

## Investigating the Relationships of Destination Reflect, Tourist Satisfaction and Destination Loyalty

<sup>1</sup>Fakhraddin Maroofi and <sup>2</sup>Samira Dehghan

<sup>1</sup>University of Kurdistan, Iran

<sup>2</sup>Management, Molavist, Iran

**Abstract:** The purpose of this study was to suggest a mixed approach to comprehending destination loyalty by investigating the hypothetical and empirical evidence on the connection among destination reflect, tourist quality and generally satisfaction and destination loyalty. A research model was suggested in which seven hypotheses were improved. The data was collected in a major tourism destination in the west of Iran. A total of 345 questionnaires were returned and the data were analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). The results encourage the proposed destination loyalty model: (1) destination reflect directly affected quality satisfaction; (2) destination reflect and quality satisfaction were both direct significant events of generally satisfaction; and (3) generally satisfaction and quality satisfaction in turn had direct and positive effect on destination loyalty. The hypothetical and managerial indirect suggestion was moved based on the study findings and approval for future researchers were made.

**Key words:** Destination reflect • Destination loyalty • Tourist satisfaction • Quality satisfaction  
• Intervention • Structural equation modeling (SEM)

### INTRODUCTION

The global tourism industry has evolved into an area of fierce competition and a fundamental challenge for marketers is to comprehend the distinguishing characteristics of tourist experiences [1]. Destination reflect, perceived quality, perceived value and satisfaction [2] are the most frequent factors used to explain tourist motivation or intention to visit /revisit a tourist destination. Due to the imperative role of customer satisfaction, a great deal of research has focused on the topic [3]. Consumer satisfaction is a post-consumption evaluation of the product or service received. It is also explained as a function of consumer perceptions [4]. However, many corporations have started to announce a high customer disloyalty in spite of high satisfaction ratings [5, 6]. This circumstance has motivated a number of experts [5, 7] to disapprove the mere satisfaction studies and call for a basic change to a journey toward a goal of loyalty as a strategic business target. Customer satisfaction is one of the most frequently examined topics in the hospitality and tourism field because it plays an important role in survival and future

of any tourism products and services [1]. It also significantly influences the choice of destination, the consumption of products and services and the decision to return [8]. Those perceptions, evaluations or experiences are in the literature defined differently such as destination reflect [9], perceived quality [10, 11], perceived value [2], quality satisfaction [10, 11], or behavioral intentions depending on the hypothetical and empirical focus of the studies. As a result, satisfaction extent has recently been replaced by the idea of customer loyalty, mainly because loyalty is seen as a better forecaster of current behavior. Two of the three measures compensating most Customer Loyalty index (CLI) are behavior based, such as “chance to repurchase the product or service” and “chance to suggest a product or service to others.” The third element of a CLI is generally “generally satisfaction” itself [6]. The move to quantify loyalty is based on a wish for better understanding and maintenance, which has a direct link to a firm’s conclusion. Studies have recorded as evidence that a 5% increase in customer maintenance can produce a profit growth of 25-95% beyond a range of industries [7, 12]. In addition, continue to use existing customers

generally has a much lower connected costs than winning new ones [13], so a larger portion of the gross profit counts towards the final result. Moreover, loyal customers are more probably to act as free word-of-mouth (WOM) advertiser that casually bring networks of friends, relatives and other possible consumers to a product/ service [14]. In fact, WOM source of information s account for up to 60% of sales to new customers [12]. With such unusual returns, loyalty becomes a basic strategic component for organizations. However, in the context of travel and tourism, a survey of report displays a richness of studies on tourist satisfaction; and destination loyalty has not been deeply examined [15]. Therefore, it is time for professional and academics to conduct more studies of loyalty in order to have greater knowledge of this idea, to understand the role of customer satisfaction in improving loyalty, the effect of other non-satisfaction determining factor on customer loyalty and their mutual dependence. Understanding the determining factor of customer loyalty will allow management to focus on the major impact factors that lead to customer maintenance. A number of studies have examined the significant events or causes of repeat purchase plans [16, 17]. The Results of this research have shown that satisfaction, quality/performance and different other variables are good forecasters of customer planned loyalty. In order to retain customers, organizations must seek to satisfy them, but a further purpose must be to found customer loyalty. In the tourism context, satisfaction with travel experiences contributes to destination loyalty [15, 18, 19]. The rank of tourists' loyalty to a destination is reflected in their plans to revisit the destination and in their readiness to suggest it [15]. Tourists' positive experiences of service, products and other resources provided by tourism destinations could produce repeat visits as well as positive WOM effects to friends and/or relatives. Approval by previous visits can be taken as the most dependable information sources for possible tourists. Approval to other people (WOM) is also one of the most often sought types of information for people interested in traveling. Most early research work focused on satisfaction at the global level [20]. Recently, there appears a quality-level idealization of the significant events of satisfaction [21]. Under a quality-level approach, generally satisfaction is a function of quality-level estimation. This estimation typically captures a significant amount of change in generally satisfaction [21, 22]. Generally satisfaction and quality satisfaction are clear, though related assemblies [21]. This study focused on generally estimation, quality satisfaction and the

