

# Study of the Role of Integrated Marketing Communications in Developing Ecotourism Industry of Kish Island

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## Abstract

According to the WTO, although Iran is among the 10 first countries of the world in terms of tourist attractions, and among the 5 first countries of the world with respect to ecotourism, unfortunately, for different reasons such as failure to use suitable marketing strategies in tourism industry, it could not use this invisible export which plays an important role in the country's economy.

In this study, it is attempted to investigate the relationship between integrated marketing communications and development of ecotourism industry in Kish Island. The methodology of research is applied in terms of goal, and descriptive-survey from the data gathering perspective.

To gather data, questionnaire is used. For hypothesis testing and to answer the questions of the study, structural equation modeling test is used. The results obtained from the hypothesis testing showed that integrated marketing communications and its aspects and factors (e.g., advertisement, personal selling, sales promotion, public relations, direct marketing) have relationship with ecotourism industry in Kish Island.

**Keywords:** Integrated Marketing Communications, Ecotourism, Direct Marketing, Sales Promotion.

## Introduction

Today, tourism industry is considered as the third industry of the world after oil and car, and, currently, it plays an important role in the world economy. According to the experts, tourism industry will become the first industry of the world in the early future century. According to the WTO, although Iran is among the 10 first countries of the world in terms of tourist attractions, and among the 5 first countries of the world with respect to ecotourism, unfortunately, for different reasons such as failure to use suitable marketing strategies in tourism industry, it could not use this invisible export which plays an important role in the country's economy (Hosseini Kia, 2006).

The most principle activity is based on living nature, which, by definition, refers to a responsible travel to the natural areas, which protects the environment and improves local people's life. The importance of ecotourism development is cleared when we know that the mean travel made by 50% of the ecotourists of the world is between 8 to 14 days. Nature hiking causes the least damage to the nature and culture of a region.

The International Ecotourism Society (TIES) defines ecotourism as "ecotourism is a responsible travel to natural areas in which the environment is protected and local people welfare is emphasized. Ecotourism, in terms of work market, is defined as a type of naturalist tourism.

Today, nature hiking has a special place among the different types of tourism, and has a considerable growth. During the latest 20 years, we have observed rapid extension of activities of nature hiking throughout the world, and it is expected this extension to be increased. Ecotourism for studying natural geography of Iran as well as the study of feasibility of each of ecotourism attractions can be invested in our country indicate that ecotourism in Iran is a special exclusive and very talented but abandoned economic source. Tourism development plans include educational programs encouraging the people to join nature hikers, and enable local and national societies to develop and properly use ecotourism. In addition, it increases the participation of investors in developing tourism and protecting natural inheritance in order to develop protection of the environment and natural resources and cultural inheritance.

## 1. Integrated Marketing Communications

Integrated marketing communications is a concept considered by managers of companies and researchers since the late 1980s. As defined by Schultz and Schultz (2004), integrated marketing communications is a process

made by companies to accelerate their return of investment through alignment of communicative goals with the organizational objectives. Duncan and Ouwersloot (2008) define integrated marketing communications as "integrated marketing communications is a concept coordinating and directing the process of planning, execution, and supervision of brand messages, which establish the relationship of customer with brand".

## **2. The Role of Integrated Marketing Communications in Modern Marketing**

Advertisement does the duty of marketing communications. Today, a leading company enjoys an integrated marketing communications system. Such company communicates with intermediaries, customers as well as different segments of the population. The intermediaries of such company also communicate with the customers and the public. The customers also communicate, through word of mouth, with each other and other people. In these communications, there is also some feedback on the information.

Word of mouth existed since the human kind communicated with others and began the exchange and transaction of goods and services. Word of mouth is considered as the most effective form of advertisement, and has desirable qualitative characteristics such as strong reputation, high level of audience's attention, and amicable acceptance by the audience. Examples of the other features of word of mouth are comfort and easy conversation and questions and answers about the product; existence of psychological drives for purchasing the goods; being memorable; efficiency and alternative distribution. Word of mouth transfers the information for the goods to many buyers and can include encouragement to goods test, goods show, or even goods supply, without any high cost. Integrated marketing communications always seeks to make a type of campaign result of which is the word of mouth on the product. Kotler believes that "the best advertisement is satisfactory customers" (Heidarzadeh, 2001).

Therefore, advertisement in the form of integrated marketing communications acts as a catalyst and intermediary for achieving word of mouth and the factor increasing the sales. Word of mouth is one of the most successful and effective advertising procedures which are the final goal of integrated marketing communications plan.

In the process of formulating, executing and evaluating integrated marketing communications, the most important role belongs to marketing research. Marketing managers, in the modern era more than ever, need suitable information for decision-making. These managers do such tasks as determining target markets, identifying characteristics of potential customers and the process of decision-making on their purchase, determining situation and place of potential customers in the diagram of effects hierarchy, and evaluating the results from execution of communication plans and some similar things, relying on marketing research (Heidarzadeh, 2001).

