



The impact of customer experience and engagement on sports tourism destination with an experiential marketing approach of sports events in Iran

Sara Yazdanpanah¹, Mirhasan Seyyed Ameri², Rogaye Sarlab³

1. PhD Student in Sports Management, Physical Education and Sports Science, Urmia University, Urmia, Iran
 2. Professor of Sports Management, Physical Education and Sports Sciences, Urmia University, Urmia, Iran
 3. Assistant Professor of Sports Management, Physical Education and Sports Sciences, Urmia University, Urmia, Iran
- *Author Email: ha_ameri2003@yahoo.com



Copyright ©The authors

Publisher: [University of Kurdistan, Sanandaj, Iran](https://www.uok.ac.ir/)

This is an open access article under the CC BY-NC 4.0 License (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>)

DOI: [10.22034/sms.2025.142026.1403](https://doi.org/10.22034/sms.2025.142026.1403)

ABSTRACT

Received: 29.08.2024
Revised: 01.01.2025
Accepted: 18.01.2025
Available online: 22.12.2025

Keywords:

Sports tourism, customer experience, customer engagement, experiential marketing, tourist behavior, sporting events

In the era of global competition, sporting events are recognized as one of the most important tourist attractions for attracting tourists. Therefore, this research aims to examine the impact of customer experience and engagement on the destination of sports tourism with an experiential marketing approach to sporting events in Iran, focusing on the twenty-second edition of the volleyball championship. The research method was descriptive-correlational and applied in nature, with the statistical population consisting of sports customers and tourists, managers, sports tourism experts, and university professors. Using simple random sampling, a sample size of 370 people was determined. Data was collected using standardized questionnaires, after validation of their content and reliability by professors. Data analysis was conducted using SPSS and Smart PLS software. The results showed that the customer engagement component had the greatest impact ($\alpha = 0.567$) and customer enthusiasm had the least impact ($\alpha = 0.449$) on customer experience. Additionally, the customer recognition component had the greatest impact ($\alpha = 0.414$) and customer enthusiasm had the least impact ($\alpha = 0.362$) on customer identification. Data analysis was conducted using SPSS and Smart PLS software. The results showed that the customer engagement component had the greatest impact ($\alpha = 0.567$) and customer enthusiasm had the least impact ($\alpha = 0.449$) on customer experience. Additionally, the customer recognition component had the greatest impact ($\alpha = 0.414$) and customer enthusiasm had the least impact ($\alpha = 0.362$) on customer identification.

How to Cite This Article:

Yazdanpanah, S., Seyyed Ameri, M. H., & sarlab, R. (2025). The impact of customer experience and engagement on sports tourism destination with an experiential marketing approach to sporting events in Iran. *Journal of Sport Marketing Studies*, 6 (4): 77-99. <https://doi.org/10.22034/sms.2025.142026.1403>

1. Introduction

In recent decades, sports tourism has gained a special place in the global economy as one of the most dynamic and profitable sectors of the tourism industry (Cooper and Balkey, 2022). International sports events, including championships, World Cups, and the Olympics, not only provide opportunities to enhance the level of sports activities in countries but also serve as key tools in attracting tourists and developing the economies of host destinations (Weaver, 2021). Therefore, the country of Iran, by hosting important sporting events such as the Asian Championship Volleyball competitions, seeks to attract more domestic and foreign tourists by utilizing its extensive sports capabilities and to enhance its position in the field of sports tourism.

Simply hosting a major sporting event is not a guarantee of success in attracting and retaining sports tourists (Funk and Wang, 2019). What matters is the customers' experience of attending the event and their level of engagement with the sports activities. These factors determine whether tourists are willing to return to the destination and recommend it to others (Carlisle, Ivano, and Dijkmans, 2023). For example, studies show that effective risk management in organizing sporting events plays a key role in attracting tourists (Fathi et al., 2022). Additionally, the research by Ajilchi et al. (2021) has shown that place branding has a significant impact on factors such as attractiveness, accessibility, accommodation, facilities, and activities. Furthermore, the results of multiple studies by Klentiz et al. (2023), Seshardi et al. (2023), Rabioul and Yuan (2021), Chang et al. (2020), and Zoini et al. (2020) indicate that customer experience at sporting events is influenced by a wide range of factors. These factors include service quality, the organization of competitions, ancillary facilities, the environmental atmosphere, and opportunities for social interactions, which influence the satisfaction and memory-making of visitors (Klentiz et al., 2023; Seshardi et al., 2023; Rabioul and Yuwan, 2021; Chang et al., 2020; Zoini

et al., 2020). Li and colleagues (2019) and Rader (2020) believed that experiential marketing, as a novel approach in this field, focuses on creating meaningful and memorable experiences for customers and can be an important factor in enhancing the destination image and attracting tourists again (Li and colleagues, 2019; Rader, 2020). Customer engagement is also one of the important factors in the success of sporting events and the development of sports tourism (Kumar et al., 2019). Holbeck and Anderson (2018) stated that engagement refers to the level of importance individuals place on a sporting event and the amount of time, energy, and attention they dedicate to it. Individuals with high engagement with. This conflict can be reinforced through various stimuli such as side activities, opportunities for interaction with athletes, and creating a sense of belonging to fan groups (Holbeck and Anderson, 2018).

In Iran, despite the abundant potential in the field of sports tourism, there are still numerous challenges in utilizing these potentials. Insufficient attention to customer experience and failure to create necessary engagement with sports events can lead to missed golden opportunities in attracting tourists. For example, the Asian Volleyball Championship is a great opportunity to enhance Iran's sports tourism position, but without precise planning and effective experiential marketing strategies, this event may not have a long-term impact on the country's tourism. Therefore, this research seeks to examine the impact of customer experience and their engagement in sporting events on the success of sports tourism destinations. The special focus of this research is on the twenty-second edition of the Asian Men's Volleyball Championship in 2023 in Iran and the city of Urmia, analyzing how experiential marketing can help attract more tourists and enhance their stay at the destination by strengthening customer experience and engagement. The main objective of this research is to provide solutions that can enhance Iran's position as a prominent sports tourism destination by improving

the quality of customer experience and increasing their engagement, while making the best use of the country's sports tourism potential.

In this research, sports customers and sports tourists are considered as a single group, a decision based on the extensive overlap in experiential marketing literature (Klentiz et al., 2023; Seshardi et al., 2023; Rabioul and Yuan, 2021; Zoini et al., 2020; Holbeek et al., 2019; Rader, 2020). Sports customers refer to individuals who are directly involved with sporting events and use related products and services, while sports tourists are recognized not only for participating in the event but also for traveling to the destination of sporting events.

Both groups have a lot in common in their interaction with various elements of customer experience, including emotional, cognitive, and behavioral aspects. According to experiential marketing theory, customers and sports tourists seek experiences beyond the consumption of goods and services and pay more attention to emotional and social interactions (Rader, 2020). In the literature

related to sports tourism, researchers have shown that sports customers and sports tourists are motivated by factors such as the reasons for participating in events. In other words, both groups come closer to each other as consumers of sports experiences, and from the perspective of experience consumption, both seek rich and meaningful interactions with brands and sporting events (Funk and Brown, 2007). However, considering the specific conditions in Iran and the possible differences between domestic and foreign tourists, there may be a need for further differentiation. Domestic sports tourists may pay more attention to local sports and cultural aspects, while international tourists may seek more cultural and tourism experiences alongside sporting events (Hinch and Higham, 2011). Therefore, in this study, these two groups have been examined as a common statistical sample, but in future research, the cultural and geographical distinctions between them will be examined more thoroughly.

