
P2	* Organizers	
P12	* Government and Governmental Bodies	

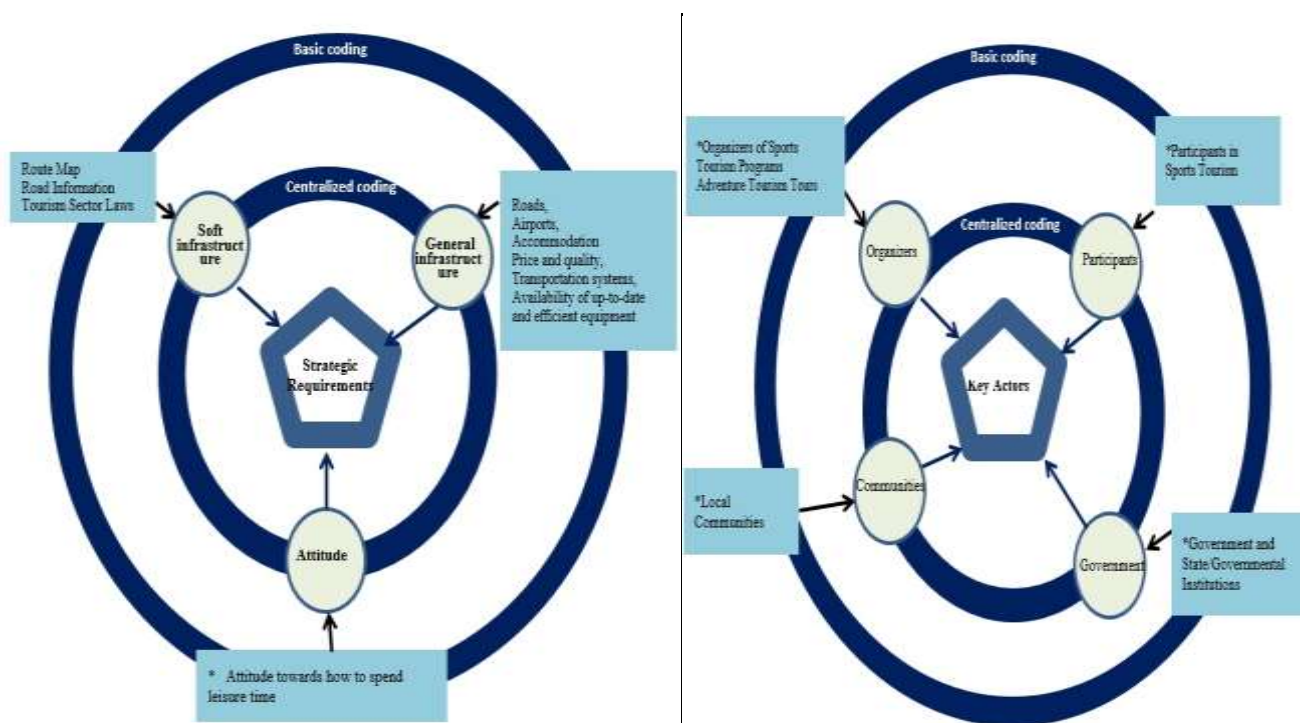


Figure 1. Schematic of Strategic Requirements and Key Stakeholders for the Development of Adventure Tourism

