Original Research Article

Presenting a Digital Marketing Model for the Development of the Hotel Industry

(A Case Study of Kish Island)*

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Abstract| One of the most important factors that can develop and improve the country's tourism industry, especially the hotel sector, is the use of marketing tools and parameters, especially digital marketing. The main goal of the research is to present a digital marketing model for the development of the hotel industry (Kish Island study). In this research, a mixed (qualitative and quantitative) exploratory method was used. The method used in the qualitative part of the research is grounded theory. In the qualitative part, a semi-structured interview tool was used to collect the data, and in the quantitative part, a questionnaire tool (made by the researcher) was used. The subjects in the qualitative part included tourism industry experts and in the quantitative part, the subjects consisted of managers of 5 and 4-star hotels in Kish Island (day and night managers); among the first group, 12 people were selected by the targeted snowball method, and 66 people were selected from the second group. To analyze the data from the semi-structured interviews, the coding method was used in MAXQDA software. The findings based on grounded theory in the qualitative section showed that the elements of digital marketing include 7 components of the technical characteristics of digital tools, relative advantage (value), cost (price), process management, promotion, service quality, and information quality affect tourism intention. Analysis in the quantitative part to test the conceptual model, a questionnaire consisting of 6 dimensions, 25 components, and 59 items was designed and distributed among the subjects. The results obtained from the quantitative findings from structural equation modeling confirm the qualitative findings. Also, the data analysis of the quantitative part of the research was done using the partial least squares method in smart PLS software.

Keywords| Digital marketing, Tourism, Hotel industry, Kish Island.

Introduction and Statement of the Problem| Today, many managers and planners have prioritized the maximum use of tourism development capabilities, especially hotels but the proper use of these capacities requires careful study and investigation, which is the main problem of the present research. One of the most important factors that can develop and improve the country's tourism industry, especially the hotel sector, is the use of marketing tools and parameters, especially digital marketing. The ever-increasing progress of information technology in today's era and the increase in the number of Internet users have become one of the creative and innovative tools in providing tourism information and international exchanges, and the use of traditional marketing methods makes business-service enterprises, including hotels, stay away from the global market (Kim, Kang &

Lee, 2021). Digital marketing consists of a wide selection of services, products, and marketing tactics that mainly use the Internet as a primary advertising medium (Ng'ang'a, 2015); Therefore, digital marketing is a broad term that refers to various advertising techniques to reach customers through digital and considers a wider level of the target market than traditional marketing, which is also economically efficient (Aktas, Sahin & Topaloglu, 2018). In recent years, digital technologies have been increasingly recognized as a key factor in the development of sustainable tourism, providing new opportunities to improve destination management and enhance visitor experiences (Polishchuk, Bujdosó, El Archi, Benbba, Zhu, & Dávid , 2023). Digital marketing is beneficial to deal with the intangible nature of hotel services and gain a competitive advantage. The reason is that the website content of tourism organizations and enterprises, including hotels, allows them to use the participation and interests of customers to capture information about their preferences and use that information to provide personalized services (Shuai & Wu, 2011). Empirical evidence suggests that the use of a digital platform to perform business activities, such as ordering, selling, and paying, is positively related to increased business performance (Pelsmacker, Tilburg & Holthof, 2018). However, there are conflicting findings regarding the role of digital marketing and its relationship with business performance in the tourism industry. A study among travel and hotel agencies indicates that the majority of them consider their website as an important competitive weapon in obtaining a significant average of new customers. The results of the research of Tsiotsou and Vlachopoulou (2011) also indicate that there is a positive and significant relationship between digital marketing and tourism performance. Also, Shuai and Wu (2011) showed that hotel performance is significantly affected by electronic communication and Internet exchanges. However, Jarvinen (2016) believes that digital marketing activities do not have a direct impact on performance in the localization sector of tourism. He explained that these findings are a reflection of the use of low levels of acceptance of customers' activities. According to what has been said, the advances made in the information and communication industry in recent years have led to an informatics revolution, which has transformed traditional marketing methods and brought about new operational methods and dynamics in this field. So, the main focus of this revolution is the emergence of the new media of the Internet, the impact of its existential components in the field of marketing has emphasized the need to redefine the key factors in this field and has created a new concept of marketing called digital marketing (Pelsmacker, Tilburg & Holthof, 2018). It is also necessary to have a clearer understanding of digital marketing issues and their opportunities for organizations and service companies,

especially hotels, and how these technologies can be used to implement hotel marketing activities in a more effective way than traditional marketing methods. Today, the number of internet users and international internet networks is increasing and every business-service enterprise, including hotels, is obliged to respond to the huge number of this group of customers and users regardless of geographical boundaries. Therefore, the current research seeks to answer the question: What will be the digital marketing model for the hotels of Kish Island for the development of the tourism industry?