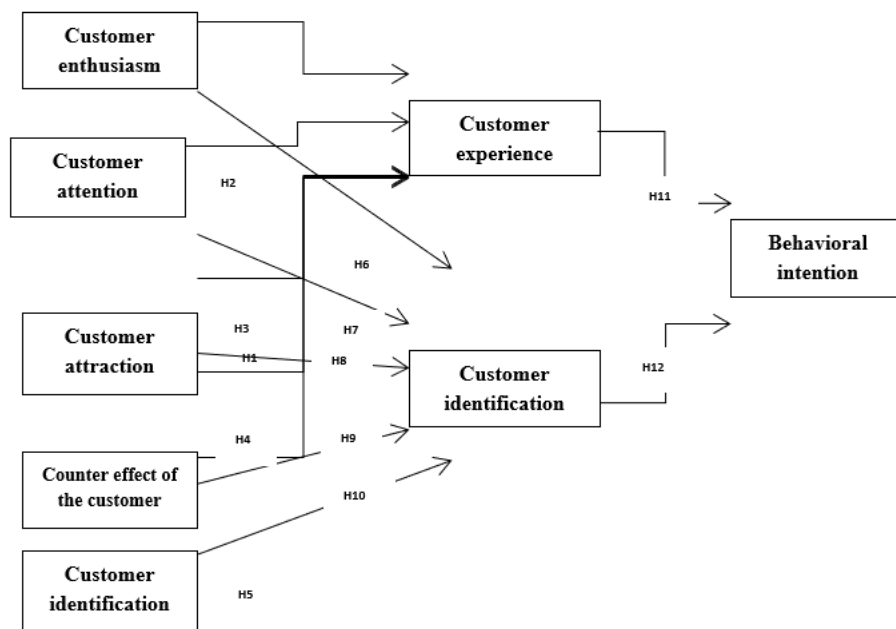


Figure 1. Conceptual model of the research based on the proposed model by Rader (2020)

Table 1. Research Background

Internal background	Title	Result
Ali Doost-Qahrafi and colleague (2023)	Strategic analysis of the development of active sports tourism in Iran	The findings indicated that weak marketing was the most significant weakness, the abundance of active sports tourism attractions was the most important strength, the high value of international currencies in Iran was the main opportunity, and U.S. sanctions were the most significant threat to Iran's active sports tourism on an international level.
Mineral and colleagues (2022)	Examining and studying the role of sports tourism in promoting green behaviors among tourists	The results obtained indicated that sports tourism, while creating significant social, cultural, and economic benefits for residents and visitors, has a considerable role in promoting green behaviors among tourists, and this issue, while protecting the environment, also impacts the development of sports tourism.
Parsamahr (1401)	Meta-analysis of the factors influencing the development of the sports tourism industry in Iran and outlining its future based on scenario writing in the next two decades.	According to the information provided in the mentioned study, the greatest impact among the factors affecting the development of sports tourism, with an effect size of 0.786, is attributed to the services factor, followed by the factors related to mountaineering and cave diving, which ranked second and third, respectively .It was also determined that the information factor has the least impact on the development of sports tourism. The chart of direct and indirect effects between variables and key trends showed six factors: diversity in sports tours, sanctions imposed against Iran, facilitation of travel, Iran's security in the region compared to neighboring countries, and the use of tools.
Foreign background	Title	Result
Rahman and colleagues (2023)	How the quality of the tourist experience, perceived price rationality, and regenerative tourism participation affect .tourist satisfaction	The findings showed that there is a significant positive impact of pleasure, loyalty to the tourist destination, and the image of the destination on tourist satisfaction .However, the findings indicate that escape, relaxation, engagement, perceived price rationality, and restorative tourism participation do not have a direct impact on tourist satisfaction. Furthermore, it was found



that the destination image moderates the relationship between restorative tourism participation and tourist satisfaction.

Chan and colleagues (2022)	Determinants of Sports Tourists' Decision-Making: A Meta-Analysis of Determinants of Sports Tourists' Decision-Making	The findings of the mentioned study showed that nostalgia, attitude, motivation, behavioral intention, event quality, destination image, tourist satisfaction, perceived value, future intention, and loyalty to the destination and location are determinants of decision-making for sports tourists.
Rader (2020)	The impact of engagement and customer experience on the sports tourism destination with an experiential marketing approach in India	The findings showed that different dimensions of customer engagement have varying effects on customer experience and identity, and consequently on behavior based on the tourism destination. The findings indicated that there is a significant difference in fundamental structures between first-time and repeat visitors.

2. Methodology

The present research was conducted as an applied descriptive-correlational study and was carried out in a field setting. This research is designed using the research onion model, in which each layer specifies an aspect of the research process. This research is designed using the research onion model, in which each layer specifies an aspect of the research process. The research strategy has been survey-based, and data has been collected and analyzed

using quantitative methods. In Table 2, the details of the research selections based on the research onion model are presented. This research has been conducted based on a realist ontology, which views reality as objective and independent of the human mind. From an epistemological perspective, the chosen positivist approach acquires scientific knowledge through observation, analysis of objective data, and testing of hypotheses.

Table 2. Research Onion Model

Onion model layer of research	Selection in this research	Explanations
Research philosophy	Positivism approach	Based on objective reality, observable data, and hypothesis testing
Research approach	Deductive	Using existing theories to formulate hypotheses
Research strategy	Survey study	Collecting data through standardized questionnaires for quantitative analysis
Time horizon	Cross-sectional	Data have been collected over a specific time period
Data collection techniques	Questionnaire, statistical analysis with SPSS and Smart PLS	Main tools for data collection and analysis techniques for hypothesis testing.

The statistical population of this research includes all customers and sports tourists, sports managers, experts in the field of sports tourism, and university professors. In this research, a simple random sampling method was used so that each individual in the target population had an equal opportunity for selection. To ensure the representativeness of the samples, specific criteria were considered in selecting participants. For example, the sample includes a range of customers, sports tourists, managers, experts, and professors in the field of tourism to cover various dimensions of experience and engagement related to the sports tourism destination. Finally, to estimate the sample size, a sample size determination software was used, and a sample size of 370 people was estimated.

Table 3). This number has been considered as an appropriate representative of the target community and provides the possibility of generalizing the results. This estimate has been

made based on a specified confidence level (for example, 95 percent) and a reasonable sampling error. In this research, an effort was made to provide the necessary diversity from the target community by implementing random sampling and utilizing a sufficient variety of community members (including customers, sports tourists, managers, and experts). In addition, criteria such as attendance at sporting events and familiarity with the Asian Volleyball Championship were used to ensure that the selected individuals have sufficient knowledge and involvement in the research topic and can answer relevant questions.

Table 3, Sample Size Estimation

Sample size	Effect size	Ability test	error rate
370	0/05	0/95	0/05

For data collection, five different questionnaires were used, which included personal information (gender, marital status, age, education level, number of attendances at sports events, and familiarity with the Asian Volleyball Championship), the customer engagement questionnaire by Hy and colleagues (2023) consisting of 16 questions and four components, and the customer experience questionnaire by Rad. In order to confirm the face and content validity of the questionnaires, after a three-stage translation process, the opinions of 10 experts in the field of sports management were collected. The questionnaires were prepared based on a five-point Likert scale (from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree"). In the continuation, in a preliminary study, the reliability of the questionnaires was examined using Cronbach's

alpha coefficient, with the obtained results reported as follows for the components: customer engagement (0.84), customer experience (0.86), customer identification (0.82), and behavioral intentions (0.85). Finally, the questionnaires were distributed in two sections consisting of personal information and main questions among the research samples. For data analysis, descriptive and inferential statistical methods were used. Additionally, confirmatory factor analysis was employed to examine the construct validity of the measurement tool. Based on the results of the skewness and kurtosis test that fell within the range of -2 to 2, it can be said that the data follows a normal distribution. All data analyses were conducted using SPSS, SPSS Sample Power (for determining sample size), and Smart PLS software.



3. Results

The results from the descriptive findings showed that out of a total of 370 sample participants, 83.8% were customers and sports tourists, 2.7% were sports managers in the tourism sector, 9.5% were experts in the tourism field, and 4% were professors in the tourism field. The majority of participants (56.8%) were male and the rest (43.2%) were female. The marital status of most research samples was single (51.4 percent) and the rest (48.6 percent) were married. Additionally, the highest number of samples were in the age range of 31 to 40 years (with a frequency of 47.3 percent) and the lowest number were in the age range of 18

to 20 years (with a frequency of 2.7 percent). The educational qualification of most participants (48.1 percent) was a bachelor's degree, and the least common qualification (3.3 percent) was a diploma or lower. Based on attendance at sporting events, the highest number of samples (50.3 percent) attended 1 to 2 times, and the lowest number (0.3 percent) had no attendance at all. Additionally, all research samples were related to the competition events.