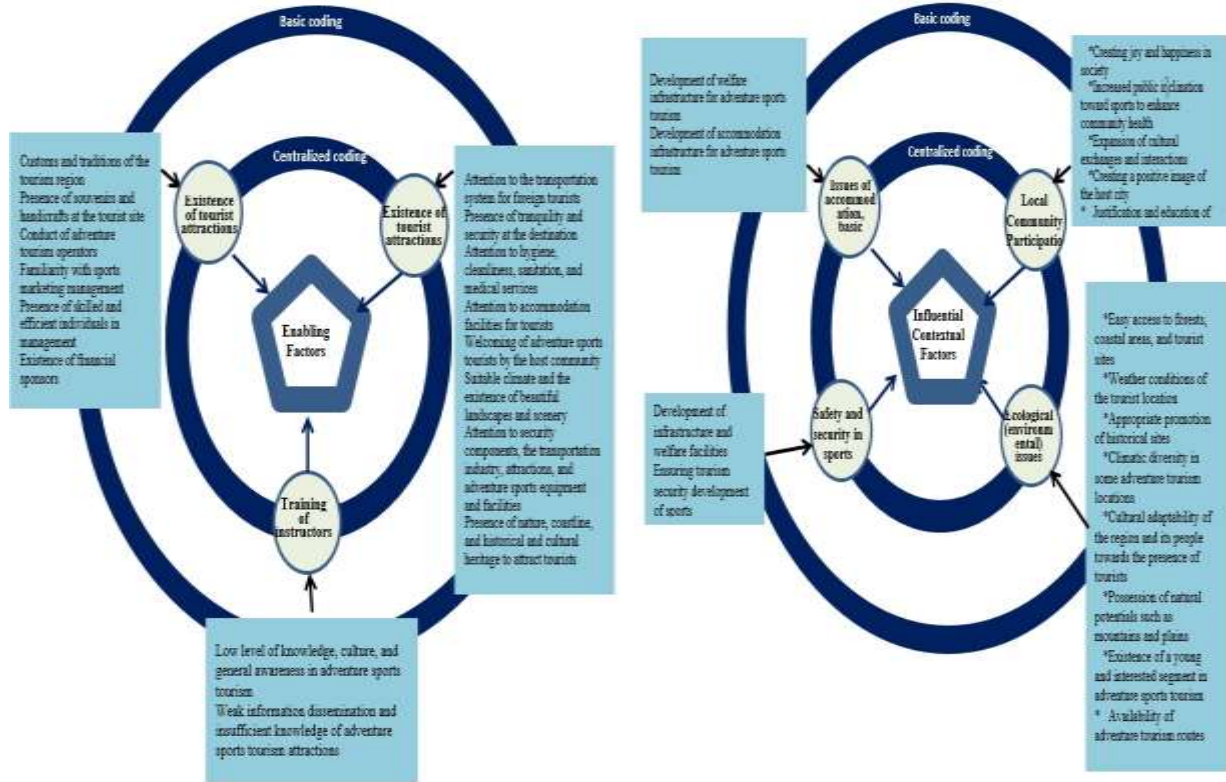


Figure 2. Schematic of Enabling Factors and Contextual Factors for the Development of Adventure Tourism