relationship between the two. Moreover, previous studies [23, 24, 25] showed that destination reflect will affect tourists in the act of selecting a destination, the achievement estimation of the trip and in their future plans. Destination reflect exercises a positive effect on distinguished quality and satisfaction. A positive reflect deriving from positive travel experiences would result in a positive estimation of a destination. Tourist satisfaction would improve if the destination has a positive reflect. Destination reflects also affects tourists' behavioral plans. More positive reflect will lead to higher chance to return to the same destination. To sum up, the following progress could be founded: destination reflect - tourist satisfaction - destination loyalty. Satisfaction in turn has a positive effect on destination loyalty. Anyhow, the tourism studies to date have directly examined assemblies of reflect, satisfaction and loyalty independently [26]; studies discussing the causality relationships among destination reflect, tourist satisfaction and destination loyalty are lacking. To bridge the gap in the destination loyalty report, the main purpose of this study was to suggest a mixed approach for understanding destination loyalty and to examine the hypothetical and empirical evidence on the causality relationships among destination reflect, tourist satisfaction and destination loyalty. A research model was proposed and tested. The model examined the related relationships among assemblies by using a structural equation modeling (SEM) approach. The empirical data for the study was from a major tourism destination in the West region of Iran.

**Report Survey:** The main purpose of this study was to improve and test a hypothetical model, which described the elements donated to the building of destination loyalty: destination reflect, quality satisfaction and generally satisfaction. Below is a brief overview of the mutual dependence of assemblies in the model. It has been widely recognized that destination reflect affects tourists' personal comprehension, resulting behavior and trip distribution [26, 27, 28, 29]. Tourists' behavior is expected to be partially conditional by reflect that they have of destinations. Reflect will affect tourists in the act of selecting a destination, the achievement estimation of the trip and in their future plans. The effect of reflect on destination choice has been studied by various authors [30, 31]. It is believed that destinations with more positive reflect will more probably be included in the act of decision making. In addition, destination reflect exercises a positive effect on distinguished quality and satisfaction. More positive reflect will lead to higher

tourist satisfaction. In turn, the estimation of the destination experience will effect of reflect and adapt it [32, 33]. Lastly, destination reflects also affects the behavioral plans of tourists. For example, Kotler, Bowen and Makens [34] founded the following progress: reflect - quality - satisfaction. In this model, reflect would affect how customers perceive quality - a more positive reflect match to a higher distinguished quality. Distinguished quality will in turn conclude the satisfaction of consumers [35, 8], because satisfaction is the result of customers' estimation of the distinguished quality. To test the relationship between destinations reflect and tourist satisfaction, the following hypotheses were propose:

**H1:** Destination Reflect Positively Affects Tourists' Generally satisfaction.

Providing quality service is an essential strategy for the success and survival of any company and represents a challenge to the managers. The characteristics of services - perishability, heterogeneity, inseparability and intangibility - present certain difficulties with definition, standardization and control. However, the quality of service, marketing relationship and global satisfaction with the service may improve the chances of the customers returning to the company. Therefore, all companies must improve their quality standards and keep customers happy if they are to maintain a competitive position in the market. Early research's focused on satisfaction at the global level [20]. But recently, researchers focused on the quality-level conceptualization of the significant events of satisfaction [21] and a positive and significant relationship between service quality and consumer loyalty in the aviation industry [36] and a correlation between service quality and behavioral intention [37]. These authors also stated that service quality affects behavioral results such as loyalty. One of the main objectives from the study by Gengqing [38] was to develop and test a hypothetical model that represents the elements contributing to the loyalty of the tourist: the destination reflects the quality of satisfaction and generally satisfaction with the destination.

According to Oliver [21], generally satisfaction and quality satisfaction are clear but related assembles.

Quality satisfaction has significant, positive and direct effects on generally satisfaction; and it capture a significant amount of change in generally satisfaction [32, 39]. Satisfaction research in tourism and recreation has indicated that tourists' satisfaction with individual component of the destination leads to their satisfaction

with the generally destination [40, 41]. It is important in tourism to distinguish generally satisfaction from satisfaction with individual qualities; because the particular attribute of tourism have a remarkable effect on tourist satisfaction [42]. Beyond the generic attribute that distinguish services from goods, such as incomprehensibility, inseparability, heterogeneity and mortality [43], there are some further differences between tourism and other services. For example, Middleton and Clarke [44] emphasized interdependence - sub-sector interlink age of tourism products. Satisfaction with various components of the destination leads to generally satisfaction [8]. generally satisfaction with a hospitality experience is a function of satisfactions with the individual elements/qualities of all the products/services that make up the experience, such as accommodation, weather, natural environment, social environment, etc [45, 46]. Therefore, it was suppose that:

**H2:** Quality Satisfaction Positively Affects Generally satisfaction.

Two more hypotheses were moved to test the relationship between destinations reflect, quality satisfaction and generally satisfaction

**H3:** Destination Reflect Positively Affects Tourists' quality satisfaction

**H4:** Quality Satisfaction Partially Intervene the Relationship Between Destination Reflect and Generally Satisfaction.

Hallowell, [47]; LaBarbera and Mazursky, [48] founded links between satisfaction and post-purchase behavior.