Table 4. Demographic characteristics of the research samples

	variable	abundance	percent
samples	Sports customers and tourists	310	83/8
	Sports managers in the tourism sector	10	2/7
	Tourism experts	35	9/5
	Tourism field professors	15	4/0
Gender	Man	210	56/8
	Woman	160	43/2
Marital status	Single	190	51/4
	Married	180	48/6
Age	18-20 years	10	2/7
	21-30 years	89	24/1
	31-40 years	175	47/3
	Over 40 years	96	25/9
Education	Diploma and below	12	3/3
	Associate degree	32	8/7
	Bachelor's degree	178	48/1
	Master's degree	96	25/9
	Doctorate	52	14/0
Attendance at sporting events	Without presence	1	0/3
	1 time presence	153	41/3
	1 to 2 with presence	186	50/3
	2 to 3 with presence	23	6/2
	More than 3 with presence	7	1/9
Familiarity with the Asian Volleyball Championship	I am familiar	370	100
	I am not familiar	-	-
the whole		370	100

Ghasemi and colleagues (2020) pointed out that to evaluate the indicators of reliability and validity, methods of internal consistency reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity should be used. Additionally, Sarstad and colleagues (2021) and Hayer and colleagues (2023) stated that the assessment of the reliability of indicators should be conducted by examining the correlations between each item and construct, which are known as composite loadings or item correlation

weights. To ensure the reliability of the indicators, according to the recommendations of Ghasemi and colleagues (2020), a value higher than 0.7 was considered, and no cases with a value below this threshold were found. Dijkstra and Hansler (2015) also emphasized that the reliability assessment of indicators should be accompanied by the assessment of internal consistency reliability. Table (5) shows the results related to these evaluations.

Table 5, Measurement Equations of Questionnaires

Variable	component	representative	factor load	Mean extracted variance	Composite reliability	Ravi index	Cronbach's alpha	source	
Customer engagement	Customer passion	I am very interested in this tourist destination.	0/839	0/583	0/957	0/953	0/952	Hey and colleagues (2023)	
		I love this destination.	0/848						
		. I am very eager for this destination.	0/809						
	Customer attention	I pay a lot of attention to everything related to this destination.	0/822	0/687	0/946	0/937	0/935		
		Anything related to this tourist destination catches my attention.	0/798						
		I focus completely when visiting this tourist destination.	0/762						
	Customer attraction	In interacting with this destination, I forget everything around me.	0/630	0/586	0/957	0/953	0/952		
		Time passes quickly when engaging with this destination.	0/754						
		Interacting with this destination captivates me.	0/761						
		It is hard to separate myself when connecting with this destination.	0/792						
	Customer interaction	I enjoy interacting with like-minded people in this tourist destination.	0/787	0/547	0/946	0/941	0/912		
		I like to actively participate in discussions within the tourism community.	0/750						
Exchanging ideas with others in the tourism community is enjoyable for me.		0/820							
Knowing the customer	I want to spend more time exploring the different aspects of this destination.	0/742	0/687	0/942	0/926	0/923			



	Instead of saying "they," I use "we" when talking about	0/784					
	This destination provides an opportunity for discovery and exploration that excites me.	0/720					
Customer experience	This destination is mentally interesting to me.	0/555	0/652	0/863	0/923	0/924	Rader (2020)
	This destination tries to capture my attention.	0/662					
	This destination doesn't have much sensory appeal for me.	0/585					
	This destination evokes emotional responses in me.	0/643					
	This destination tries to put me in a specific mood.	0/624					
	This destination stimulates my curiosity.	0/646					
	This destination strives to captivate me.	0/587					
	This destination aims to stimulate my creative thinking.	0/619					
	I would like to share what I experienced in this destination with others.	0/623					
	I want to take photos of this destination as a souvenir.	0/628					
	This destination evokes a sense of commitment to environmental protection in me.	0/656					
	I buy souvenirs related to this destination.	0/593					
Customer identification	When someone criticizes this destination, I feel that I am somehow being insulted.	0/695	0/632	0/987	0/911	0/915	Rader (2020)
	I am very interested in others' opinions about this destination.	0/766					
	If the media reports criticism of this destination, I feel embarrassed.	0/597					
	When someone praises this destination, I consider it a personal compliment.	0/606					
Behavioral intentions	After the visit, I intend to travel to this destination again.	0/739	0/579	0/874	0/844	0/869	Rader (2020)
	I will recommend this destination to my friends and acquaintances.	0/787					
	I am eager to share my experience of this destination with others.	0/680					

Table 5 shows the estimated values of the factor loads of the questionnaire items that are in an optimal condition. Among the questions related to customer engagement, the second question (I like this destination) has the highest factor loading of 0.848. While the seventh question (in interaction with this destination, I forget everything around me) has a factor loading of 0.630, it has the lowest value. For the variable of customer experience, question eleven (This destination evokes in me a sense of commitment to environmental protection) has the highest factor loading of 0.656, while question one (This destination is intellectually interesting to me) shows the lowest factor loading of 0.555. In the

customer identification variable, the first question (I am very interested in others' opinions about this destination) has the highest factor loading of 0.766, while the third question (If there is news in the media criticizing this destination, I feel embarrassed) has the lowest factor loading of 0.597. Ultimately, for the behavioral intentions variable, the second question (I will recommend this destination to my friends and acquaintances) has the highest factor loading of 0.787, while the third question (I am interested in sharing my experience of this destination with others) shows the lowest factor loading of 0.680.

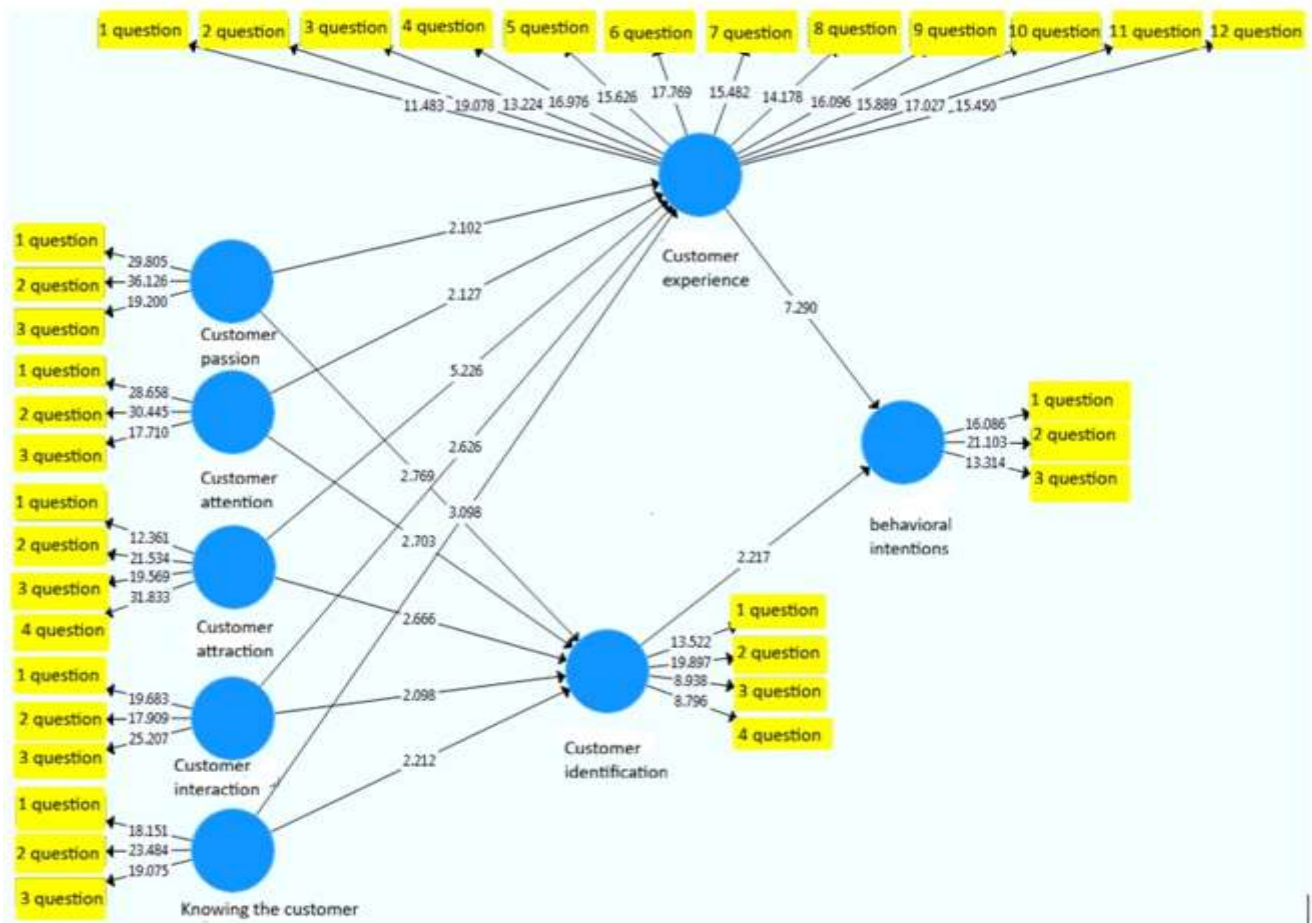


Figure 2. Structural equation model of the research in the state of significance

According to Figure 2, all significant Z coefficients are greater than 1.96. This indicates the significance of all questions, components, and

relationships between variables at a confidence level of 0.95.