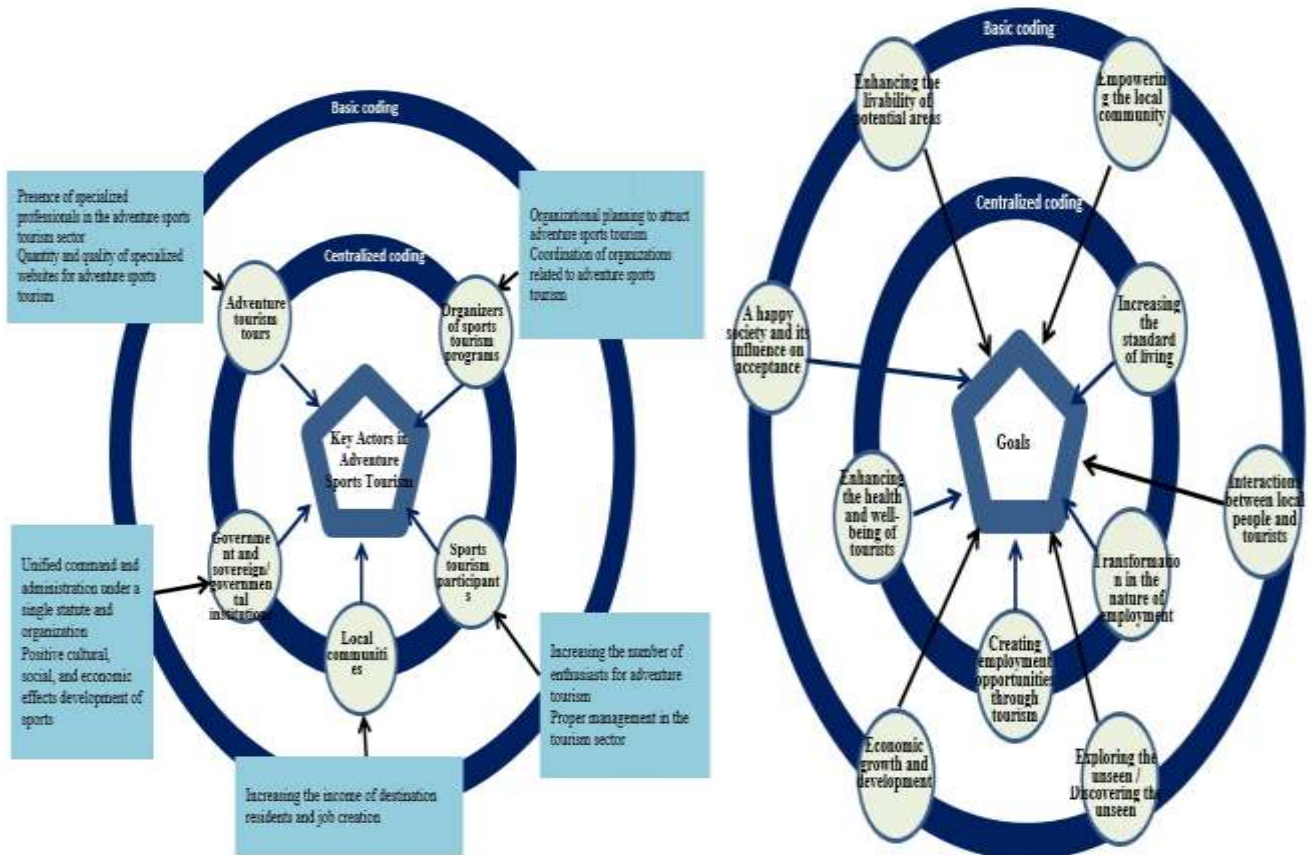


Figure 3. Schematic of Objectives and Key Actors for the Development of Adventure Tourism