Destination loyalty has been highlighted as one of the most important subjects in tourism researches. In many studies, revisit intention and positive word of mouth recommendation are noted as indicators of loyalty [49]. Several studies have attempted to identify major antecedents of revisit intention including satisfaction [50], novelty seeking [51], reflect [49], motivation and satisfaction, safety, generally satisfaction [52], cultural difference and the like. It is generally believed that satisfaction leads to repeat purchase and positive WOM suggestion, which are main signal, of loyalty. Marketing report has paid much attention to the relationship between customer satisfaction and loyalty and a number of studies have verified a significant positive relationship between customer satisfaction and loyalty/ maintenance

[53, 54]. If consumers are pleased with the product/service, they are more probably to continue to purchase and are more agreeable to extend positive WOM. In tourism industry, there are empirical evidences that tourists' satisfaction is a strong signal of their plan to revisit and suggest the destination to other people [8, 50, 55]. Pleased tourists are probably to return to the same destination and are agreeable to share their positive traveling experience with their friends and relatives. WOM approval is particularly important in tourism marketing because they are quantified to be the most dependable and thus are one of the most sought-after information sources for possible tourists [55]. Therefore, the following hypotheses were moved:

**H5:** Generally satisfaction positively affected destination loyalty

**H6:** Generally satisfaction fully intervene the relationship between destination reflect and destination loyalty

**H7:** Generally satisfaction fully intervene the relationship between quality satisfaction and destination loyalty.

To summarize the evidence of seven hypotheses, the following paths could be founded: (1) destination reflect - quality satisfaction - generally satisfaction; (2) destination reflect- generally satisfaction- destination loyalty; (3) quality satisfaction - generally satisfaction - destination loyalty.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study examines the cause and design using a cross-sectional sample survey. The survey questionnaire consisted of the questions that quantified the following assembles-destination reflect, tourists' quality satisfaction, generally satisfaction, destination loyalty and questions designed to gather tourists' demographic information and travel behavior.

**Destination Reflects:** A combination of structured and unstructured techniques was used in order to capture various aspects of the respondents' comprehensions of west of Iran as a travel destination, including a comprehensive survey of previous destination report, component analysis of tourism report, encouragement brochures for West of Iran and the employment of qualitative research techniques such as

focus group meeting, unstructured personal interviews and managerial judgment. The selected 42 destination items were rated on a 5-point Likert scale where 1 = strongly disagree (SD) and 5=strongly agree (SA).

**Quality Satisfaction:** Illustrating the related tourism report and destination qualities suitable to the (WEST) situation and quality list consisting of 25 items was founded. The destination quality's surround five field of tourism activities: accommodation, dining, shopping, attractions and environment. The choice of quality's within each field different with the selected mix of the five tourism activities. Along five-point Likert-scales, tourists were asked to judge their satisfaction with each tourist attracting quality (1 = Very dis pleased and 5= Very pleased).

**Generally Satisfaction.** A number of studies have used a generally quantify of satisfaction [56, 57]. A single generally quantify of satisfaction was used in this study for its usability and empirical support. The respondents were asked to rate their satisfaction with the generally traveling experience on a 5-point Likert scale (1 is Very displeased and 5 is Very pleased).

**Destination Loyalty:** Including repeat purchase plans and WOM approval were most generally used to derive consumer loyalty and were found to be the relevant quantify [58]. Prior research has shown that loyal customers are more probably to repurchase a product/service in the future [59, 60]. It has also been propose that loyal visitors are more agreeable to suggest the product/service to others [14]. In addition, good correlation has been found between consumers' repurchase plans and positive WOM source of information s [61, 62]. Therefore, repurchase and source of information plans assemble the most CLI [6]. In this study, two single-item measures were used for estimation tourist destination loyalty as the best achievable dependent assemble: tourists' goal to revisit West of Iran and their readiness to suggest West Springs as a positive destination to others, with 5-point Likert scale (1 = most improperly; 5=most probably).

**Reliability:** An experimental test was directed to test the internal consistency of the questionnaire items. The first outline of the survey instrument was distributed to 100 randomly selected visitors who stayed at West of Iran

hotels and motels. A total of 82 questionnaires were returned. A reliability analysis (Cronbach's alpha) was carrying out for 'destination reflects' and 'quality satisfaction,' resulting in a robust of 0.98 and 0.96, respectively. An alpha of 0.8 or above is quantified acceptable as a good indication of reliability [63]. According to the results of the experimental test and feedbacks from West of Iran, the final version of the survey instrument was improved.

**Sampling Plan:** The target population was all the visitors who stopped by the West of Iran Welcome Center, stayed at hotels, motels and B&B and they also visited shops/art galleries during a 2-month survey period. Confidence interval approach was used to conclude the sample size [64]. The formula for obtaining 95% accuracy at the 95% confidence level is:

$$n = \frac{B^2(pq)}{e^2} = \frac{1.97^2(0.5 \times 0.5)}{0.05^2} = 387$$

where B is the standard error connected with selected level of confidence (96%); p the estimated changeability in the population (50%); q = 1 - p; and e the acceptable error 75% (accuracy 97%). The amount of changeability in the population is estimated to be 50%. Assuming a response rate of 50% and an unusable rate of 10%, a total of 971 (387/0.4) people were approached to take part in the survey. A two- perform sampling approach was used: corresponding stratified sampling was useable for deciding on the strata sample size and systematic random sampling (SRS) was used to select the survey participator within each stratum, which involved selecting every  $k^{\text{th}}$  element after a random start. Investigative factor analysis (IFA) was employed to derive the basic dimensions of destination reflect and visitors' quality satisfaction. Supporting factor analysis (SFA) and SEM were used to test the conceptual model that examined the significant events of destination loyalty.