## **3. Goals of Integrated Marketing Communications**

### **A. Goals of Giving Information**

- Extend customers' awareness of products and services in market relative to the price
- Diversity of products and services, their performance and like that
- Direct and amend perception indices of customers
- Create a desirable image from company
- Announce presence and warn the rivals (Melever and Vemmervik, 2004)

### **B. Goals of Encouraging Customers**

- Encourage customers to pay attention to firm, trademark, products, and its services through reminding them.

### **C. Goals of Reminding and Retaining Customers**

- Reminding future needs of customers to product and services of the company
- Keep the place of products and services of the firm in customers' mind.

## **4. Tools of Integrated Marketing Communications**

Tools used in order to improve the place of a firm's products and services in target markets, and relative to different customers, are different, and each is suitable for achieving certain goals.

The principle elements of communicative activities in the mixed form of promotion include: advertisement, personal selling, sales promotion, public relations, and direct marketing. The tools are investigated as follows:

### **4.1 Advertisement**

Advertisement refers to non-personally show and present ideas and beliefs, goods and services against payment. Advertisement includes the messages usually transferred to target market through TV, the Internet, journals, and other media. When a company decides to publish information about its new product or to create a trade mark, probably TV can be the most powerful tool for attracting through videos and audios. However, when a company decides to send a message about sales to regional customers, dailies are useful tools (Hsu et al, 2009).

The purpose of advertisement is not only sales of products. In other words, real purpose of advertisement is to

effectively communicate with customers, and the final result of advertisement should be change in approaches and behaviors of those who receive the messages.

In general, the first step taken in preparing a campaign is to determine goals of advertisement. Such decisions are often influenced by the previous decisions in target market, determination of the place in market and combination of marketing elements. Advertisement can have different goals, the most important of which include:

1. Increased consumption: try to diversify type of consumption. For example, a flower can be used as a gift, in addition to decorate our houses, or used in weddings or funerals.
2. Increases purchase: small goods can be sold in large packs with several goods in them, which affects total consumption.
3. Increased term of consumption: seasonal goods can be consumed throughout the year.
4. Increased repetition of consumption: goods which are needed for using other goods and are known as subsidiary goods, have short shelf life, such as cooler filter, motor oil and etc ..., can be replaced in a short time, so that the main goods works better.
5. Attract new generation: advertisement made by the rivals prevents the goods from being reputable. Then, it cannot be hoped that when a goods became reputable for a generation, next generation necessarily will buy it.
6. Name of the company / brand: if the goods or companies, which have been reputable due to advertisement, fail to advertise continuously, they will be forgotten after a time, and the name of the rival substitutes for them.
7. Campaign against dissenting opinions: sometimes, it occurs that some negative reputations against a goods or a company or managers of a firm are spread. In this case, special campaigns are needed for neutralizing these rumors.
8. Campaign against substitute: due to inventions or advertisement, some goods are substituted for others. For example, nylon is substituted for silk.
9. Special activity: commercial institutions are sometimes obliged to achieve a big goad within a short time. For example, producers of fashion goods, must sell all the inventory at the end of the season, because in the next year, they can be bought. This will be possible only by extraordinary advertising campaigns.
10. Serve the public: sometimes, the purpose of advertisement is to serve a special group of people, such as collecting relief funds, granting scholarships and etc ... In two cases, such things may occur. First, the previous trend of the company's managers, and second, material use of good respect and trust created in the public (Bahrami, 1990).

Among the elements of integrated marketing communications model, advertisement has a more known place than other elements for a product being reputed. Because it is through advertisement that customers become familiar with new products. In addition, advertisement minimizes the obstacles between customers and firms (Herrera and Rodreguez, 2002).

#### **4.2 Personal Selling**

Personal selling is a type of establishment of relationship with customer for transferring information in order to convince him / her to purchase. Personal selling constitutes one of the principles ways of sales promotion. Success of this way depends on the ability of leading and experienced sellers. Today, the characteristics of selling job considerably differ from what was referred to it in the past.

Sellers, directly and or indirectly, influence different activities of the organization. Examples of these effects include:

1. Success of new products
2. Keep successful the products existing in market
3. Determine type of the facilities required for production
4. Provide suitable conditions for extension of new business activities.

In our country, due to incorrect perception of the importance of personal selling, selecting and training individuals are not usually made carefully. Due to underestimation of individuals' duties, the applicants for this job are not always among creative and clever and active individuals.

Today, readily sales agents should have a designer of strategic plans, in such a way that a specific geographical region is determined for them. Given product formation and price structure and sales portion specified, they must develop their own tactics and strategies to achieve their goals. However, to strengthen their abilities, training courses are considered, but direct control on their activities is limited (Ranjbarian, 1999).