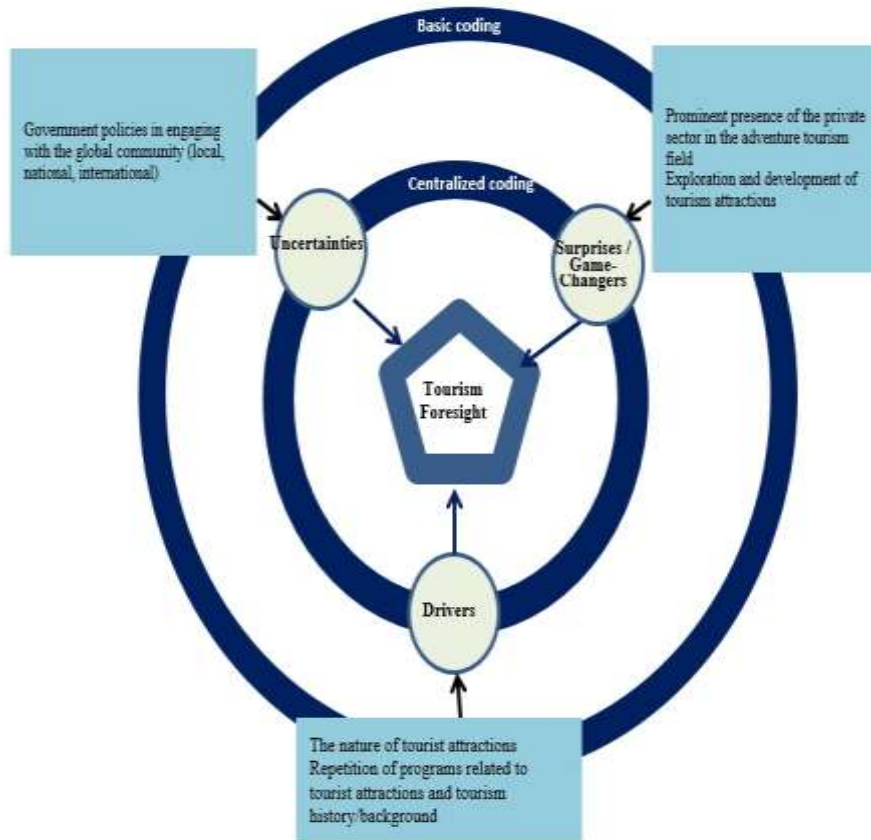


Figure 4. Schematic of the Futures Studies Approach for Adventure Tourism Development