## RESULTS

A total of 650 questionnaires were returned, about 95% of the targeted sample size. The large majority of the respondents (99%) were domestic visitors from 15 different Iran states. The majority (97%) of the respondents were traveling with partners (family and friends) and vacation/free time was cite as the major purpose of the trip (89%). One-third (27%) of the respondents were first-time visitors. Previous Iran visits

(33%) and WOM (36%) appear as the two key information sources for respondents to learn about the travel destination.

**Basic Dimensions of 'Destination Reflect' and 'Quality Satisfaction':** The IFA was carry out to conclude the basic dimensionality of 'destination reflect' by analyzing samples of correlations among the 42 reflect quality's. Principle axis factoring extraction method with oblimin revolution was adopted because (1) oblique revolution is best when the target of the factor analysis is to obtain several hypothetically significant factors; (2) oblique revolutions supposing that factors are correlated to each other, which is more justifiable and more realistic in social sciences [65]. A range of cutoff criteria were used to conclude the number of factors derived, such as proper value, percentage of variance, item character and factor loadings [65]. Items with loadings lower than 0.4 and with loadings higher than 0.4 on more than one factor were eliminated. A seven factor solution, with 23 variables being hold, was selected representing approximately 85.9% of the total variance (Table 1). Seven factors were analyzed and the character of the 23 variables extend from 0.52 to 0.95, suggesting that the variances of each original variable (from 52% to 95%) were logically describe by the seven-factor solution. Factor loadings of the variables extend from 0.45 to 0.97, above propose threshold value of 0.35 for practical and statistical significance [65]. The Cronbach's alpha for the nine factors different from 0.84 to 0.96, suggesting high internal consistency. The seven factors were labeled based on the core variables that established them: travel environment, natural attractions, hospitality and events, historic attractions, travel foundation, relaxation and price and value. Seven composite variables were created and used as signal, for the hidden assemble 'destination reflect' in the achieve SEM. The same IFA procedure was used to verify the pre-specified dimensions of tourist satisfaction. Five factors with proper value above 1.0 were produced, which describe about 76% of the total variance (Table 2). The character different from 0.55 to 0.96, suggesting that the variance in each original variable was logically described by the five common factors taken together. The factor loadings for the 17 variables extend from 0.45 to 0.94; within the threshold value propose by Hair *et al.* [65]. The loadings also display a clean and highly explainable solution: the 17 variables loaded significantly on five factors as the researchers conceptualized-lodging, dining, shopping, activities and

Table 1: Fundamental units of 'destination reflects'

	Proper value	Variance (%)	Cronbach's $\alpha$	Factor loadings	Communalities
F1 Travel environment	19.23	45.34	0.88		
Safe and secure environment				0.75	0.73
Friendly and helpful local people				0.58	0.69
quiet and restful atmosphere				0.57	0.72
Pleasant weather					
F2 Natural attractions	5.31	11.40	0.94		
Scenery of mountain and valleys				-0.84	0.80
Beautiful gardens and springs				-0.82	0.81
Pictures of parks/ivers				-0.69	0.80
Caves and underground formations				-0.49	0.58
F3 Entertainment and events	3.30	7.23	0.92		
Attractive cultural events and festivals				-0.77	0.78
Excellent quality and fun/music				-0.76	0.71
Wide variety of entertainment				-0.60	0.67
F4 Historic attractions	1.65	4.14	0.82		
Different history and heritage				0.82	0.81
Classic houses				0.71	0.65
F5 Infrastructure	1.64	3.98	0.88		
Wide selection of restaurants				-0.79	0.73
Wide variety of shop facilities				-0.70	0.73
F6 Relaxation	1.07	2.82	0.87		
Great place for refreshing the body				0.69	0.70
Spiritual rejuvenation				0.68	0.70
F7 Outdoor activities	0.92	2.73	0.90		
Exciting water activities (boating, fishing's) etc				0.81	0.83
Terrific place for picnicking/camping				0.66	0.73
huge opportunities for nature recreation				0.49	0.69
F8 Price and value	0.84	2.27	0.89		
Reasonable price for food and accommodation				-0.98	0.94
Good value for money				-0.74	0.80
Reasonable price for attractions and activities				-0.70	0.75

Table 2: Fundamental units of 'attribute satisfaction'

	Proper value	Variance	Cronbach's $\alpha$	Factor loadings	Communalities
F1 Shopping	16.78	43.13	0.87		
Quality of merchandise				0.84	0.76
Reasonable price of merchandise				0.66	0.63
Variety of shops				0.61	0.64
F2 Lodging	1.89	5.98	0.97		
Variety of lodging options				0.83	0.75
Historic interests of lodging				0.63	0.53
Service in lodging facilities				0.56	0.74
Reasonable price of meals				0.48	0.53
F3 Attractions	1.67	3.87	0.89		
Variety of cultural options				-0.58	0.75
Reasonable price for sightseeing				-0.41	0.63
Variety of natural attractions				-0.67	0.82
F4 Environment	1.78	3.98	1.39		
Friendliness of local people				0.66	0.73
Peaceful and restful atmosphere				0.72	0.78
Safety and security				0.50	0.61
F5 Dining	1.28	3.36	0.98		
Service in restaurants				0.77	0.73
Quality of food				0.86	0.80
Convenience of meals				0.74	0.62
Reasonable price of meals				0.66	0.66

events and environment; no variables loaded significantly on more than one factor. The Cronbach's alphas for the five factors were robust, ranging from 0.88 to 0.95, well above the generally agreed upon lower limit of 0.60 for research at investigative perform [63], point out high internal consistency among the variables within each factor. Five Functionscales were created and used as clear variables for the hidden variable 'quality satisfaction' in the achieveSEM analysis.