Any company determines special goals for its customers. Sellers usually are responsible for one or more works. Their duty is to search for new customers and provide them with the information about the company and its products. Through contacting customers; showing the company's products; response to their complaints; and transacting deals, they sell the company's products to them. In addition, sellers are responsible for rendering

services to customers, conducting market research, collecting news and information on the market, and drawing up reports on reference to customers. As companies' direction towards market increases, sellers also must pay more attention to market and customers. The sellers who pay attention to market instead of sales, will be more fruitful in the future (Kotler and Armstrong, 1997). As shown in Fig. 1, four secrets of success in personal selling communications include:

- a. Effective hearing: means hearing, keeping in mind and reminding in future.
- b. Observation: means showing objective samples of goods or product, in miniature and maquette and even invite to visit the sites and equipment installed and immovable.
- c. Transparency: means the ability to provide the material so that there is no ambiguity, and buyer is persuaded by seller's explanations.
- d. Auxiliaries: such as catalogues, brochures, and video materials showing the stages of production process.

Fig. 1 Secrets of Success in Sales Communications (BolurianTehrani, 2003)

### 4.3 Sales Promotion

Sales promotion uses a various short-term techniques for motivating or informing customers with the aim of making customers interested in purchasing products or services. For return of short-term retailing, sales promotion is a strong device which encourages customers to impulse purchase. Sales promotion creates an extra purchase motivation, encourages customer to buy other products without incentives, and finally, decreases the inventory level (Hsu et al, 2009).

Different advertisement on sales promotion differs from each other with respect to its own goals. A free sample causes consumer to test goods, while the purpose of proving counseling services by management is to establish more strong long-term relations with retailer.

The goals which are usually considered for sales promotion include:

- Attract new user
- Encourage to repurchase
- Encourage to high purchase
- Incentives for loyal customers (Semenik and Bamossy, 1995)

To attract new testers, to grant incentives to loyal buyers, and to increase repurchase by the users, sellers sometimes and randomly use sales promotion tools as driver.

Sometimes, advertisement on sales promotion attract those who change the brand they buy, because the users of trademarks and other classes do not always pay attention to advertisement on sales promotion, or do not act based on it. Those who change the brand they consume, often seeks for low price, good usefulness or reward and incentives. Advertisement on sales promotion can less change this group of users into loyal users of trademark. If advertisement on sales promotion is used in markets in which the similarity of trademark is high, it will have high sales reaction in a short time. However, it will be very hopeful that market portion is calculated permanently. Instead, in the markets in which the non-similarity of trademark is high, one can hope that advertisement on sales promotion contribute to calculate permanent market portion (Kotler, 2009).

Sales promotion tools also include:

1. Sales promotion advertisement tools for consumer: include coupon, goods sample, purchase incentives, discounts, rewards, trade stamps, and product show.
2. Sales promotion advertisement tools for business: include discounts for goods purchase for intermediaries, free goods, discounts for numerical purchase, negative advertisement, and sales incentives for intermediaries.
3. Sales promotion advertisement tools for sellers: include various rewards and incentives, and sales conferences.

Today, particularly use of sales promotion tools, in most cases, is paid high attention. Growth of sales promotion advertisement, particularly in the area of consumer markets is caused by several factors: first, now inside companies, sales promotion advertisement has been more accepted by senior managers as an effective tool for increasing sales volume, the difference between trademarks has been minimized as possible. The rival uses more sales promotion advertisement tools, and the consumers have been more dealers. Philip Kotler accepts different tools of sales promotion as effective solutions for promoting sales, and emphasizes its use for the following reasons.

1. Competitive pressures making managers put more effort in their work
2. Increase number of trademarks available from each goods in market
3. Compatibility and similarity of competitive products.
4. Increase sovereignty of customer over price
5. Increasingly expectations of intermediaries for accepting more product to be provided to market.
6. Decrease advertisement efficiency (Bahrami, 1990).

#### 4.4 Public Relations

Public relations are of sales promotion tools, and its role is to create and promote a positive mental image about company and its products. Public relations include deliberate, planned and supportive attempts to create and maintain mutual agreement between the organization and the public (Palmer, 1994). Attraction of public relations is caused by its three clear properties, including:

- **High Validity:** New stories and reputable persons are more reliable for readers than advertising campaigns.
- **Ability to Eliminate Buyers' Resistance and Attract them:** Public relations are able to achieve many possible customers, who avoid from encountering sellers and watching advertisements. The message reaches to buyers in the framework of news, and not a communication message only for selling goods.
- **Better Show:** Like advertisement, in public relations, there is potential ability for better imaging the company and its product. Normally, marketers do not use public relations correctly and reasonably, or know it as an excessive tool. However, a well-thought-out public relations plan, coordinated with other pillars of promotion elements combination, can be extremely effective (Kotler, 2009). In general, duties of public relations include:
  - Establish Relation with Press: prepare invaluable information and provide it to the news media for attract the attention of the public to a person, goods, or service.
  - Make aware of a product: send special messages for special products.
  - Public affairs and fix individuals: establish relationship with legislators and authorities to fix them for the purpose of approving regulations and rules.
  - Relationship with investors: establish relationship with stockholders and other individuals of a financial society.
  - Extend or develop: establish public relations with benevolent persons and members of non-profit organizations for obtaining financial supports and using voluntary contributions.
  - Consult with the management concerning general issues and the place and mental image of the company.
  - Mass communication: establish domestic and foreign communications to publicize the company or institution better (Mohammadian, 2003).