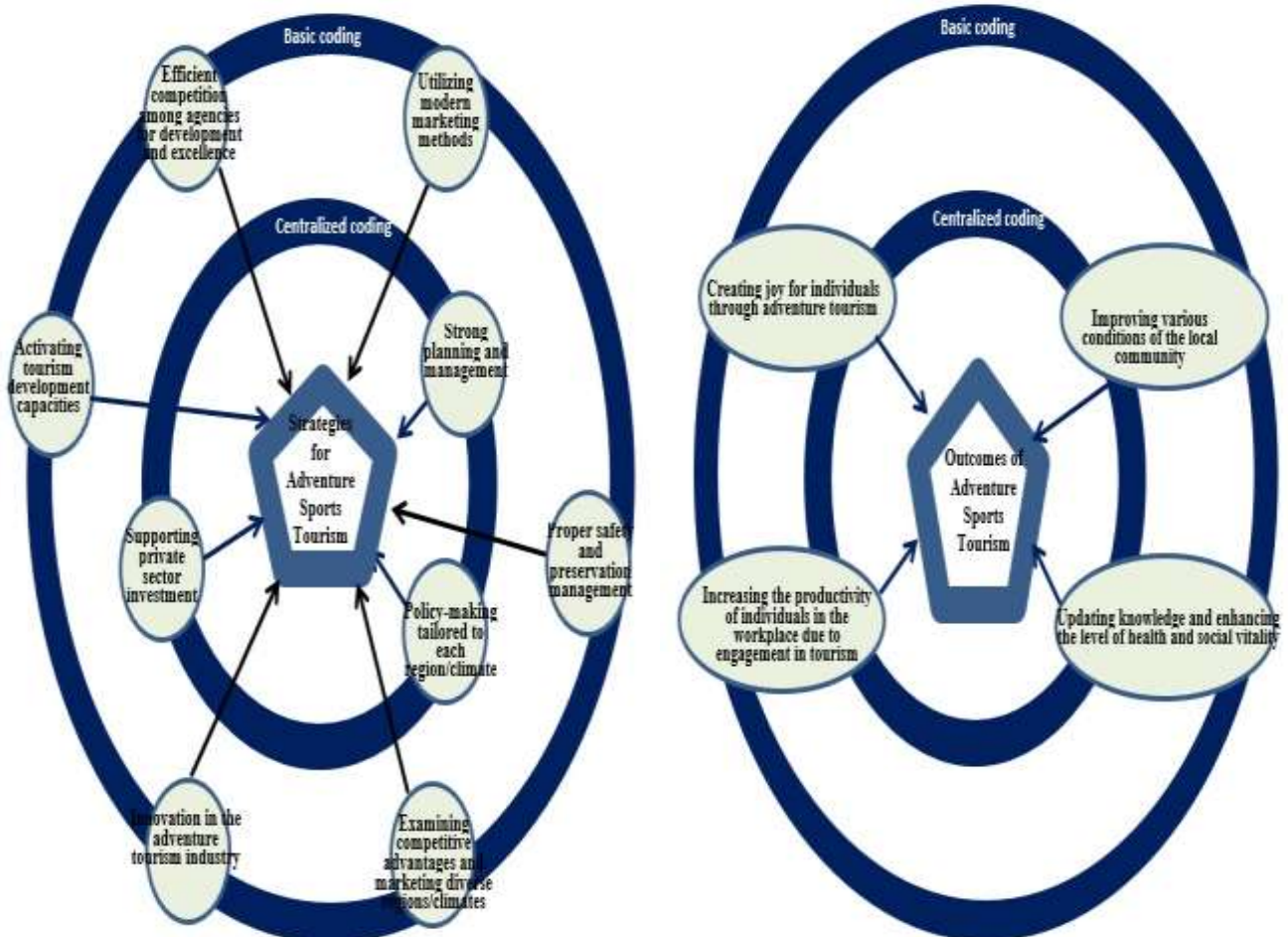


Figure 5. Schematic of Strategies and Outcomes for Adventure Tourism Development

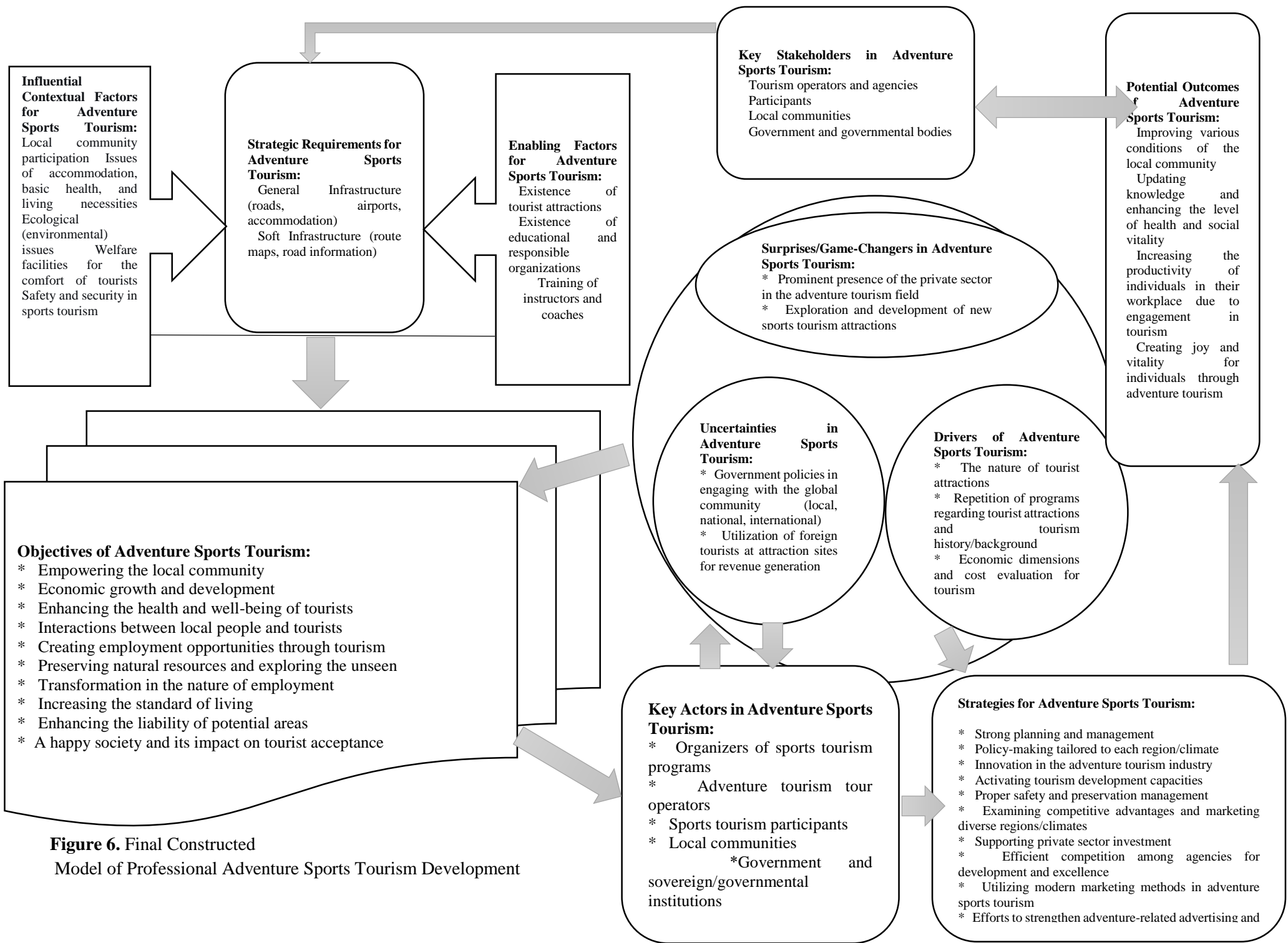


Figure 6. Final Constructed Model of Professional Adventure Sports Tourism Development

4. Discussion and Conclusion

The aim of this research was to contribute to public improvement and increased awareness regarding the importance of adventure sports tourism and its impacts on the economy, health, and productivity of individuals and society. Therefore, the constructed model for the development of professional adventure sports tourism can be described and explained based on these two phases. This model first explains the strategic requirements that enable the development of adventure sports tourism; subsequently, it addresses the key actors, objectives, strategies, and outcomes of adventure sports tourism.

In the initial phase of this model, it is indicated that the most important factors influencing adventure sports tourism include preserving attractions, developing infrastructure and welfare facilities, ensuring tourism security, educating and training the local community, and establishing appropriate relations with other countries for sending individuals abroad. This part of the research findings is consistent with the findings of [Aghili et al. \(2022\)](#). Furthermore, the most significant impacts of adventure tourism among individuals who engage in this physical activity include creating happiness and joy in society and fostering greater public inclination toward sports to enhance community health. In this regard, it has been acknowledged that, if institutionalized, adventure sports tourism can influence the economy, health, and productivity of individuals and society. Adventure sports tourism, if adopted as a comprehensive approach, can help reduce treatment costs, promote health, and improve public well-being ([Fancourt & Finn, 2019](#)). This approach is based on disease prevention and health preservation. These findings are convergent, and the reason for this alignment appears to be that the development of local education deepens knowledge in the field of local businesses and ultimately institutionalizes health within communities.

Therefore, by promoting regular physical activity and healthy nutrition, the risk factors for chronic diseases such as cardiovascular diseases and

diabetes can be reduced. These preventive measures can lead to a decreased need for expensive treatments and a reduction in hospital admissions. For instance, engaging in regular physical activity and maintaining a healthy diet can help reduce weight and control blood pressure and blood sugar levels, which in turn can be effective in lowering related diseases. On the other hand, providing urban and community environments that encourage physical activity plays a crucial role in preventing diseases associated with physical inactivity.