Research Objectives

This study aims to present a digital marketing model for hotels on Kish Island, as well as a research model obtained from semi-structured interviews with experts and the distribution of questionnaires among managers and employees of hotels on Kish Island, validation and components of the model in the field of digital marketing factors and components related to the purpose of tourism It is recognized.

Research Questions

This research used the grounded theory proposed by Strauss and Corbin to answer the following questions according to the background and context in Kish Island, especially the hotels of Kish Island (hotels five and four stars). What will be the presentation of a digital marketing model for Kish Island hotels for the development of the tourism industry? What are the structures and components of digital marketing models in the hospitality sector of the tourism industry? What are the components, dimensions, and indicators affecting the digital marketing model in Kish Island hotels for the development of the tourism industry? What is the prioritization of digital marketing factors and components in Kish Island hotels for the development of the tourism industry?

Theoretical Foundations of Research

The 19-COVID pandemic, which began in 2020, had a major impact on the tourism industry in Iran as well as around the world. Tourism and hospitality were one of the most intense sectors of the global economy in terms of the COVID- 19 pandemic. Border closures, lockdowns around the world, and an almost complete halt to air traffic are testament to the major blow suffered by the hospitality and tourism sector. Although it is in the early stages of understanding its true meaning for all aspects of tourism, it has been said that the impact of the pandemic is widespread and will change the way people live and travel in the coming years. The COVID-19 pandemic disrupted the hotel sector with an expected loss more than any previous crisis, including the 9/ 11 terrorist attack, recession, or the SARS epidemic (Oxford Economics,

2020). Average revenue per room (RevPAR) fell by nearly $90 in the second quarter of 2020 (Courtney, 2020). The first cases of COVID-19 were reported in Wuhan, China, in December 2019, and gradually spread throughout the world. Countries have taken measures such as social distancing, travel and tourism restrictions, border closures, etc. (Polemis, 2020). Hotels have to deal with a double crisis. Falling demand and rising prices of their services have jeopardized the level of profitability in the hotel industry. Estimating the long-term consequences of this crisis is difficult. In Italy, government restrictions have reduced hotel performance by an average of 68% (ibid.). In Iran, the coronavirus outbreak has caused a cyclical cessation of industry and commerce, including tourism and hotel industry (Shahvazian & Hashemi Gheinani, 2020). The hotel industry is one of the major and fundamental activities of the economy and is considered income-generating, currency-generating, employment-generating, and clean in terms of environmental issues. This industry is one of the basic infrastructures for attracting and developing tourism and tourism (Hoseinnejad Dovin & Faridi, 2020). The internet, social media, mobile apps, and other digital communication technologies have become part of everyday life for people around the world. According to recent figures released in January 2020, the number of active Internet users in the world is 4. 54 billion, accounting for 59% of the global population; therefore, businesses are forced to market and have a presence in the digital space to compete in the field of business. With the emergence of new technologies, including social networks as an important source of information, customer relationship management through social media (SCRM) has become a new concept in customer relationship approach and has attracted the attention of various industries including the hotel industry (Aldaihani, Bin Ali & Besha, 2020). The concept of digital marketing in a limited definition of the word means marketing products and services using digital channels but in the broad sense of the word it represents the use of digital technologies to attract customers promote brands retain customers and increase sales (Coco, 2017). According to this definition, digital technologies are not limited to Internet technology and include all new digital technologies such as social media, mobile, augmented and virtual reality, big data, and the Internet of things (Kannan, 2017). Attracting and attracting the view, attitude, and behavior of tourists to visit natural and historical places of a country or a particular region or place is one of the marketing goals in this industry; therefore, to provide such a process, we need to manage tourism marketing so that this way accurate information and a clear picture of what should be visited from various recreational, residential, natural, artistic and historical places be presented. Considering that services are sold in the tourism industry, therefore, the introduction of tangible and subtle dimensions of services to tourists is of particular importance. In fact, in this industry, serious customer participation and providing feedback and satisfaction is considered an important success factor (Kazemi, 2010). Digital marketing is now a key issue in the hotel industry (Harrigan, Miles, Fang & Roy, 2020); it is a surveillance tool for hotels that not only monitors customer visits but also serves as a platform for active accountability to customers to prove their commitment to their satisfaction. Success in digital marketing requires a new combination of hardware and software. With the advent of massive social media platforms the customer is not limited to a passive role in their relationship with a company (Lotfi Ashtiani, Andervazh & Albo Naeimi, 2023).