**Table 6.** Divergent validity based on HTMT

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Behavioral intentions								
Customer counter-effect	0/820							
Customer enthusiasm	0/802	0/589						
Customer experience	0/714	0/680	0/510					
Customer attention	0/750	0/796	0/695	0/599				
Customer attraction	0/773	0/756	0/560	0/709	0/763			
Customer identification	0/778	0/841	0/675	0/757	0/746	0/793		
Customer identification	0/670	0/594	0/497	0/775	0/594	0/572	0/641	

Hansler et al. (2015), Ghasemi et al. (2020), and Franke and Sarstedt (2019) emphasized that the HTMT index should be used to assess discriminant validity. Based on this recommendation, this study utilized the guidelines related to the evaluation of

HTMT values. The estimated values in Table 5 show that all HTMT values are less than 0.9, which serves as evidence of appropriate divergent validity and good fit of the measurement model.

Table 7. Evaluation indicators of the measurement, structural, and overall model

Indicators	Indicator type	Index name	abbreviation	Final model	
Fit indices	Measurement section	Shared values	CVCom	0/256	
	Structural section	Coefficient of determination	Measure of impact	f ²	0/077
			Amount of variability	CVRed	0/173
			General section	Square root of the mean squared residuals standard	SRMR
		Goodness of fit index	GOF		0/316

The estimated values in Table 7 show the evaluation indices of the measurement, structural, and overall model. Considering the desired range of these indices, the results obtained indicate that the proposed model is supported by the research data. In other words, the fit of the data to the model is established. Ghasemi and colleagues (2020) emphasized that the evaluation of the structural model should include examining multicollinearity

among exogenous constructs, testing significance and the relationship of path coefficients, as well as indirect effects. In addition, the evaluation of the predictive power of both in-sample and out-of-sample models, the examination of effect size (f²), and the unique contribution of predictor variables (R²) in endogenous constructs should also be considered. Hair et al. (2019) also stated that the

variance inflation factor (VIF) is often used to assess the multicollinearity of formative indicators.

Table 8. Results of the Structural Model Evaluation

Independent variable	Dependent	Hypothesis	solidarity	t statistic	Sig	VIF	f2	Result
Customer enthusiasm	Customer experience	H1	0/449	10/687	0/001	1/475	0/345	Confirmation
Customer attention	Customer experience	H2	0/494	10/246	0/001	1/401	0/442	Confirmation
Customer attraction	Customer experience	H3	0/567	16/324	0/001	1/802	0/512	Confirmation
Customer interaction effect	Customer experience	H4	0/534	12/959	0/001	1/981	0/275	Confirmation
Customer recognition	Customer experience	H5	0/563	11/070	0/001	1/753	0/181	Confirmation
Customer enthusiasm	Customer identification	H6	0/362	8/181	0/001	1/937	0/356	Confirmation
Customer attention	Customer identification	H7	0/406	8/219	0/001	1/842	0/426	Confirmation
Customer attraction	Customer identification	H8	0/395	9/303	0/001	1/753	0/369	Confirmation
Customer interaction effect	Customer identification	H9	0/413	9/432	0/001	1/325	0/385	Confirmation
Customer recognition	Customer identification	H10	0/414	9/593	0/001	1/853	0/362	Confirmation
Customer experience	Behavioral intentions	H11	0/516	12/762	0/001	1/412	0/371	Confirmation
Customer identification	Behavioral intentions	H12	0/405	10/783	0/001	1/236	0/390	Confirmation

The estimated values in Table 8 indicate that customer enthusiasm affects customer experience H1 ($\alpha = 0.449$, $p = 0.001$), customer attention affects customer experience H2 ($\alpha = 0.494$, $p = 0.001$), customer engagement affects customer experience H3 ($\alpha = 0.567$, $p = 0.001$), customer interaction affects customer experience H4 ($\alpha = 0.534$, $p = 0.001$), Customer identification has a positive and significant effect on customer experience H5 ($\alpha = 0.563$, $p = 0.001$). The customer's enthusiasm for customer identification H6 ($\alpha = 0.362$, $p = 0.001$), the customer's attention to customer identification H7 ($\alpha = 0.406$, $p = 0.001$), Customer attraction on

customer identification H8 ($\alpha = 0.395$, $p = 0.001$), customer interaction on customer identification H9 ($\alpha = 0.413$, $p = 0.001$), Customer identification on customer identification H10 ($\alpha = 0.414$, $p = 0.001$), customer experience on behavioral intentions H11 ($\alpha = 0.516$, $p = 0.001$), Customer identification also has a positive and significant effect on behavioral intentions H12 ($\alpha = 0.405$, $p = 0.001$). These results emphasize that enthusiasm, attention, attraction, interaction, and customer recognition are all key factors in shaping customer experience and identification, ultimately influencing their behavioral intentions.