Furthermore, expanding cultural exchanges and interactions, creating a positive perception of the host city, qualitative and quantitative development of facilities, increasing the income of destination residents, and generating employment—as highlighted in the promotion of healthy habits in lifestyle by [Kogatian et al. \(2022\)](#) can strengthen life balance and prevent mental burdens on individuals. Additionally, group activities and team sports can help strengthen social connections and foster a sense of belonging to the community, encouraging individuals to persist in healthier and more social activities ([Nikobadi & Nazari, 2024](#)). In analyzing the alignment of these findings with other researchers, it must be acknowledged that adventure sports tourism plays a significant role in increasing productivity and enhancing individuals' focus, while also strengthening the quality of life and general morale of society. Moreover, it contributes to the growth and spread of a culture of conservation and sustainable utilization of natural resources, expands mutual understanding and social participation, ensures the presence of specialized professionals in the adventure sports tourism sector, and improves the quantity and quality of specialized websites for adventure sports tourism.

The most significant barriers and limitations to adventure sports tourism include: lack of organizational planning for attraction, insufficient attention to attractions, low levels of public knowledge, culture, and general awareness, poor coordination among related organizations, inadequate welfare facilities and accommodations

at locations, and weak information dissemination and insufficient familiarity with adventure sports tourism attractions. Among the most important strategic requirements for adventure sports tourism are general infrastructure (roads, airports, accommodation facilities), soft infrastructure (route maps, road information), and attitudes toward leisure time utilization. In this context, it is acknowledged that adventure sports tourism promotes healthy habits and regular physical activity, enhancing individuals' energy and mental capacity (Aucherlich et al., 2021). These measures can lead to improved efficiency and focus in performing daily tasks and professional duties. Additionally, this approach, by emphasizing stress management and mental well-being, can help individuals face less stress and enhance their ability to manage emotions and maintain greater focus.