• **Study of tourism destination**

In the study of the Internet, as one of the main components of information technology, the role of the Internet in the field of tourism communication, informing tourists and becoming aware of the status of tourism destinations and on the other hand, the status of the tourism market, which according to it and considering the personal desires of the individual can choose tourist destinations for his travel.

• **Online ticket shopping**

E-tourism is the use of modern technology to provide the services needed by tourists using information technology, providing the services needed by tourists more simply with higher quality and lower cost, which is one of the main things that guarantees this definition is the possibility of buying air, train and bus tickets online for travel. Hotel or accommodation reservation: Online booking is one of the emerging manifestations of information technology that can solve major problems of the tourism system.

• **Virtual tour**

Virtual tourism is an interesting topic that has not been created for at most two decades. Virtual tourism is a presence in the virtual land of the web and viewing audio and video data from the physical world around us. Using the palace sites of museums, the world's archaeological sites can be accessed with a world of text information and illustrations of ancient history symbols (Kim & Seo, 2008).

Theoretical foundations show that nowadays due to the significant effects that the tourism industry has on the economy, culture, and society of the tourist-receiving areas, paying attention to this field of activity is necessary and inevitable. The tourism industry is not only a step towards strengthening cultures, but also a step towards economic and social progress and transformation. Increasing the digital approach and its services in hotel marketing by using social networks, and hotel websites, will improve revenue generation to provide a better picture of the facilities and requirements needed in the hotel industry by reviewing the content of customers' interest and evaluating online visitors from hotel websites.

Research Background

Soltanalipour (2018) presented a study on "Digital Marketing Strategies in Hotel Management". In this paper, the effect of digital marketing strategies on room occupancy in hotels

directly on revenue per room and indirectly on the volume and capacity of online criticism and the difference between this mechanism with different types of hotels in terms of star classification and independent and chain hotels were discussed. The results showed that the volume of criticism increased room occupancy, and the capacity for online criticism indirectly affected revenue per room available. Also, digital marketing tactics and strategies affect the volume and capacity of online criticism and indirectly affect hotel performance. Mehrabi and Aghamiri (2017) in a study examined the role of digital marketing in the hotel industry to expand the tourism industry. This research is descriptive. The results show that using the business models of the past cannot compete in today's hotel industry, and attracting more domestic and foreign tourists requires more attention to marketing issues. Identifying the needs of tourists in this regard is very important because, without the needs of customers, the proper operation of the hotel services will not be achieved. Jahangiri (2017) in a study examined the impact of Iran's hotel industry on information technology. This research has been conducted based on an analytical and descriptive method and using available resources to assess the impact of the Iranian hotel industry on information technology. The results indicate that information technology, tourism, and hospitality all three play a key role in economic growth and development, attracting investment, wealth, and equity in the society, especially in the growth and promotion of tourism and hospitality industry in different parts of the country. Dimitrios et al. (Dimitrios, Ioannis, Angelos & Nikolaos, 2023) in an article titled "Digital Marketing: A Case of Digital Marketing Strategies in Luxury Hotels" explores the latest digital marketing trends. Based on the findings of the study, this is the most important point for a hotel's digital campaign. To better understand the digital marketing stuff, and especially the reviews performed. Especially the current situation with the COVID- 19 pandemic means that digital marketing may play an important role in improving the tourism industry. Kim et al. (Kim, Kim, Choi & Trivedi, 2019) looked at "offline social interactions and online shopping demand. "The purpose of this study is to answer three questions: (1) how social offline interactions affect online shopping; (2) whether the active and passive of online social interactions have different effects on online shopping. (3) How online shopping preferences offset the effects of online social interactions. The analysis of the data showed that, firstly, online social interactions have a positive effect on online shopping demand. Second, while active offline interactions have a positive information influence on online shopping demand, passive social interactions have a negative impact on it. Third, online shopping preferences