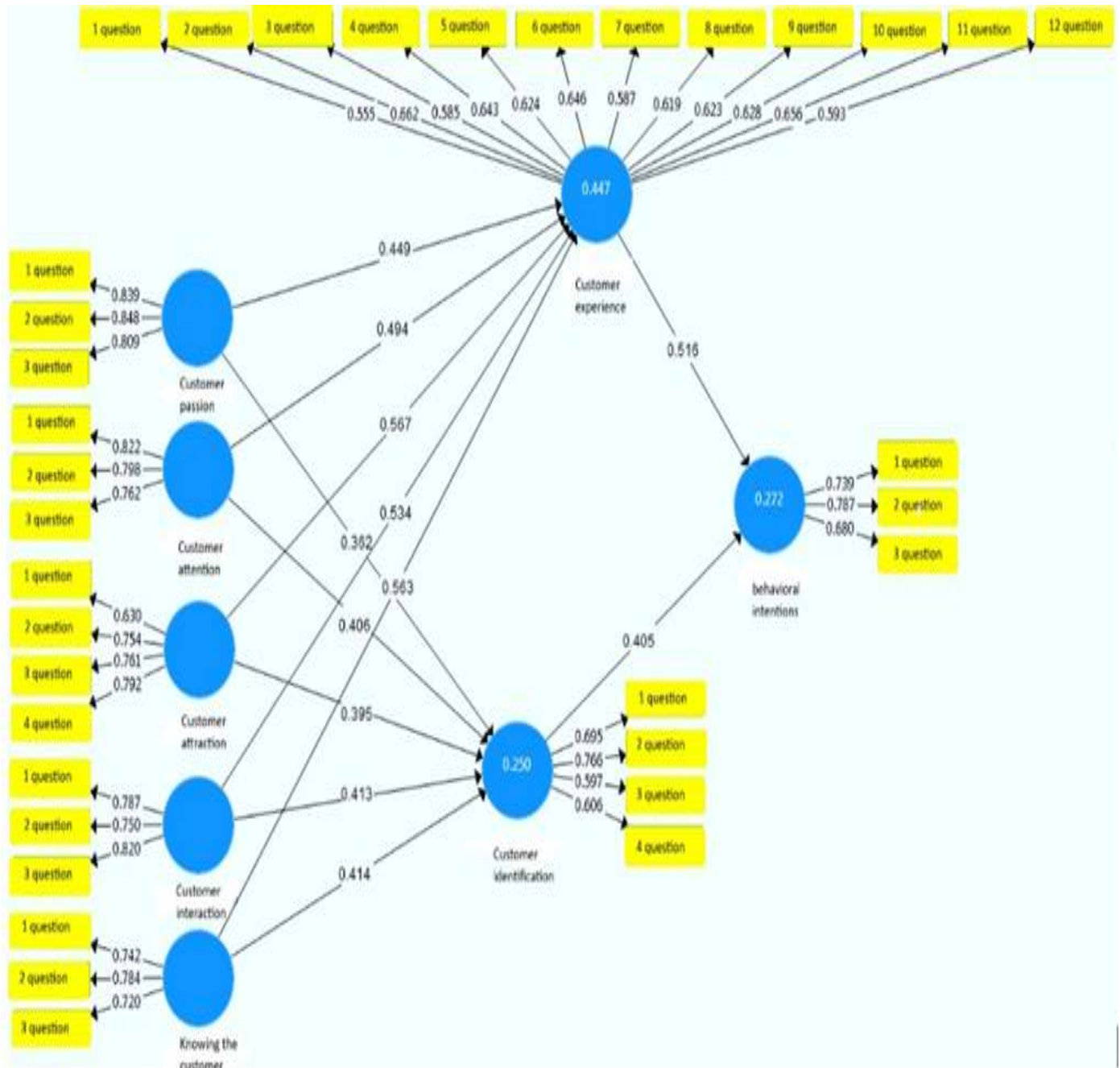


Figure 3. Structural equation model of the research in the standard state

4. Discussion and Conclusion

The results showed that customer enthusiasm impacts the sports tourism destination. These results clearly indicate that customer enthusiasm for the sports tourism destination has a significant effect on their overall experience. These findings not only highlight the importance of considering the emotional and psychological aspects of customers

in the design and management of tourism destinations. These results are consistent with the studies by Rad et al. (2020), Holbeck et al. (2019), Kumar et al. (2019), and Rahman et al. (2023). Customer enthusiasm, as a fundamental driver, can contribute to the creation of a positive and memorable experience. When customers travel

enthusiastically to a sporting destination, they are more likely to enjoy the services and activities, which can lead to increased satisfaction and loyalty. In other words, enthusiasm not only affects customers' emotions but can also shape their buying behaviors and choices (Kumar et al., 2019). In explaining these results, it can be said that paying attention to the enthusiasm of sports tourists and striving to improve their experience can lead to success and sustainable growth in the sports tourism industry. These findings can help managers and planners develop effective strategies to attract and retain their tourists, thereby enhancing the experience. The results indicated that customer attention to sports tourism destinations has a significant impact on customer experience. This research clearly shows that customer attention to the details and specific features of sports tourism destinations plays a key role in shaping their overall experience. These findings not only emphasize the importance of paying attention to details, but also help managers and planners design effective strategies to improve their customers' experience. The results obtained are consistent with the studies by Rader (2020), Holbeck et al. (2019), Rader et al. (2022), and Rahman et al. (2023). Customer attention to the sports tourism destination is recognized as a key factor in shaping a positive customer experience.

When customers pay attention to the details, facilities, and services available at the destination, this attention can lead to increased satisfaction and a pleasant feeling about their trip (Rahman et al., 2023). When customers pay attention to the details, amenities, and services available at the destination, this attention can lead to increased satisfaction and a pleasant feeling about their trip (Rahman et al., 2023). According to Rader (2020), several factors can influence the level of customer attention to a sports tourism destination: 1) Quality of information: Providing accurate and comprehensive information about the destination can attract customers' attention. 2) Effective advertising and marketing: Advertising strategies that emphasize the unique features of the destination can increase

customer attention. 3) Previous experiences: Customers' positive or negative previous experiences from similar trips can affect their level of attention to the destination. 4) Social experience: The opinions of others, especially in the digital age, can influence customer attention (Rader, 2020). In explaining these results, it can be said that customers' attention to the sports tourism destination not only affects their experience but can also lead to increased satisfaction and loyalty among customers. By deeply understanding the needs and expectations of customers and striving to enhance their attention to the destination, positive and lasting experiences in the sports tourism industry can be achieved. This not only contributes to the success of tourist destinations but can also lead to the sustainable growth of this industry. In summary, customer attention to the sports tourism destination is a key factor in enhancing the customer experience, and by focusing on this aspect, attractive and successful destinations in the field of sports tourism can be created.

The results indicated that attracting customers with a sports tourism destination affects the customer experience. These findings emphasize the importance of customer attraction strategies in enhancing the experience of tourists and improving their satisfaction with sports trips. These findings were consistent with the results of studies by Radr (2020), Holbek et al. (2019), Radr et al. (2022), Pruding and Nohhofer (2023), and Rahman et al. (2023). Attracting customers to a sports tourism destination as a key factor can lead to the formation of a positive and memorable experience. When customers are well attracted to a destination, they are more likely to enjoy the services and activities offered, resulting in greater satisfaction and pleasure from their trip. This direct relationship indicates that customer attraction not only influences their initial decision-making but can also affect their perception and evaluation of the overall experience of the journey (Rader et al., 2022). According to Rader (2020), several factors can impact customer attraction to a sports tourism destination: An appealing and attractive image of



the destination can help attract customers. Factors such as natural beauty, sports facilities, and the reputation of the destination can play an important role in this regard. Providing high-quality services and positive past experiences can help attract new customers and retain existing ones. Effective advertising and marketing: Well-designed advertising strategies that emphasize the unique features of the destination can help attract new customers. These advertisements should be designed to evoke positive emotions and enthusiasm in customers (Radr, 2020). In explaining these results, it can be said that attracting customers to a sports tourism destination not only affects their experience but can also lead to increased customer satisfaction and loyalty. By deeply understanding the needs and expectations of customers and striving to enhance their attraction to destinations, positive and lasting experiences in the sports tourism industry can be achieved. This not only helps the success of tourist destinations but can also lead to the sustainable growth of this industry. Considering these results, tourism managers and planners must seriously pay attention to customer attraction strategies and utilize them as tools to enhance customer experience and increase satisfaction in this industry. The results indicated that customer awareness of the sports tourism destination affects the customer experience. These findings emphasize the importance of customers' awareness and understanding of the features and facilities of the destination in enhancing tourists' experiences and increasing their satisfaction. These findings align with the results of studies by Rader (2020), Holbeck et al. (2019), and Rader et al. (2022). Customer awareness of a sports tourism destination as a key factor can lead to the formation of a positive and memorable experience. When customers are aware of the features and facilities of the destination, they are more likely to enjoy the services and activities offered, resulting in greater satisfaction and happiness from their trip. This direct relationship indicates that customer knowledge not only affects their initial decision-

making but can also influence their perception and evaluation of the overall travel experience (Harrigan et al., 2017). According to Rader (2020), several factors can impact the customer's knowledge of a sports tourism destination: 1) Destination information: Providing accurate and comprehensive information about the destination, including features, facilities, and available activities, can help enhance customer awareness. This information should be made available to customers through various channels. 2) Previous experiences: Customers' positive or negative previous experiences from similar trips can influence the level of interest. Feedback from Others: The opinions and feedback of other travelers, especially in the online space, can help enhance customers' understanding of a destination. This feedback can include recommendations, criticisms, and experiences of others. In explaining these results, it can be said that a customer's understanding of a sports tourism destination not only affects their experience. By striving to enhance customers' awareness of the destination and providing comprehensive and accurate information, it is possible to create positive and lasting experiences in the sports tourism industry. This not only helps the success of tourism goals but can also lead to the sustainable growth of this industry. Tourism managers and planners must seriously pay attention to increasing customers' awareness of destinations and utilize it as a tool to enhance customer experience and increase satisfaction in this industry. The results showed that customer passion for the sports tourism destination affects customer identification. These findings are consistent with the results of studies by Holbrook et al. (2019) and Kumar et al. (2019). The results of this research emphasize that customer passion, as an important psychological construct, plays a key role in shaping customers' identification and understanding of the destination. When customers eagerly travel to a sports destination, they are more likely to pay attention to the details and specific features of that destination and gain a better understanding of it