Factors influencing the development of adventure sports tourism include: attention to the transportation system for foreign tourists, the presence of tranquility and security at the destination, attention to health conditions, cleanliness, sanitation, and medical services, attention to accommodation facilities for tourists, the host community's welcome to adventure sports tourists, suitable climate and the existence of beautiful landscapes and scenery, attention to security components, the transportation industry, attractions, equipment, and adventure sports facilities, and the presence of nature, coastline, and historical and cultural heritage to attract tourists. In this regard, attention must be paid to infrastructure, including affordable and quality welfare and recreational services, transportation systems, tourism sector laws and regulations, the region's and its people's adaptability to the presence of tourists, and the availability of up-to-date and efficient equipment. Cultural components in the development of adventure sports tourism should not be overlooked, as they represent strategic potentials. It must be acknowledged that if sufficient attention is not paid to factors such as the customs and traditions of the tourism region, the availability of

souvenirs and handicrafts at the tourist site, and the conduct of adventure tourism operators, this issue could turn into a strategic bottleneck for the region and significantly harm the prosperity of local businesses through adventure sports tourism.

The most important natural components in adventure sports tourism include: easy access to forests, coastal areas, and tourist sites; the climatic conditions of the tourist location; the suitability of historical sites; climatic diversity in some adventure tourism locations; and the possession of natural potentials such as mountains and plains. The most important enabling and contextual factors for adventure sports tourism are: the existence of tourist attractions; the presence of educational and responsible organizations; local community participation; issues of accommodation, basic health, and living necessities; ecological matters; welfare facilities for tourist comfort; and safety and security in sports tourism. In this context, it has been acknowledged that by institutionalizing health-promoting activities, a sports tourism framework can be achieved; for this purpose, a structure and process must be introduced. To institutionalize health-promoting activities in communities, the first step is to provide appropriate awareness and education (Jafari et al., 2023). In this regard, it must be recognized that in the field of adventure tourism development in Iran, since the primary domain of this type of sports tourism consists of pristine, untouched areas with unique ecological conditions, it is necessary, alongside focusing on local education, to ensure proper care and protection of these areas, similar to practices in other developed countries.

Effective information dissemination and organizing educational programs to familiarize individuals with the benefits and importance of a healthy lifestyle and physical activities are of great significance. Creating sports facilities and pedestrian pathways, as well as providing amenities that encourage sports participation, can play a crucial role in institutionalizing these activities. Additionally, governmental support and policies

that prioritize promoting physical activities and a healthy, active lifestyle are essential. By combining these factors, health-promoting activities can be institutionalized within communities, leading to more targeted improvements in health and quality of life.

Furthermore, based on the findings, it can be stated that institutionalizing health-promoting activities involves several stages. Initially, identifying and accurately analyzing the needs of the society is critical. Subsequently, designing an appropriate structure and formulating policies and regulations that address these needs are carried out (Nazari & Shahvali, 2022). Such alignment is interpreted as follows: for success, the implementation and execution of these policies are carried out with precision and quality, and continuous evaluation of these activities is conducted. Through evaluation, strengths and weaknesses are identified, and necessary improvements are applied. Finally, the stabilization and establishment of this institutionalization process, aimed at embedding and solidifying these concepts and approaches within society—particularly through acculturation and fostering resilience in these efforts—are accomplished.

****Key Actors and Stakeholders:**** Organizers of sports tourism programs, adventure tourism tour operators, sports tourism participants, local communities, government and sovereign/state institutions, as well as tourism operators and agencies, have been identified as having pivotal roles in the development of adventure sports tourism.