undermine both the positive informational and normative negative impact of offline social interactions. Yen (2019) studied "the impact of hotel feature performance on electronic word-of-mouth (oral) (eWOM) marketing behaviors". He investigated e-word-of-mouth marketing (eWOM) behavior as a multidimensional structure and in this study, he reviewed impressive predictors for each of the individual e-word-of-mouth marketing behaviors with an emphasis on hotel feature performance (reputation). The results show that hotel feature performance, previous electronic word-of-mouth marketing experience, and platform convenience are generally the drivers of e-word-of-mouth marketing behaviors. Plesmacker et al. (Pelsmacker, Tilburg & Holthof, 2018, 2018) conducted a study examining digital marketing strategies, online reviews, and hotel performance. The study was conducted in 6 cities Flanders Antwerp Bruges Ghent Mechlen and Leuvin in 132 hotels in Belgium. Most of the information was collected through a questionnaire for evaluating digital marketing between hotels. The results of this study showed that the volume of requests affects the room reservation and the capacity to review the income of each room. Digital marketing strategies and techniques affect the volume and capacity of online requests and indirectly affect hotel performance. This is truer for hotel chains than for independent hotels. It is also truer in hotels with more stars compared to non-star hotels Varkaris & Neuhofer (2017) examined the impact of social media on hotel websites and consumer behavior. They found that travelers were related to hotel websites along with social media channels that had higher levels of information, enjoyment, deals, and satisfaction and indirectly the purpose of the purchase. On the other hand, online ratings are more efficient and reliable. When created by online travel communities, such as travel advice that fosters positive attitudes towards hotel goals. Showing comments and attitudes on hotel websites has a positive effect on their performance. Considering the background of research that shows that the tourism industry has significant effects on the economy, culture, and society of tourist reception areas, the study of impact with defined components, dimensions, and indicators that have led to the development and advancement of this industry by increasing its digital approach and services in marketing, especially hotels in Kish Island, which is one of the important tourism hubs, is not evident. On the other hand, the advent of the Internet and the expansion of new technology have changed the tourism sector and the hotel industry in an unprecedented way, which indicates great and abundant challenges for hotels and tourism companies. Therefore, conducting such research aimed at providing a digital marketing model for the development of the hotel industry (Case study Kish Island), is of special

Research Method

In this research, a digital marketing model for hotels in Kish Island was developed for the tourism industry. Considering that presenting such a model contributes to the development of research literature, the research method is applied in terms of purpose and exploratory and exploratory in terms of approach. This is the case with a little bit of research. In the mixed method, qualitative data makes quantitative data. Therefore, in the present study, the researcher first emphasized qualitative data instead of quantitative data and then resorted to quantitative data to confirm the qualitative findings. The present research is a mixed method, and in each phase (qualitative and quantitative) a method of data collection was used. In the qualitative phase, pluralism was first used in library resources. For this purpose, internal and external databases and human databases were used to access the resources and then the interview method was used to collect data. In the qualitative stage, a purposeful snowball sampling method was used. For this purpose, first, a list of experts and experts in the hotel and tourism industry who were familiar with digital marketing was selected, and semi-structured interviews were conducted using communication channels such as email phone calls, and cyberspace. Finally, in this phase, 12 people were selected as research samples in the qualitative section. To achieve concepts, components, and dimensions, qualitative data were analyzed using the content analysis method and based on grounded theory. In this step, three types of coding were performed: open, axial, and selective coding. After the open coding and extraction of concepts from the data, pivotal coding was performed. Then, after performing pivotal coding, the components of the research were extracted and dimensions were determined. Variables and components identified for tourism industry development that have been extracted from the text of the interviewees' responses and reviewing the theoretical bases of the research include 6 dimensions and 25 components (categories). In the quantitative phase, he proposed hypotheses and then developed a questionnaire to test the hypotheses. For this purpose, a researcher-made questionnaire consisting of 59 items that examine 6 dimensions and 25 components (categories) of research in the form of causal conditions, core conditions, contextual conditions, interventionist conditions, strategies, and outcomes, According to the total of 5 and 4-star hotels in Kish (22 hotels), 66 managers were distributed and collected in the form of the total number (CEO, day manager, and night manager). Confirmatory factor analysis was used to ensure validity. Accordingly, factor loads related to all questions of the higher questionnaire were 0. 5. Cranach's alpha method was used to ensure the reliability of the quantitative phase questionnaire. In the present study, the stages of grounded theory in 4 stages: study and collection of preliminary data, semi-structured interviews with branding and economic experts, 3) and coding data to achieve concepts, components, and dimensions, identifying new components, and establishing relationships between components and dimensions. Accordingly, three types of coding (open, axial, and selective) were performed. Then, after open encoding, 191 concepts of more than 900 words were extracted from the data. After open coding, axial coding was done and the categories (components) of the research were determined. Accordingly, 25 components were determined in the form of 6 dimensions. After extracting the components, the components were classified in the form of themes (dimensions) in the selected coding stage. Table 1 presents the concepts, components, and dimensions known during open and pivotal coding.