(Holbæk et al., 2019). In explaining these results, it can be said that customer enthusiasm, as an important psychological construct, has a significant impact on the identification and perception of the customer regarding the sports tourism destination. This finding can help managers and planners to improve recognition by focusing on factors affecting customer enthusiasm such as destination image, service quality, and advertising. Other results indicated that customer attention to the sports tourism destination affects customer identification. These findings were consistent with the results of studies by Harrigan et al. (2018), Holbrook et al. (2019), Kumar et al. (2019), and Holbrook and Andersen (2018). The results of this research emphasize that customer attention acts as a cognitive process. When customers pay attention to the details and specific features of a destination, they are more likely to gain a better understanding of that destination (Harrigan et al., 2018). In explaining these results, it can be said that customer attention, as an important cognitive process, has a significant impact on the identification and perception of the customer regarding the sports tourism destination. This finding can help managers and planners to improve customer recognition of these destinations by focusing on factors that influence customer attention, such as destination image, service quality, and advertising strategies. In particular, paying attention to service quality and creating a positive image of the destination can enhance attention and consequently improve customer recognition. This not only leads to increased customer satisfaction and loyalty but can also contribute to sustainable success in the sports tourism industry. The results indicated that customer attraction to sports tourism destinations affects customer identification. These findings were consistent with the results of studies by Holbrook et al. (2019), Kumar et al. (2019), and Rader (2020). The examination of research results shows that identifying and understanding target customers in sports tourism plays a fundamental role in attracting them. Customer identification is the foundation of attracting customers in sports tourism. Sports

tourism advertising will be effective when it has well identified the target audience. Brand awareness, customer attraction, and increased sales require a precise understanding of the customer. Planning for customer attraction in this industry always requires precise identification of target customers. Without understanding the characteristics and needs of customers, attracting them will not be possible. Effective marketing in sports tourism necessitates understanding customer needs. Important factors in marketing sports tourism include understanding the needs and desires of sports customers. Providing a product that meets customer needs is a prerequisite for effective marketing. Branding a sports tourism destination also requires familiarity with the characteristics of target customers and presenting a unique image to attract them. Understanding the customer is a prerequisite for creating a strong brand in this industry (Rader, 2020). In explaining these results, it can be said that identifying and accurately understanding target customers in sports tourism plays a key role in attracting them, and effective marketing and branding in this industry require understanding the needs and desires of customers. Customer recognition is a prerequisite for effective attraction in sports tourism. The results indicated that the interaction of the customer with the sports tourism destination affects customer identification. These findings were consistent with the results of studies by Holbrook et al. (2019), Kumar et al. (2019), and Rader (2020). This effect can be examined from various aspects: The impact of service quality on brand image: The quality of services provided in sports tourism destinations directly affects the brand image of the destination and customer loyalty. This positive image of the destination can lead to increased customer recognition and attraction. In other words, the higher the quality of services, the greater the likelihood of customer recognition and attraction. 2) The role of customer relationship management: Effective management of customer relationships enables organizations to better understand the needs and desires of customers. This process leads to



increased customer satisfaction and loyalty, thereby facilitating the identification of target customers. The use of information technologies in this area can help improve interactions and increase customer recognition. 3) The impact of customer experience on identification: The customer experience throughout the journey to a sports tourism destination, which includes various touchpoints, can help better identify customers. Identifying these touchpoints and improving the customer experience at each stage can lead to attracting and retaining customers. 4) Importance of Destination Image: The image of the destination and the customer's attachment to it are key factors in influencing customer recognition. Creating a positive and attractive image of a sports tourism destination can help attract new customers and retain existing ones (Holbik et al., 2019; Rader, 2020). In explaining these results, it can be said that the interaction of the customer with the sports tourism destination directly affects customer identification, and this impact is observable through service quality, customer relationship management, travel experience, and destination image. Optimizing these factors can lead to improved identification and attraction of customers in the sports tourism industry. The results indicated that research findings show that customer recognition significantly affects customer identification at the sports tourism destination. These findings align with the results of studies by Holbrook et al. (2019), Kumar et al. (2019), and Rader (2020). This impact can be examined from various aspects: Understanding customer needs and desires: Accurately recognizing customers, including understanding their needs, interests, and preferences, allows sports tourism destinations to offer tailored services and experiences. This not only increases customer satisfaction but also facilitates the identification of new customers. 2) Developing targeted marketing strategies: By understanding customers, sports tourism destinations can design targeted marketing strategies that specifically address the needs and desires of customers. These strategies can include

advertising, special offers, and loyalty programs aimed at better identifying and attracting customers. 3) Improving customer experience: Understanding customers' interests in sports tourism allows for the optimization of the customer experience throughout their journey. By considering the specific interests and needs of customers, appropriate services and activities can be offered that lead to the identification and attraction of more customers. 4) Establishing effective communications: Understanding customers helps sports tourism destinations to establish more effective communications with them. These communications can include personal interactions, feedback, and surveys that aid in better identifying customers and gaining a deeper understanding of their expectations (Holbeck et al., 2019; Rader, 2020). In explaining these results, it can be said that customer recognition at the sports tourism destination directly impacts customer identification. By better understanding the needs and desires of customers, sports tourism destinations can implement more effective strategies that help attract and retain customers. This process not only improves the customer experience. The results showed that customer identification with the sports tourism destination affects behavioral intentions. These findings were consistent with the results of the studies by Rader (2020), Holbek et al. (2019), Rader et al. (2022), and Rahman et al. (2023). This impact can be examined from various aspects: Increasing customer loyalty: Identifying customers and understanding their needs and desires enables sports tourism destinations to provide suitable services and experiences. This not only increases customer satisfaction but also leads to customer loyalty. Loyal customers are more likely to travel to the same destination in the future and recommend it to others. 2) Impact on the intention to revisit: Identifying customers and providing services tailored to their needs can influence customers' intention to revisit a sports tourism destination. Customers who are satisfied with their travel experience are more likely to return to the same destination in the future.

3) Increasing willingness to pay a higher price: Customers identified with sports tourism destinations who receive services tailored to their needs are more likely to pay a higher price for those services. This can lead to increased revenue for sports tourism destinations. 4) Impact on recommendations to others: Satisfied and identified customers are more likely to recommend their travel experience to others. This can help attract new customers and increase the recognition of the sports tourism destination in the market (Rader et al., 2022). In explaining these results, it can be said that customer identification at the sports tourism destination directly influences customers' behavioral intentions. By better understanding customers' needs and desires and providing appropriate services, sports tourism destinations can increase loyalty, the intention to revisit, and the willingness to pay higher prices. Additionally, satisfied customers are more likely to recommend their travel experience to others, which helps attract new customers. Overall, identifying customers plays a key role in improving customers' behavioral intentions in the sports tourism destination. Ultimately, the results indicated that customer experience with the sports tourism destination affects behavioral intentions. These findings were consistent with the results of studies by Rader (2020), Holbeck et al. (2019), Rader et al. (2022), and Rahman et al. (2023). This impact can be examined from various aspects: Customer satisfaction and loyalty: A positive customer experience at a sports tourism destination directly impacts their satisfaction. Customers who are satisfied with the services and facilities available at the destination are more likely to return to that destination and remain loyal customers. This loyalty can lead to positive behavioral intentions, such as revisiting. The impact on the intention to revisit: A positive customer experience throughout the journey, especially regarding service quality, interactions with staff, and available facilities, can influence the intention to revisit. Customers who have had a pleasant and flawless experience are more likely to return to that destination.) Willing to

pay more: Customers who have a good experience traveling to a sports tourism destination are usually more willing to pay higher prices for services and products related to that destination. This can contribute to increased revenue and profitability for sports tourism destinations. 4) Impact on word-of-mouth advertising: A positive customer experience can lead to the creation of positive word-of-mouth advertising. Customers who are satisfied with their trip are more likely to share their experience with others, and this can help attract new customers and increase destination awareness in the market (Rader, 2020; Rader et al., 2022). In explaining these results, it can be said that the customer experience at a sports tourism destination directly affects their behavioral intentions. By providing positive and memorable experiences, sports tourism destinations can increase customer satisfaction and loyalty, strengthen the intention to revisit, and stimulate the willingness to pay more.