**Testing the Destination Loyalty Model:** SEM was applied for testing the destination loyalty model in which seven hypotheses were improved based on a comprehensive survey of report. Various quantify of generally model goodness-of-fit and extent model fit were estimated to conclude if the proposed conceptual model was acceptable.

**Generally Model Fit:** Generally model fit describes the rank to which the specified signal, represent the hypothesized assemblies. The  $\chi^2$  value (703.12 with 165 ranks of freedom) has a statistical significance level of 0.0. This statistic failed to support that the differences of the predicted and current models were non-significant. However, it is generally agreed that the  $\chi^2$  value should be used as a guide rather than an absolute index of fit due to its sensitivity to sample size and model complexity [66]. Thus, other index should also be estimated. Incremental Fit measures estimate the incremental fit of the model compared to a null model that generally specifies no relation among of assemblies and variables. These were the Comparative Fit Index (CFI), the Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI) and the Normed Fit Index (NFI), which were 0.96, 0.96 and 0.95, respectively. These measures were above the proposed level of 0.90, point out support for the proposed model. Another quantify to estimate the model fit is the Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA), which provides a measure of fit that adjusts for parsimony by estimating the difference per rank of freedom in the model. The RMSEA value was a marginal 0.13.

**Extent Model Fit:** The extent model provides meaning to assemblies (hidden variables) in the model. Proper estimation of the extent model is a pre-requisite to the estimation of the structural model [66]. The convergent validity of the extent scale was examined via the following tests. First, for each variable the t value connected with each of the loadings was significant at the 0.01 level (Table 3). The results indicated that all variables were significantly related to their specified assemblies, verifying

the assumed relationships among indicators and assemblies. Second, squared multiple correlation coefficients (SMC) for the Y- and X-variables were estimated. SMCs lie between 0 and 1 (the closer to 1, the better the variable acts as a signal of the hidden assembly). Table 3 showed that the SMCs for Y-variables extend from 0.55 to 0.95 and for X variables from 0.35 to 0.65, point out fairly high reliability (convergent validities) of the extent model. The assembly reliability (AR) and the average variance extracted (AVE) were also calculated for the hidden assemblies. For both AR and AVE, all three assemblies exceed the threshold value of .75 and .55, respectively. Therefore, it can be concluded that the signal, for all three assemblies were sufficient in terms of how the extent model was specified. To examine the discriminant validity of the extent model, the AVE values for the hidden assemblies were compared to the squared correlations between the corresponding assemblies [67] and none of the squared correlations exceed the AVE. The above tests indicated that the discriminant validity was upheld for the extent model.

**Structural Model Parameters:** The clearest examination of the structural model involves the significance tests for the estimated coefficients (paths), which provide the basis for accepting or rejecting the proposed relationships between hidden assemblies. The LISREL results showed that all the paths proposed in the 'destination loyalty' model were statistically significant and of the appropriate direction (positive): (1) destination reflect positively affected generally satisfaction ( $\gamma_{2,1} = 0.33$ ;  $t = 4.87$ ); (2) quality satisfaction positively affected generally satisfaction ( $\beta_{2,1} = 0.25$ ;  $t = 2.98$ ); (3) destination reflect positively affected quality satisfaction ( $\gamma_{1,1} = 0.75$ ;  $t = 12.12$ ); (4) generally satisfaction positively affected destination loyalty ( $\beta_{3,2} = 0.78$ ;  $t = 13.31$ ); and from the results of (1)–(3), it can be concluded that (5) quality satisfaction partially intervenes the relationship between destination reflect and generally satisfaction [68]. The hypotheses 1–5 could not be rejected, which proposed Causality relationships among destination reflect, quality satisfaction, generally satisfaction and destination loyalty. The fit of the structural model was also estimated by the SMCs for structural equations, which indicate the amount of variance in each endogenous hidden variable accounted for by the previous variables in the related structural equation. The SMC for 'quality satisfaction' was 0.51; point out that 54% of the variance in quality satisfaction was described by 'destination reflects.'