After determining the concepts, categories, and dimensions of the research, the following qualitative phase of the proposed conceptual model at the level of dimensions and components that have 25 components and 6 dimensions was presented as Fig. 1.

To measure the relationships between dimensions, it is better to measure causal relationships between the components, which confirms the causal relationships between the dimensions. However, due to the high number of research components, in this section, the hypotheses were defined at the level of dimensions obtained. The figure below shows the proposed conceptual model at the dimensional level.

According to the proposed model in Fig. 2, the research hypotheses are as follows:

Hypothesis 1 (H1): The elements of digital marketing have a significant effect on tourism intent.

Hypothesis 2 (H2): Tourism intention has a significant effect on empowerment (human resource empowerment and environmental empowerment).

Hypothesis 3 (H3): Environmental factors have a significant effect on empowerment.

Hypothesis 4 (H4): Infrastructure has a significant effect on empowerment.

Hypothesis 5 (H5): Empowerment has a significant effect on tourism development.

To test the conceptual model, a questionnaire consisting of 6 dimensions, 25 components (categories), and 59 items was designed and distributed among the statistical population including managers and staff of Kish Island hotels. To test the model and hypothesis of the research, structural equation modeling was used, and according to the conditions in this study, SMART PLS software was used. In the Fig. 3, the structural equation modeling with standard coefficients is

Table 1. Pivotal coding to extract categories from among concepts. Source: Authors.

Dimensions	Component (Category)	Concepts
Elements of Digital Marketing	Technical Features of Digital Tools	Ease of use of digital tools, adaptability, complexity or simplicity, testability, visibility, desirability of digital tools, hardware and software compatibility with the needs of tourists, ease of understanding of technology, simple and understandable menus, tangible and transparent results of digital tools
	Relative Advantage (Creating value for the customer)	Maximum value created for customers, amount of social value created, more benefits than other methods, elimination of operating costs, timely and timely information, description of valuable aspects of services and goods
	Cost for customers (Price)	Internet purchase prices in comparison to other methods, minimum costs of transportation and delivery of goods or services, reducing travel and accommodation costs for tourists in digital methods, announcing tours with reasonable prices in the off-season
	Managing Items and Processes	Paying attention to customers' requests, delivering customers' requests at the time and place of the customer's desire, paying attention to the sensitivities of tourists
	Promote	Customer feedback options on the site, the presence of frequently asked questions in the application (site), the possibility of receiving online comments, public notifications of sales by tourist centers, tourists awareness of services and products such as hotels, handicrafts, tangible and intangible cultural works, advertising, having the right to opt out of purchase, transfer the experience of marketers and tourists on the site, a part in the system for advice and guidance on tourist destinations, ensuring confidentiality of personal information on the site, policy incentives such as special services for tourist destinations, discounts in the system for loyal tourists, online lottery
	Quality of Service	Ability to track orders online and non-online, various methods for ordering and payment, having a search function for tourists, ease of purchase, display photos, dimensions, and features of tourism works on the website, announce the contact information of tourist destinations, announce hotel contact information, introduce the complete cultural monuments tangible and intangible tourist destinations, search engines on the web, easy and convenient payment
	Quality of information	Updating news, services, and products, how to arrange content on the site, using music, 3D design, beautiful design, moving images in the system, uniform appearance on web pages, not having pages under repair, fast download of site content, high speed of site or app, suitable map for the web, proper organization and comprehensibility menus, ease of movement between web pages, ease of return to the home page
Infrastructure	Transportation	Transportation networks, integrated transport system, quantity and quality of transport networks, number and location of airports, railways and ports, ease of transport, facilities for transportation of people with disabilities, number and location of airports, ports and roads
	Residential & Health Services	Number of hotels, quality of hotels, conditions of hotels and resorts for people with disabilities, accommodation index, existence of interstate residences, health conditions of residences and hotels, health services, appropriate infrastructure, state of the restrooms and tourist destinations, emergency and pharmaceutical services of tourism destinations
	Food and Restaurants	Quality of Food, Variety of Foods, Quality of Restaurants for Tourist Destinations, Quality of Service of Restaurants, Cost of Nutrition, Quality of Restaurants, Quality of Restaurants, Local Cuisine
	Information and Communication System	Web technology, information systems, systems integration and internal and external networks, web services, internet status, internet networks, local networks, IT infrastructure
Environmental factors	Political-security factors	Sanctions Conditions, Terrorist Actions, Abduction of Tourists, Internal Military Mistakes, Regional Wars, Internal Disturbances, International Security in the Region, Political Stability, Security Threats
	Economic factors	Recession, currency fluctuations, unemployment rate, uncontrolled price growth
	Cultural factors	Cultural sensitivities of tourist destinations, linguistic sensitivities, cultural and customary sensitivities, religious sensitivities
	Tourism policies	Coordination among tourism organizations, coordination between tourism and non-tourism organizations, reducing the boundaries between religion and politics, easing restrictions such as mandatory veiling, holding tourism seminars, assessing the effects of tourism