Public relations tools are as follows:

- News: One of the most important tools is news. Managers of public relations search for / bring suitable news of the company, its products and employees.
- Deliver speech: by delivering speech, publicity can be given to the company and its products.
- Special occasions: special occasions such as press conferences, press travels, grand reopening, fireworks and laser displays, dropping hot-air balloons, multimedia shows, and programs with artistry of superstars on condition that the relevant communities see and admire them.
- Written materials: To achieve their target markets and influence them, employees of the public relations dept may use written materials. These materials include annual reports, brochures, papers, newsletter, and internal journal of the company.
- Audio and video materials: such as films, radio broadcasts, slide show, and audio and video cassettes.
- Items making the company known: the identity which makes the company promptly known by other communities. Printed signs, stationery, brochures, signs, business forms, business cards, uniforms and etc ... can be used as marketing tools.
- Charitable activities (Kotler and Armstrong, 2000).

#### 4.5 Direct Marketing

Direct Marketing Association (DMA) defines direct marketing as follows:

Direct marketing is an interactive marketing system which makes possible measurable reaction and or a transaction in site, using one or more advertising media. This definition relies on a measurable reaction and a purchase order by a customer. That's why direct marketing is sometimes known as direct order marketing. Today, many direct marketers believe that the role of direct marketing is more extensive than usual. They consider this marketing as direct relation marketing with the purpose of establishing a long-term relationship. Occasionally, in order to elect member among from their customer base, direct marketers send him / her birthday card, journal, and promotional products. Airlines, hotels and other firms, using incentive programs (such as free flight) and other programs seek to desirably communicate with their customers in a long term.

Although direct marketing statements are very high (direct mail, marketing by phone, electronic marketing and etc ...), all of these forms have four main features, including:

- **Non-general:** The message is usually sent to a special person.
- **Customized:** The message can be sent to the person in a customized way.
- **Up-to-date:** The message can be prepared rapidly to be delivered to a person.

- **Interactive:** Depending on the person's reaction, the message can be amended (Kotler, 2009).

## 5. Ecotourism

Ecotourism is a relatively new concept, still not understood and correctly used. Some misuses the term "ecotourism" for attracting travelers knowing how to protect the places used only as tourism places, and believe that it has harmful environmental and social effects. The term "ecotourism" was used for the first time in the 1980s, and this comprehensive, reliable and short definition was accepted nearly by all, and entered the tourism literature, for the first time in the 1980s. The first comprehensive, reliable and short definition was given by International Ecotourism Society in 1990: "responsible travel to natural areas in order to protect the environment and improve economic conditions of the local communities".

As more awareness and experience were acquired, the need for a comprehensive and complete definition was also increased. The newest, best, and most complete definition was provided by Marth Honey (1999): "Ecotourism is any travel to sensitive, pristine and healthy regions usually protected. Ecotourism is an informative travel for tourist, income earned from which is spent for protection of the place and has a direct effect on economic growth and development and political strengthening of the local communities, and venerates various cultures and human rights" (Ranjbar, 2008).

According to the agreement reached with the organizations related to ecotourism (organizations active in conservation of nature), the definition provided in 1996 by *the International Union for Conservation of Nature* (IUCN) has been accepted: "Ecotourism is a responsible travel and visit to natural areas in order to use and respect nature with any historical characteristic and new culture related to it, which help protect the area and has the least negative effect, and will be profitable for the occupants socially and economically" (IUCN, 1996).

Importantly, ecotourism for management and development of protected regions, is conducted in a flexible way. However, to be successful an ecotourism, the following things must be observed:

- The least effect on natural resources of the protected regions.
- Participation of shareholders (individuals, communities, ecotourists, tour operators, government departments) in the process of planning and developing, executing, and supervising.
- Venerate and respect local culture and traditions.
- Create a fixed and equal income for local communities, and for shareholders as possible, including tour operators in the private sector.
- Train all shareholders concerning their role in conservation of the regions (Ranjbar, 2008).

### 5.1 Tourism Industry and Ecotourism

According to the statistics provided by World Tourism Organization in 2000, world tourism increased throughout the world about 74%, indicating the most growth during the last decade, doubled compared to the year 1999. In 2000, more than 698 million people traveled to different countries, and created an income up to 476,000,000,000 USD, with a growth of 4.5% compared to the last year.

Tourism industry and travel have created about 200 million jobs throughout the world. On average, from each 12.4 jobs, a job belongs to this industry. It is estimated that by 2010, this increase reaches 250 million, that is, from each 11 jobs (WEFA and WTTC, 2000). East Asia and the Pacific, with 14.5%, have had the highest percent and, in the Americas, the highest growth belongs to the Central America.

Currently, no global action has been taken to collect the information on ecotourism. However, there are some signs indicating what the speed of ecotourism as a part of natural tourism market is.

In general, according to the statistics provided by Ceballas-Loscurain (1993) and WTO, natural tourism included about 7% of international travel expenses. According to the estimation made by the World Resources Institute, tourism growth rate is about 4% per year, while natural tourism (ecotourism) has had about 10% to 30% growth (Reingold, 1993). Other statistics show that in the Pacific and Asia, tourism has had a growth of about 10 to 25% (Lew, 1997).