Table 3: LISREL results for measurement model

	Std	SMC	CR	AVE
Exogenous: destination reflect			0.94	0.56
Travel environment	0.85	0.68		
Natural attractions	0.75	0.54		
Entertainment and events	0.81	0.63		
Historic attractions	0.60	0.35		
Infrastructure	0.78	0.59		
Price and value	0.86	0.70		
Outdoor activities	0.77	0.57		
Relaxation	0.73	0.52		
Endogenous: attribute satisfaction			0.94	0.66
Lodging	0.80	0.61		
Shopping	0.88	0.74		
Attractions	0.89	0.76		
Environment	0.79	0.62		
Dining	0.80	0.61		
Endogenous: destination loyalty			0.93	0.66
Revisit intention	0.89	0.75		
Recommend intention	0.97	0.94		

Table 4: Fit index for competing models

	Hypothetical	M1	M2
Chi-square	703.12	698.27	696.65
Degrees of freedom	165	163	161
RMSEA	0.13	0.13	0.13
RMR	0.067	0.059	0.059
GFI	0.85	0.85	0.84
CFI	0.96	0.96	0.96
NNFI	0.96	0.96	0.95
PNFI	0.85	0.83	0.83

About 27% of the uncertainties in ‘generally satisfaction’ were accounted for by ‘destination reflect’ and ‘qualitysatisfaction’ ( $SMC = 0.27$ ). ‘Destination reflect,’ ‘generally satisfaction,’ and ‘qualitysatisfaction’ describe approximately 47% of the variance in ‘Destination loyalty’ ( $SMC = 0.47$ ).

**Competing Models:** The final approach to model estimation was to compare the propose hypothetical model (Fig. 1) with a series of competing models, which acted as alterative interpretation to the propose model. The purpose was to conclude the best fitting model from a set of models. In this study, two alternative models were propose [69] (Fig. 2): M1 and M2. M1 added the path between ‘qualitysatisfaction’ and ‘destination loyalty.’ M2 further added another path between ‘destination reflects’ and ‘destination loyalty.’ The sequential Chi-square ( $X^2$ ) difference tests (SCDTs) were carry out to estimate whether there were significant differences in estimated assemblecovariance's describe by the three structural models [70]. The  $X^2$  difference test examined the null hypotheses of no significant difference between two

nested structural models (denoted as  $M1-MT = 0$  and  $M1-M2 = 0$ ). The difference between  $X^2$  statistic values ( $\Delta X^2$ ) for nested models was itself asymptotically distributed as  $X^2$ , with ranks of freedom equal to the difference in ranks of freedom for the two models ( $\Delta df$ ). If the null hypothesis was support themore restricted model of the two would be temporarilyaccepted. The  $X^2$  difference test between MT and M1 ( $\Delta X^2 = 6.21$ ;  $\Delta df = 1$ ) propose that M1 was dosignificantly better than the hypothetical model MT; and the  $X^2$  difference test between M1 and M2 ( $\Delta X^2 = 0.31$ ;  $\Delta df = 1$ ) propose that M2 was not performing significantly better than M1. The results of the  $X^2$  difference tests preferred the competing model M1 to propose hypothetical model MT and the alternative model M2 (saturated model). To further detect the effect of adding more causality (paths), it was essential to examine the statistical significance of theparameter coefficients for the additional paths for M1 and M2. The causality between ‘quality satisfaction’ and ‘destination loyalty’ was significant ( $\beta = 0.14$ ;  $t = 2.98$ ); whereas the causality path from ‘destination reflect’ to ‘destination loyalty’ was not suppose significant ( $Y = 0.05$ ;  $t = 0.56$ ). This suggests that there should be a direct path between ‘quality satisfaction’ and ‘destination loyalty’ as the competing model M1 propose. This relationship could be hypothetically supported because tourists’ satisfaction with various components of a destination could directly lead to their loyalty with the destination. The findings encourage; the full intervention role of generally satisfaction on the relationship between destination reflect and destination loyalty ( $H6$  could not be rejected),