Key Drivers for the Development of Adventure Sports Tourism: The nature of tourist attractions, repetition of programs related to tourist attractions and tourism history, economic dimensions and cost evaluation for tourism, and organizers (federations, Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts, governmental bodies) were considered.

Uncertainties in the Development of Adventure Sports Tourism: Government policies in engaging

with the global community (local, national, international), utilization of foreign tourists at attraction sites for revenue, national policies for advertising and promoting tourist visits to locations, as well as environmental crises and political tensions. These findings align with the theoretical conclusions of Nazari et al. (2023); they asserted that a crisis is recognized as an extraordinary disruption to standard operations that threatens the safety and success of an organization. Before a crisis occurs, there is an opportunity to anticipate and manage potential crises to prevent some serious damages.

Game-Changers in the Development of Adventure Sports Tourism: The prominent presence of the private sector in the adventure tourism domain, exploration and development of new sports tourism attractions, and the involvement of the private sector in producing clothing and equipment required for adventure tourism.

The most important objectives of adventure sports tourism are: empowering the local community, economic growth and development, improving the health and well-being of tourists, interactions between local people and tourists, creating employment opportunities through tourism, preserving natural resources and exploring the unseen, transforming the nature of employment, raising the standard of living, enhancing the livability of suitable areas, and ultimately fostering a happy society and positively influencing tourist acceptance.

Given that sports have a direct impact on the economy of a society (Nikoabadi et al., 2024), it can be stated that the present model acknowledges that adventure sports tourism likely has the potential to directly and indirectly affect its share in the Gross Domestic Product (GDP). In this regard, Azadi et al. (2023) also emphasized the direct role of sports in GDP. These effects may manifest in several key areas. First, improving individuals' physical health enhances work efficiency and productivity. Individuals with better physical health perform better in the workplace, which can contribute to

increased production and improved economic outcomes for companies and industries. Second, increased focus on a healthy lifestyle and sports can lead to reduced healthcare costs. This decrease lowers the need for treating preventable diseases and additional medical care, ultimately reducing health-related expenses and freeing up resources for investment in other economic sectors.

In conclusion, it should be acknowledged that the most important proposed strategies for the development of adventure sports tourism include: providing suitable sports equipment for adventure sports tourism; fostering a happy local community to enhance tourist acceptance; implementing strong planning and management; technological advancements in the field of communications and information; privatization; policy-making tailored to each region; innovation in the adventure tourism industry; activating tourism development capacities; proper safety and preservation management; examining competitive advantages and marketing diverse regions; supporting private sector investment; fostering efficient competition among agencies for development and excellence; utilizing modern marketing methods in adventure sports tourism; striving to strengthen adventure-related advertising and information dissemination; specialized and professional activities of tourism enterprises; proposing innovative solutions in management; leveraging unique competitive opportunities in certain provinces and specific areas; tourists' willingness to experience both positive and negative excitements in tourism; changes in the components of the tourism environment; creating more exciting activities for tourists; and empowering individuals in social, economic, political, and personal dimensions.

It seems reasonable to assert that, in line with the stated objectives and proposed strategies, the following potential outcomes for the development of adventure sports tourism can be envisioned: improving various conditions of the local

community; updating knowledge and enhancing the level of health and social vitality; increasing the productivity of individuals in the workplace through engagement in tourism; and fostering joy and energy for individuals through adventure tourism. This is because increased attention to a health-oriented lifestyle can contribute to economic growth by boosting demand for health- and sports-related products and services, leading to job creation and profitability across various industries. Consequently, by developing and promoting a health-oriented lifestyle, opportunities arise for expanding related industries and services, and sales of products in this category can grow and increase. These actions not only contribute to improving community health but also aid in economic development and enhancing the income of related industries.

The most significant limitation of this study was the collection of data from experienced local individuals in the field of adventure sports tourism. Additionally, another limitation is that the generalizability of the results is specific to the domain of adventure sports tourism, and caution should be exercised when extending these findings to other areas of tourism. Therefore, it is recommended that other researchers develop development models for other domains of sports tourism, including both active and passive sports tourism.

5. Conflict of Interest

There is no conflict of interest.

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