Additionally, a positive customer experience can lead to positive word-of-mouth advertising, which helps attract new customers. Overall, paying attention to the customer experience in a sports tourism destination plays a key role in shaping positive behavioral intentions.

This research, like other studies, has faced limitations, which include the following:

Cultural and social diversity: Cultural and social impacts can significantly affect the experiences and identities of customers. Limiting research to a specific area, especially in a country with diverse cultures like Iran, may lead to results that are not generalizable to other regions or cultures. 2) Time and place of study: Conducting research at a specific time and in a certain location, such as a particular sporting event, can affect the results. Changes in time or place may lead to significant differences in outcomes and, as a result, limit the generalizability of the findings. 3) Personal experiences and backgrounds: Customers' personal experiences and backgrounds can significantly influence how they perceive and evaluate a tourist destination. These differences may not be considered in analyses and can impact the research

results. 4) Impact of external variables: External variables such as economic, social, or political changes can affect customer experience and identification. Ignoring these factors may lead to providing incomplete or unrealistic results. 5) Considering sports customers and sports tourists as the same: In the sample, sports customers and sports tourists have been regarded as a common group. Although this decision is based on conceptual overlap in the literature of experiential marketing

References The suggestions arising from this research are presented below in two theoretical and practical areas:

Theoretical suggestions:

1) Expansion of research literature: Given the positive and significant impact of customer experience and engagement on customer identification and behavioral intentions, it is essential for researchers to further investigate these concepts. Expanding the literature related to customer experience and engagement in various fields can aid in the creation of new theories and a better understanding of these concepts. 2) Conceptual modeling: Based on the obtained results, it is recommended that new conceptual models be developed to explain the relationships between customer experience variables, engagement, and customer identification. These models can serve as a theoretical foundation for future research in this area. Research on other influencing factors: Identifying and examining factors that can impact customer experience and engagement, including individual, social, and cultural characteristics, will enrich the theoretical framework of the research.

Practical suggestions:

1) Designing tourism packages: Based on the research findings, it is recommended that planners design tourism packages that include a variety of sports and recreational activities to attract new customers and retain existing ones. 2) Focus on customer experience: Organizations and institutions related to tourism should concentrate

and sports tourism, there may be behavioral and motivational differences between these two groups. For example, domestic and foreign sports tourists may have different motivations and expectations regarding the sports experience and interaction with the destination. These differences, which include a greater focus of foreign tourists on the cultural and geographical aspects of the destination compared to domestic tourists, can influence the final outcomes of the research.

on improving customer experience. This includes creating attractive and interactive environments, enhancing services, and increasing customer participation in various activities. 3) Staff training: In order to improve the customer experience, it is essential that personnel and staff receive necessary training in service delivery and customer interaction. Increasing their awareness of customer needs and expectations can lead to better service and an improved customer experience. 4) Continuous research and evaluation: To ensure the effectiveness of marketing strategies and customer experience, it is recommended that organizations continuously assess and review customer experiences and use the results obtained to improve their services. 5) Use of modern technologies: The application of modern technologies, such as apps and online platforms, can facilitate the customer experience and enhance interactions. These tools can provide customers with useful information about events and attractions and lead to increased engagement. 6) Creating effective communication: Using diverse communication channels, including social media and email, to connect with customers and receive feedback can help increase their engagement. 7) Personalized experiences: Offering services and special programs tailored to the interests and needs of customers can enhance their experience and increase their enthusiasm. 8) Development of attractive tourism packages: Designing tourism

packages that include a variety of sports and recreational activities can help attract new customers. 9) Attention to service quality: Improving the quality of services and facilities at the destination, including staff training and infrastructure enhancement, can have a positive impact on customer experience. 10) Providing comprehensive information: Preparing and disseminating comprehensive and accurate information about the destination, through a website, brochures, and social media, can increase awareness. 11) Improving service quality: Providing high-quality services and positive customer experiences can help increase their awareness of the destination and enhance their future experience. 12) Encouraging interaction: Creating opportunities for customers to engage with the destination, such as trial visits or educational events, can increase their awareness and understanding of the destination's features.

Suggestions arising from the research have been presented in two areas: theoretical and practical suggestions. Theoretical suggestions include: 1) Expanding the research literature: Given the significant and positive impact of customer experience and engagement on customer identification and behavioral intentions, it is necessary for researchers to further investigate these concepts. Expanding the literature related to customer experience and engagement in various fields can help create new theories and lead to a better understanding of these concepts. 2) Conceptual modeling: Based on the results obtained, it is suggested that new conceptual models be developed to explain the relationships between customer experience variables, engagement, and customer identification. These models can serve as a theoretical basis for future research in this area. 3) Research on other influencing factors: Identifying and examining factors that can impact customer experience and engagement, including individual, social, and cultural characteristics, will enrich the theoretical framework of the research. Practical suggestions also include: 1) Designing tourism packages:

Based on the research findings, it is recommended that planners design tourism packages that include diverse sports and recreational activities to attract new customers and retain current ones. 2) Focus on customer experience: Organizations and institutions related to tourism should focus on improving the customer experience. This includes creating engaging and interactive environments, enhancing services, and increasing customer participation in various activities. 3) Staff training: In order to improve the customer experience, it is essential that personnel and staff receive the necessary training in service delivery and customer interaction. Increasing their awareness of customer needs and expectations can lead to better service and an improved customer experience. 4) Continuous research and evaluation: To ensure the effectiveness of marketing strategies and customer experience, it is recommended that organizations continuously assess and review customer experiences and use the results obtained to improve their services. 5) Use of modern technologies: The application of modern technologies, such as apps and online platforms, can facilitate customer experience and increase interactions. These tools can provide customers with useful information about events and attractions, leading to increased engagement. According to the obtained results. 6) Establishing effective communication: Utilizing diverse communication channels, including social media and email, to connect with customers and receive feedback can help increase their engagement. 7) Personalized experiences: Offering services and special programs tailored to customers' interests and needs can enhance their satisfaction. 8) Development of attractive tourism packages: Designing tourism packages that include various sports and recreational activities can help attract new customers and retain existing ones. 9) Attention to service quality: Improving the quality of services and facilities at the destination, including staff training and infrastructure enhancement, can have a positive impact on the customer experience. 10) Providing

comprehensive information: Preparing and publishing comprehensive and accurate information about the destination through the website, brochures, and social media can help increase customers' awareness. 11) Improving service quality: Providing high-quality services and positive customer experiences can enhance their knowledge of the destination and improve their future experiences. Encouraging Interaction: Creating opportunities for customers to interact with the destination, such as trial visits or educational events, can help enhance their awareness and understanding of the destination's features.

Considering the results obtained and the limitations present in this research, the following suggestions are proposed for future studies:

1) Future research should provide a more detailed distinction between sports customers and different types of sports tourists so that the cultural, geographical, and behavioral differences among these groups can be analyzed more comprehensively. This can help in better understanding the needs and preferences of each group and in developing experiential marketing

5. Conflict of Interest: The authors report no conflict of interest.

6. Author Contributions: All Authors contributed equally.

9. References

1. Ajilchi, M., Esmailpour, H., & Saeidnia, H. (2023). Clarifying the Impact of Place Branding on the Components of the Tourism Experience of Health Tourists Studied in Tehran. *urban tourism*, 10(3), 49-67.
2. Alidoust Ghahfarokhi, E., Dastgerdi, M., Ranjbar, N., & Khosravi Manesh, R. (2023). Strategic analysis of active sports tourism

strategies to attract and retain both groups. 2) Future research should examine the cultural and social impacts in different regions and consider cultural diversity in the design of studies. This can help in gaining a better understanding of the effects of experience and customer identification in various cultures. 3) It is suggested that researchers use various tools for data collection to cover different dimensions of the customer experience and engagement more comprehensively. Utilizing qualitative methods such as in-depth interviews and focus groups can provide a deeper understanding of customer experiences. 4) It is suggested that future research pay more attention to analyzing individual experiences and customer backgrounds. This work could include the use of demographic and psychological variables to better understand the impacts on customer experience. 5) In future research, researchers should pay attention to the impact of external variables on customer experience and identification. This work may include examining the economic, social, and political effects on customer experiences. Implementing these suggestions can help researchers achieve more accurate and reliable results and contribute to a better understanding.