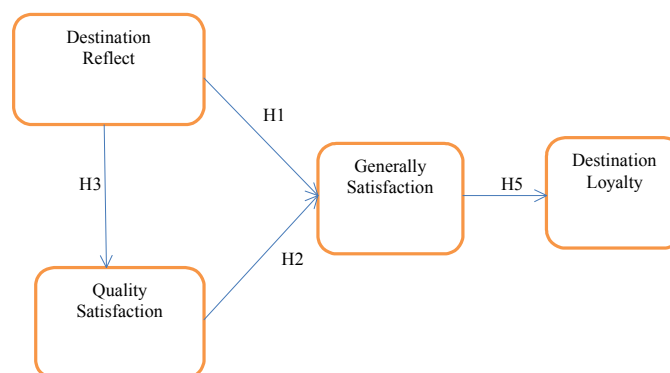


Fig. 1: Theoretical 'destination loyalty' model

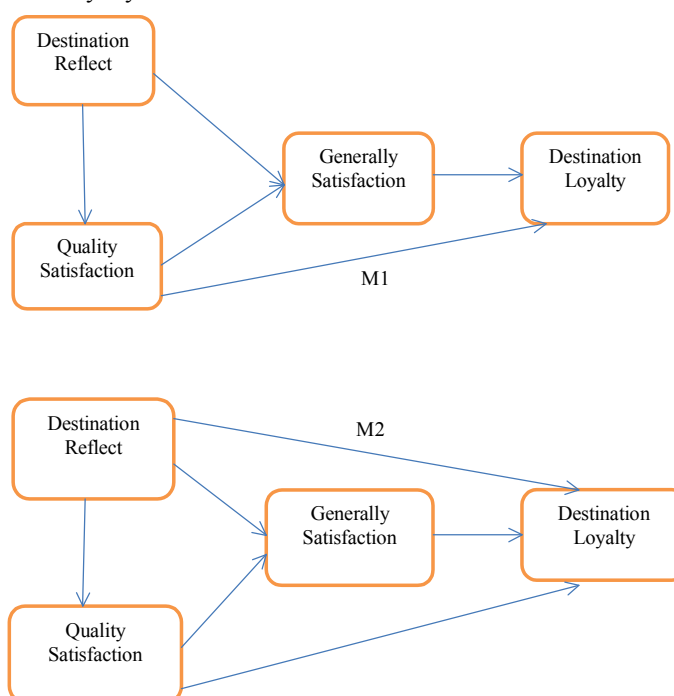


Fig. 2: Competing 'destination loyalty' models

but failed to support the full intervention role of generally satisfaction on the relationship between quality satisfaction and destination loyalty (H7 could not be encourage). Therefore, generallysatisfaction partially intervenethe relationship between quality satisfaction and destination loyalty [68]. As another means of comparison, a set of goodness-of-fit measures were also compared to conclude which of the two models had the best model fit (Table 4). The fit index such as RMSEA, CFI and PNFI for the three competing models wasalmost same, point out that the two competing models achieved approximately the same level of model fit. Thus it was concluded that the competing model M1 could be hold as a viable alternative for acceptance.

## CONCLUSIONS

Attribute satisfaction is different with generally satisfaction. The reason is probably the other variables has impact on generally satisfaction and not included in this study and can be considered in further research. Based on research findings tourist loyalty are affected by generally satisfaction and this finding is clearly in line with other research that has confirmed this issue. The results showed that more positive tourist reflect lead to more attribute satisfaction about services that presented in West of Iran and this will lead to tourist loyalty. Based on the finding of this research, the variables of attribute satisfaction that strongly affected by

the perceived reflect of tourist destination. The SEM analysis propose support for the statistically significant relationships between destination reflect and generally satisfaction (H1), quality satisfaction and generally satisfaction (H2), destination reflect and quality satisfaction (H3) and generally satisfaction and destination loyalty (H5). The SEM analysis also verified the partial intervention role quality satisfaction played between destination reflect and generally satisfaction (H4) and the full intervention role generally satisfaction played between destination reflect and destination loyalty (H6). The only hypothesis (H7) that was not encourage; pointed to generally satisfaction as a partial mediator, rather than a full mediator as originally propose, between quality satisfaction and destination loyalty. The destination loyalty model outlined in the conceptual framework was corroborated. Therefore it can be said that tourist generally satisfaction was concluded by destination reflect and quality satisfaction, tourist quality satisfaction was also directly affected by destination reflect and destination loyalty was in turn affected by generally satisfaction. In addition, the newly propose direct path from quality satisfaction to destination loyalty was shown to be significant; thus, quality satisfaction was also a direct previous of destination loyalty. he findings verified that tourists' loyalty was improved by positive destination reflect and high satisfaction, consistent with reflectsatisfactionloyalty scheme that conceptually guided this study. The empirical results of this study provided resistant evidence that propose structural equation model designed to consider at the same time destination reflect, generally and quality satisfaction and destination loyalty was acceptable. Proposed loyalty programs can develop true loyalty and advocates of tourism suppliers if used appropriately. They include joint contribution, environmental-friendly programs and care for people and environment and, as such, represent a step away from classical frequent programs broadly used in tourism. The strength of proposed loyalty programs is that they can be used complementary. Tourism destination loyalty had causality with reflect and satisfaction. Moreover, the quality satisfaction separately from the generally satisfaction affected the destination loyalty. This study makes it clear that destination reflect plays an essential role in achieving the loyalty of an individual and tourists' satisfaction must be handled proactively in order to improve it into a lasting relationship beneficial to both parties. Destination reflects had a positive effect on tourist satisfaction as well as destination loyalty. An improvement in the generally reflect of a place held by an

individual increased his/her tendency to make a positive estimation of the stay. It also increases his or her goal to return and to suggest it in the future. Resulting, with regard to the progress reflect - satisfaction - loyalty propose by the survey of the report, the analysis of the mutual dependence as a whole verified the propose model. In the report, although it has been recognized that destination loyalty is important, not much has been done to investigate its extent, or its structural relationships with reflect and satisfaction. This study showed and verified the existence of the important relationships among destination reflect, quality/ generally satisfaction and destination loyalty. The findings propose that it would be profitable for destination managers to make greater investments in their tourism destination resources, in order to continue to increase tourists' experiences. It is believed that this study has an important ability for generating more exact implementation related to destination behavior, particularly concerning tourists' loyalty.

This study discloses that tourist reflect is the first and most important factor in creating attribute satisfaction, generally satisfaction and also tourist loyalty. So, managers and marketers of tourism industry must use the various features in order to create a proper reflect in the minds of possible tourists of West of Iran. Determination the strengths and weaknesses of promotion planning in related to tourism destination reflects are necessary. If the managers and administrators of tourism industry cannot do it, they couldn't control these reflects to obtain the objectives of tourist loyalty. The lack of enough information about tourism destination attractions is barrier to possible tourist that wants to choice a tourism destination. The managers of tourism industry must provide this information by proper communication channels. In the next step, managers of tourism industry must focus on tourist satisfaction and attribute satisfaction. For obtain to this goals, they must has strategic planning for present the products and services to the domestic and foreign tourists. Method of strategic planning lead to close cooperation between government and business units and it's caused creativity and initiative between the units. Taken this approach is required to determine the exact duties and responsibilities. Finally, all sectors related to tourism, both public and private sectors must cooperate in providing quality products and services offered to tourists in the West of Iran. In order to remain in the competitive tourism market and also they introduced themselves as a competitive advantage with offering high quality products and services.