## 6. Goals of Research

Generally, the present study aims at investigating the relationship between integrated marketing communications and ecotourism industry development in Kish Island. Therefore, the goals of the present study can be considered as follows:

Major Goal:

- Investigate the relationship between integrated marketing communications and ecotourism industry development in Kish Island.

Minor Goals:

1. Investigate the relationship between advertisement and ecotourism industry development in Kish Island.
2. Investigate the relationship between personal selling and ecotourism industry development in Kish Island.
3. Investigate the relationship between sales promotion and ecotourism industry development in Kish Island.
4. Investigate the relationship between public relations and ecotourism industry development in Kish Island.

5. Investigate the relationship between direct marketing and ecotourism industry development in Kish Island.
6. Investigate the role of demographic variables in the relationship between the factors of integrated marketing communications and ecotourism industry development in Kish Island.
7. Provide solutions to the authorities of Kish Island towards increasing and developing ecotourism industry of the Island.

### **7. Hypotheses of Research**

Hypotheses of research for achieving the goal of research include:

1. There is a relationship between integrated marketing communications and ecotourism industry development in Kish Island.
2. There is a relationship between advertisement and ecotourism industry development in Kish Island.
3. There is a relationship between personal selling and ecotourism industry development in Kish Island.
4. There is a relationship between sales promotion and ecotourism industry development in Kish Island.
5. There is a relationship between public relations and ecotourism industry development in Kish Island.
6. There is a relationship between direct marketing and ecotourism industry development in Kish Island.

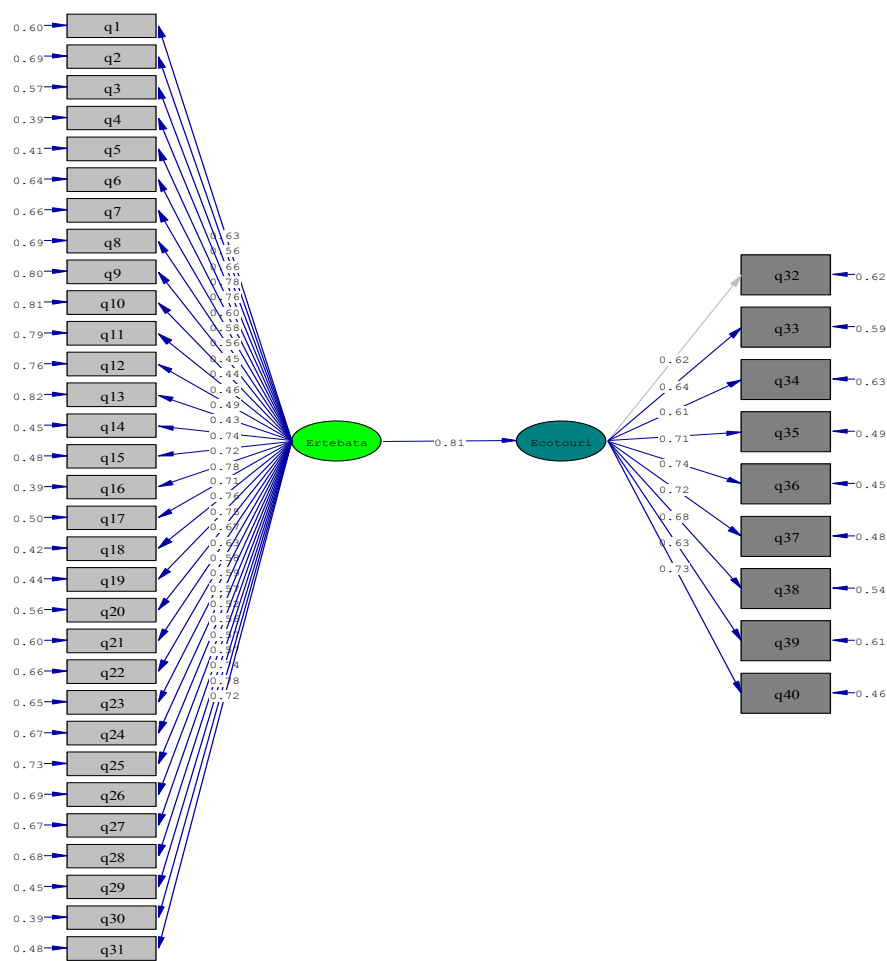
### **8. Methodology of Research**

This study is applied in terms of goal, and descriptive-survey from the data gathering point of view.

The statistical population in this study includes all tourists of Kish Island, who visited in January 2013 natural places (ecotourism) on Kish Island. Number of the sample volume was also obtained by using the formula of sampling indefinite population composed of 384 people. Since the general framework of the questions of the questionnaire of the study has been designed according to standard questionnaires of the previous researches, it has necessary validity. In addition, to fully assure of the validity of the study's questionnaire, the comments of marketing experts, supervisors, and academic advisors were used, and any necessary correction was made. Stability of the research tools was also tested in two stages by using Cronbach's alpha. The stability of the questionnaire was 0.889 and 0.961 in probationary and final stages, respectively, indicating suitable and high stability of the research tools. In order to investigate the study's hypotheses, structural equation modeling and regression model were used.