7. Declaration: We utilized the ChatGPT language model to enhance and refine the academic writing of our paper.

8. Funding: This research received no external funding.

development in Iran. *Sports Marketing Studies*, 4(1): 73-90.

3. Bahmanpour, H., Zaemdar, M., & Ghanbarian, M. (2020). Sustainable sports tourism location pattern using environmental model assessment: Case of Lahijan county. *Strategic Studies in Sports and Youth*, 19(48): 151-173.
4. Becker, J. M., Ringle, C. M., Sarstedt, M., & Völckner, F. (2015). How collinearity affects

- mixture regression results. *Marketing Letters*, 26(4), 643-659.
5. Carlisle, S., Ivanov, S., & Dijkmans, C. (2023). The digital skills divide: evidence from the European tourism industry. *Journal of Tourism Futures*, 9(2), 240-266.
 6. Chang, M. X., Choong, Y. O., & Ng, L. P. (2020). Local residents' support for sport tourism development: the moderating effect of tourism dependency. *Journal of Sport & Tourism*, 24(3), 215-234.
 7. Cheah, J. H., Thurasamy, R., Memon, M. A., Chuah, F., & Ting, H. (2020). Multigroup analysis using smartpls: step-by-step guidelines for business research. *Asian Journal of Business Research*, 10(3), 1-19.
 8. Chen, Z., Li, S., Wu, Q., Wu, Z., & Xin, S. (2023). The decision-making determinants of sport tourists: a meta-analysis. *Current Issues in Tourism*, 26(12), 1894-1914.
 9. Cohen, J. (2013). *Statistical power analysis for the behavioral sciences*. routledge.
 10. Cooper, M. A., & Buckley, R. (2022). Tourist mental health drives destination choice, marketing, and matching. *Journal of Travel Research*, 61(4), 786-799.
 11. Dijkstra, T. K., & Henseler, J. (2015). Consistent partial least squares path modeling. *MIS quarterly*, 39(2), 297-316.
 12. Fang, Y., & Deng, Y. (2019). The Impacts of Sport Tourism on Local Development. *Advances in Economics and Management*, 97-113.
 13. Fathi, F., Askaryan, F., & Rayner, M. (2022). The effect of loyalty to the national team on the level of risk-taking of Iranian tourists towards the host of the Asian Cup (2019 UAE). *Sports Marketing Studies*, 3(2), 177-151.
 14. Franke, G., & Sarstedt, M. (2019). Heuristics versus statistics in discriminant validity testing: a comparison of four procedures. *Internet Research. Internet Research*, 29(3), 430-447.
 15. Funk, D. C., & Bruun, T. J. (2007). The role of consumer engagement in sport tourism: A model of customer experience. *Journal of Sport Management*, 21(2), 167-190.
 16. Ghasemy, M., Teeroovengadum, V., Becker, J. M., & Ringle, C. M. (2020). This fast car can move faster: A review of PLS-SEM application in higher education research. *Higher education*, 80(6), 1121-1152.
 17. Gibson, H. J. (1998). Sport tourism: a critical analysis of research. *Sport management review*, 1(1), 45-76.
 18. Sarstedt, M., Ringle, C. M., & Hair, J. F. (2021). Partial least squares structural equation modeling. In *Handbook of market research* (pp. 587-632). Cham: Springer International Publishing.
 19. Hair, J. F., Risher, J. J., Sarstedt, M., & Ringle, C. M. (2019). When to use and how to report the results of PLS-SEM. *European business review*, 31(1), 2-24.
 20. Hair Jr, J., Hair Jr, J. F., Sarstedt, M., Ringle, C. M., & Gudergan, S. P. (2023). *Advanced issues in partial least squares structural equation modeling*. saGe publications.
 21. Harrigan, P., Evers, U., Miles, M., & Daly, T. (2017). Customer engagement with tourism social media brands. *Tourism management*, 59, 597-609.
 22. He, M., Liu, B., & Li, Y. (2023). Tourist inspiration: How the wellness tourism experience inspires tourist engagement. *Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Research*, 47(7), 1115-1135.
 23. Henseler, J., Ringle, C. M., & Sarstedt, M. (2015). A new criterion for assessing discriminant validity in variance-based structural equation modeling. *Journal of the academy of marketing science*, 43(1), 115-135.
 24. Hinch, T., & Higham, J. (2011). *Sport Tourism Development*, Channel View Publ. XVIII, Bristol, Buffalo, Toronto.
 25. Hollebeek, L. D., & Andreassen, T. W. (2018). The SD logic-informed "hamburger" model of service innovation and its implications



- for engagement and value. *Journal of Services Marketing*.
26. Hollebeek, L. D., Srivastava, R. K., & Chen, T. (2019). SD logic–informed customer engagement: integrative framework, revised fundamental propositions, and application to CRM. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 47(1), 161-185.
27. Islam, J. U., Hollebeek, L. D., Rahman, Z., Khan, I., & Rasool, A. (2019). Customer engagement in the service context: An empirical investigation of the construct, its antecedents and consequences. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 50, 277-285.
28. Kalantzi, O., Tsiotas, D., & Polyzos, S. (2023). The contribution of tourism in national economies: Evidence of Greece. arXiv preprint arXiv:2302.13121.
29. Kumar, V., Rajan, B., Gupta, S., & Dalla Pozza, I. (2019). Customer engagement in service. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 47(1), 138-160.
30. Le, D., Scott, N., & Lohmann, G. (2019). Applying experiential marketing in selling tourism dreams. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, 36(2), 220-235.
31. Madani, J., Zare, R., & Mahmoudi, A. (2022). The role of sports tourism in promoting green behaviors among tourists. *Quarterly Journal of Tourism Management Studies*, 2(17): 9-45.
32. Parsamehr, M. R. (2022). Meta-analysis of factors influencing the development of Iran's sports tourism industry and its future based on scenario planning over the next two decades. PhD Dissertation, Department of Physical Education and Sport Sciences, Sport Management, Islamic Azad University, Sanandaj Branch.
33. Prodinge, B., & Neuhofer, B. (2023, January). Never-ending tourism: Tourism experience scenarios for 2030. In ENTER22 e-Tourism Conference (pp. 288-299). Cham: Springer Nature Switzerland.
34. Rabiul, M. K., & Yean, T. F. (2021). Leadership styles, motivating language, and work engagement: An empirical investigation of the hotel industry. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 92, 102712.
35. Rather, R. A. (2020). Customer experience and engagement in tourism destinations: The experiential marketing perspective. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, 37(1), 15-32.
36. Rather, R. A., Hollebeek, L. D., & Rasoolimanesh, S. M. (2022). First-time versus repeat tourism customer engagement, experience, and value cocreation: An empirical investigation. *Journal of Travel Research*, 61(3), 549-564.
37. Rehman, A. U., Abbas, M., Abbasi, F. A., & Khan, S. (2023). How tourist experience quality, perceived price reasonableness and regenerative tourism involvement influence tourist satisfaction: A study of Ha'il Region, Saudi Arabia. *Sustainability*, 15(2), 1340.
38. Rehman, A. U., Abbas, M., Abbasi, F. A., & Khan, S. (2023). How tourist experience quality, perceived price reasonableness and regenerative tourism involvement influence tourist satisfaction: A study of Ha'il Region, Saudi Arabia. *Sustainability*, 15(2), 1340.
39. Seshadri, U., Kumar, P., Vij, A., & Ndlovu, T. (2023). Marketing strategies for the tourism industry in the United Arab Emirates after the COVID-19 era. *Worldwide Hospitality and Tourism Themes*, 15(2), 169-177.
40. Streukens, S., & Leroi-Werelds, S. (2016). Bootstrapping and PLS-SEM: A step-by-step guide to get more out of your bootstrap results. *European Management Journal*, 34(6), 618-632.
41. Weaver, D. B. (2021). *Sustainable tourism: Theory and practice*. Routledge.
42. Zouni, G., Markogiannaki, P., & Georgaki, I. (2021). A strategic tourism marketing framework for sports mega events: The case of Athens Classic (Authentic) Marathon. *Tourism Economics*, 27(3), 466-481.