**Managerial Indirect Suggestion:** Destinations today are essential to gain a better understanding of why travelers are loyal to a destination and what drives the loyalty. The major findings of this study have significant managerial implication for tourism and hospitality managers and marketers. First, the investigative and supporting factor analyses showed that destination reflect was consisting of seven hidden dimensions and quality satisfaction had seven basic factors. These results could help destination marketers better understand the factors that donate to tourist satisfaction and loyalty so that they are able to carefully deliver appropriate products and services that give tourists' needs and wants. Thus, it is proposed that destination suppliers and managers consider the practical indirect suggestion of these hidden variables, which may be basic elements in increasing tourists' general satisfaction and loyalty. Moreover, the SEM findings provided guidance for the success of marketing destinations. As well as reflect is shown in this study to be a key factor in the hands of destination managers. Therefore, destination managers must endeavor to improve the reflect of a destination if they are to compete successfully in the competitive holiday market. Adding to the fact that once a reflect is formed, it is difficult to change; it becomes more important for destinations to present the right reflect and then maintain it. Because the reflect that tourists hold of a destination will affect tourists' satisfaction with the travel experiences, the WOM communication that takes place after the trips as well as the goal to return in the future, destination marketers should take a critical approach to manage the reflect. Although it is not possible to control all the elements that donate to the shaping of the reflect of a destination, it is possible to manage some of them such as advertising and promoting tourist attractions, organizing cultural events that make an appeal to tourists, managing service quality provided by tourism foundation such as hotels, restaurants, tourist centers, retail fundamentals, etc. Since reflect is modified by each new piece of information or stimulus received by an individual, or that of friends, or family made different detailed and realistic reflect of a destination. Because tourists tend to rely more on this reflect for satisfaction estimation and destination choice decisions, all attempts should be aimed at improving that experience. To conclude, tourism destinations must take special care of reflect that they attempt to disclose and the quality of the services and products that they suggest, as all these will affect visitors' satisfaction and their plans for future behavior. Secondly, destination managers should consider the role of tourist satisfaction played in improving

destination loyalty. It is supposing that if tourists are pleased with their travel experiences, they are more agreeable to revisit a destination as well as extend positive WOM. This study provided empirical evidence supporting this assumption: Satisfaction was found to directly affect destination loyalty in a positive direction. Higher tourist satisfaction will lead to higher destination loyalty, which motivates tourists to visit a destination again and/or suggest the destination to others. Therefore, destination managers should focus on founding a high tourists' satisfaction level and improve/support destination competitiveness. Since quality satisfaction affected destination loyalty both directly (as an immediate) and indirectly through general satisfaction, its extent and improvement are important to destination managers. The special attribute of tourism concludes that many elements are involved in the formation of tourists' satisfaction, from the providers of specific services of accommodation, transport, free time, among others, to the tourism information offices, the local residents, natural and artificial resources, etc. The situations become even more complicated when a single unpleasant incident leads to a negative general estimation, depending on how important the incident is to the tourist. Therefore, in order to achieve a high general level of satisfaction, it is essential for all parties involved to have smooth coordination and co-operation and be fully aware of the important importance of providing quality services/products as well as diagnosing the service quality. In addition, appropriate destination products and services should be delivered to tourists in order to increase destination competitiveness.

**Limitations:** The limitation of this study is first, the study was directed in the summer, thus findings were limited to summer travelers. Tourists who travel in different seasons may form different attitudes of a destination. Seasonality restricts the generalizability of tourism research findings and should constantly be taken into consideration in the interpretation performed. Therefore future researchers could conduct similar surveys in different seasons. The survey results can then be compared to identify similarities and differences in them. Further, the population of this study was limited to visitors of a tourist destination in the West of Iran. Therefore, the results from the study may not be generalized beyond this population. Reproduce similar studies in other tourist destinations would be imperative for increasing the generalizability of these findings. Secondly, 'destination reflects', 'quality satisfaction,' and 'general satisfaction' were studied as significant events to destination loyalty. There might be

additional factors impact and interacting with tourists' loyalty. Future researchers are advised to investigate additional significant events of tourist loyalty. This may lead to exposure of default and inaccuracy of the relationships tested in the current study and to further conceptual purification and extension. In addition, since the survey was directed by the staff working at different local destinations such as the welcome center, hotels/motels and shops/galleries, it was not sure that all respondents would have perfected their traveling experiences with West of Iran while replying to the survey. Tourists' comprehensions of satisfaction or destination reflect may be under risk of being colored with their additional experiences in West of Iran. It is advisable for future studies to add a question in the survey instrument to conclude at which traveling performance data were calm (e.g. during the trip or end of the trip). Thirdly, generally satisfaction, repurchase, were all quantified by a single question. The use of a multiple-item extent scale in future studies may increase the interpretation and prediction of generally satisfaction and destination loyalty.

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