### **9. Hypothesis Testing of Research**

In this section, the hypothesis testing developed through structural equation modeling and regression analysis model is discussed. After expressing the model and collecting the data, the model with a set of the known relationships between the measurement variables begins to be estimated. In the output of the diagram, the significance of all coefficients and parameters of the model is tested. To be significant a coefficient, the significant figures must be more than 1.96 or less than -1.96. the results of the study's models are shown in Figs. 2 to 5.



Chi-Square=4477.93, df=739, P-value=0.00000, RMSEA=0.115

Fig 1.structural equation model for the main hypothesis (standard coefficient)



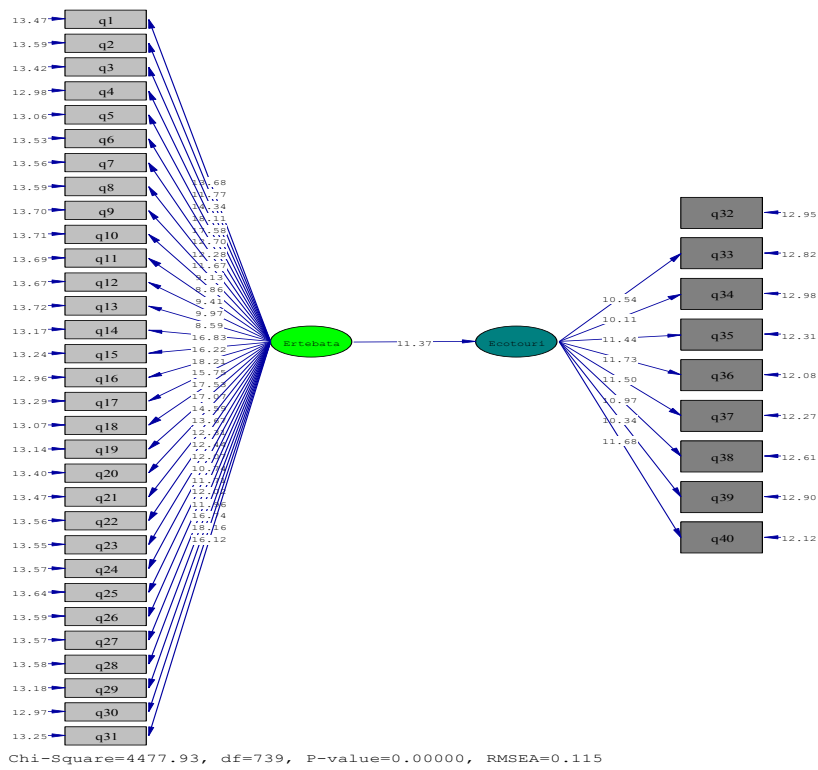


Fig 2. (significant coefficient for the main hypothesis)

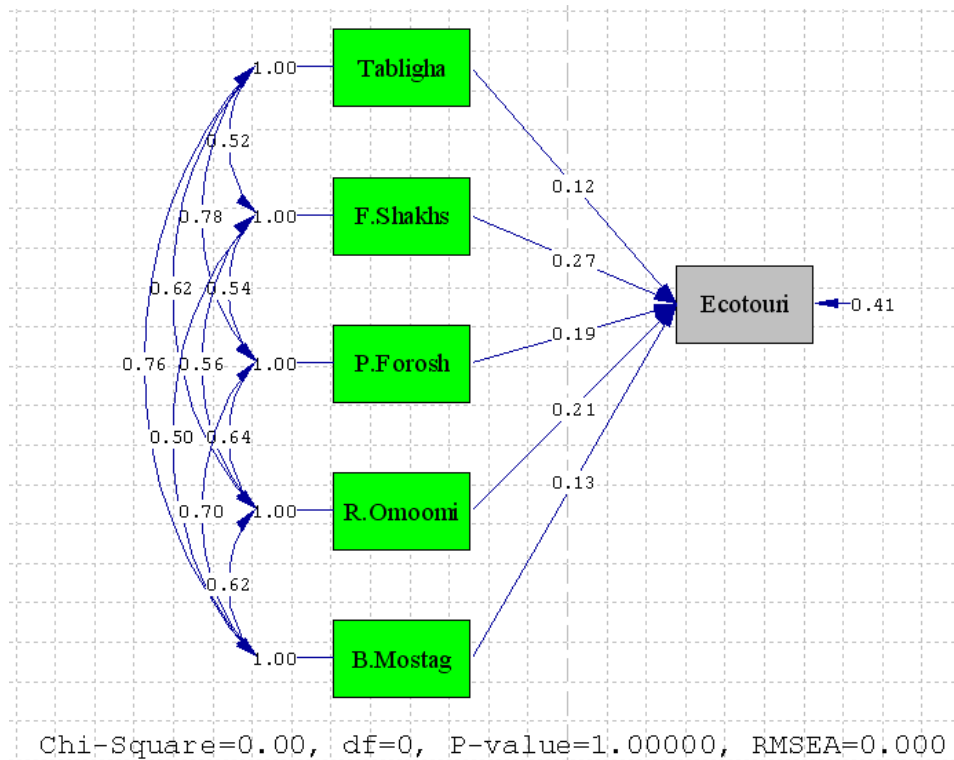


Fig. 3 Regression Model for Subsidiary Hypotheses (Standard Coefficients)

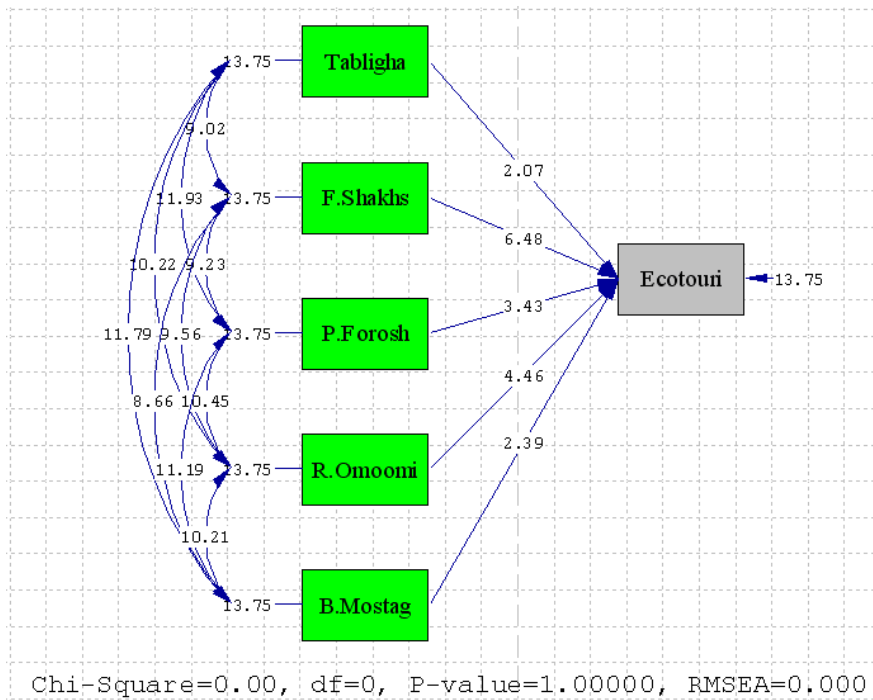


Fig. 4 Significant Coefficients for Subsidiary Hypotheses Model

Summary of the results and coefficients of the effect of main and subsidiary independent variables on dependent variable is shown in Table 4.14.

Table 1. Results of Standard Coefficients and Significant Figures  
 (Accept / Reject Subsidiary Hypotheses)

From	To	Standardized Coefficient	Significant Figures (t values)	Accept / Reject Hypothesis
Integrated Marketing Communications	Kish Ecotourism Development	0.81	11.37	Accepted
Advertisement	Kish Ecotourism Development	0.12	2.07	Accepted
Personal Selling	Kish Ecotourism Development	0.27	6.48	Accepted
Sales Promotion	Kish Ecotourism Development	0.19	3.43	Accepted
Public Relations	Kish Ecotourism Development	0.21	4.46	Accepted
Direct Marketing	Kish Ecotourism Development	0.13	2.39	Accepted

As shown in Table 1, standard coefficients for the main hypothesis and 5 subsidiary hypotheses of the study, have the necessary significant figures (more than 1.96) and thus, the main hypothesis and all of five subsidiary hypotheses of the study are accepted.

### 9.1 Study of the Role of Demographic Variables in Main Variables of Research

Before studying the role of demographic variables, first to determine normal distribution of the research data, Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test was used. The results obtained from this test are shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test for Studying the Normality of the Community

One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test		
N		Koll 384
Normal Parameters (a,b)	Mean	3.8040
	Std. Deviation	.61127
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	.042
	Positive	.029
	Negative	-.042
Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z		.819
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		.514
a) Test distribution is normal.		
b) Calculated from data.		

Since the significant level obtained for the test is above 0.05, it can be concluded that the data of research have a normal distribution. Therefore, to study the role of demographic variables in the main hypotheses of the study, parametric tests are used.

In order to study the role of demographic variables of the research, given the normality of the data, independent T-test and Analysis of Variance Test (ANOVA) were used.

**Hypothesis 2: Sexuality has role in the relationship between the factors of integrated marketing communications and Kish Island's ecotourism development.**

The result of independent t-test for studying the role of the variable of sexuality in the relationship between the factors of integrated marketing communications and Kish Island's ecotourism development is shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Independent T-Test for Studying the Role of Sexuality

Significant Level	SD	Mean	Number	Sexuality	
.727	.75848	3.6020	213	M	Advertisement
	.71094	3.5754	169	F	
.383	.70693	3.9864	213	M	Personal Selling
	.70603	3.9228	169	F	
.891	.78154	3.7866	213	M	Sales Promotion
	.73979	3.7973	169	F	
.784	.73909	3.8150	213	M	Public Relations
	.74496	3.7941	169	F	
.522	.81391	3.6967	213	M	Direct Marketing
	.80237	3.6433	169	F	

Since the significant level obtained for this test is not below 0.05 for no variables of research, it can be concluded that sexuality does not play any role in the main factors of research. So, variable of sexuality has no role in the relationship between the factors of integrated marketing communications and Kish Island's ecotourism development.

**Hypothesis 3: Marital status has role in the relationship between the factors of integrated marketing communications and Kish Island's ecotourism development.**

The result of independent t-test for studying the role of the variable of marital status in the relationship between the factors of integrated marketing communications and Kish Island's ecotourism development is shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Independent T-Test for Studying the Role of Marital Status

Significant Level	SD	Mean	Number	Marital Status	
.869	.72933	3.5922	282	Married	Advertisement
	.75696	3.6063	101	Single	
.244	.70872	3.9383	282	Married	Personal Selling
	.70714	4.0342	101	Single	
.833	.77210	3.7905	282	Married	Sales Promotion
	.74056	3.8092	101	Single	
.596	.75664	3.7979	282	Married	Public Relations
	.70106	3.8436	101	Single	
.843	.79934	3.6696	282	Married	Direct Marketing
	.83505	3.6881	101	Single	

Since the significant level obtained for this test is not below 0.05 for no variables of research, it can be concluded that marital status does not play any role in the main factors of research. So, variable of marital status has no role in the relationship between the factors of integrated marketing communications and Kish Island's ecotourism development.

**Hypothesis 4: Age has role in the relationship between the factors of integrated marketing communications and Kish Island's ecotourism development.**

In addition, because the significant level obtained for analysis of variance test (Attachment 2) in order to study the role of the variable of age is not also below 0.05 for no variables, it can be concluded that age does not play any role in the main factors of research. So, variable of age has no role in the relationship between the factors of integrated marketing communications and Kish Island's ecotourism development.

**Hypothesis 5: Education has role in the relationship between the factors of integrated marketing communications and Kish Island's ecotourism development.**

In addition, because the significant level obtained for analysis of variance test (Attachment 2) in order to study the role of the variable of education is not also below 0.05 for no variables, it can be concluded that education does not play any role in the main factors of research. So, variable of education has no role in the relationship between the factors of integrated marketing communications and Kish Island's ecotourism development.

**Hypothesis 6: Experience of Travel to Kish has role in the relationship between the factors of integrated marketing communications and Kish Island's ecotourism development.**

The significant level of this test for the variables of advertisement, sales promotion, and public relations is below 0.05. So, it can be concluded that the variable of experience of travel to Kish plays role in the relationship between the factors of integrated marketing communications and Kish Island's ecotourism development. The variable of experience of travel to Kish plays role in the variables of advertisement, sales promotion, and public relations. This role is in such a way that those who have more than 5 times experience of travel to Kish county, have more perception than others of the variables of advertisement, sales promotion, and public relations.

**Conclusion and Suggestions**

The results obtained from the hypothesis testing showed that integrated marketing communications and its aspects and factors (advertisement, personal selling, sales promotion, public relations, direct marketing) have relationship with Kish Island's ecotourism development. Given the relationship of personal selling as the most important factor of integrated marketing communications with Kish ecotourism development, managers of Kish Island Tourism Organization are recommended, through planning and taking necessary measures in this regard, to attempt to attract more tourists to ecotourism areas of this island. Examples of the important actions taken in this regard is the participation of sellers (marketers of tourist place) in tourism fairs to register tourists; answer the questions of tourists by sellers; negotiation of sellers with tourists concerning visit of the tourist area; provide tourists with useful information about the region; and provide an image of attractions of the region by sellers together with details.

Given the role of public relations as the second factor of integrated marketing communications in attracting tourists in Kish ecotourism, the authorities are recommended to have dynamic and continuous planning for the region's cooperation and assistance with charity organizations; publishing books about the region; communication with the mass media; and holding annual seminars.

Given the role of sales promotion in attracting tourists in Kish ecotourism, the authorities are recommended to attract more tourists in the ecotourism areas of Kish Island, through providing sales promotion tools including free supply of the region's products; granting advertising rewards and incentives; holding competitions and amusements; drawing lots for the applicants and granting rewards; providing almanacs presenting the tourism area; holding entertainment programs in the tourism area for the purpose of attracting more tourists in ecotourism regions of Kish Island. Given the supported effect of direct marketing on attraction of tourists in Kish ecotourism, improvement and launching programs of the tourism organization in the area of face-to-face marketing; region marketing through electronic catalogues; marketing by phone; marketing through online channels such as the Internet; and marketing through TV and other direct media can have effective role in attracting tourists.

Given the relationship between advertisement and tourist attraction in Kish ecotourism, advertisement in specialized dailies and journals concerning tourism, advertisement in radio and TV, advertisement through mails, advertisement on billboards and in streets, advertisement in tourism fairs, advertisement on public transportation vehicles such as bus, advertisement in brochures and booklets, and advertisement in the Internet and sites, can have an important role in publicizing and introducing Kish ecotourism to the tourists and attracting them more and more to travel to this island.

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