Rest of table 1.

Dimensions	Component (Category)	Concepts
Intention of tourism	Tourists' Learning	Obtaining information about tourist destinations, searching tourist destinations through digital tools, information about all travel expenses, simulating travel maps through tourism apps and sites
	Clash of Tourists	Evaluation of tourists about travel, assessment of destination conditions, assessment of facilities, acceptance and belief in travel, accurate selection of tourist destination, internal motivation of tourists to travel
	Intention to travel (attracting tourists)	Planning for travel, using opportunities and resources, coordinating with travel agents, and providing resources such as money, tickets, hotel reservations, etc. Preparing a plan and itinerary
	Re-visit (loyalty)	Satisfaction with travel, satisfaction with digital tools, revisiting tourists, customer loyalty, constant communication of tourists to destinations through digital apps and tools
Empower	Human Resources Empowerment	Possessing competent human resources, hospitality, cultural education, etc., Manpower participation in tourism destinations, hiring specialist manpower, innovation in tourism destinations, developing high social relations, creating job opportunities
	Environmental Empowerment	Environmental security, revitalization of cultural monuments, establishment of amenities and services, development of information and communication technology, development of infrastructure, development of transportation system in tourist destinations, investment opportunities, preservation of monuments, conservation of tangible cultural monuments, creation of tourism entrepreneurial skills
Tourism Development	Economic Development	Employment creation, achieving stable foreign exchange incomes, adjustment of wealth, economic development, diversification and development of local economy, direct and indirect employment, infrastructure development, construction development, gross national product, increase in foreign exchange income, increase in tax revenues
	Socio-Cultural Development	Social cohesion, cultural confrontation, improving host life, changing values, preserving and restoring tangible and intangible cultural works such as clothing, art, customs, music, and crafts, preventing the destruction of historical and ancient sites, recognizing different cultures, creating a safe and peaceful cultural atmosphere, developing and learning different languages
	Political development	Political balance, political stability, elevation of security in society, reduction of political tensions, peaceful contact between ethnicities and nationalities, mutual understanding between communities, mutual respect between communities, reduction of political hostage-taking, constructive interaction with international communities
	Environmental Development	Development of man-made environment, development of urban and suburban green spaces, environmental protection, landscaping, waste management, increasing social responsibility, protecting beaches, national and natural parks, environmental management, increasing environmental considerations

displayed. Confirmatory factor analysis is used to investigate the measurement model. The results of confirmatory factor analysis are determined by indicators such as T-value, and internal consistency reliability (CR), which in addition to the factor load of each component is shown separately in the following tables. Accordingly, at a 95% confidence level, it can be concluded that markers provide an appropriate factor structure for measuring the studied structures in the research model. In addition, the structural reliability coefficient (CR) ranges from 0 to 1.

In Table 2, the results are related to factor loads and the significance of the research variables.

The mean and standard deviation of digital marketing elements variables were 87. 96 and 1. 78, tourism intention was 19. 04 and 0. 95, empowerment was equal to 39. 1 and 1. 04, infrastructure was 34. 55 and 0. 61, environmental factors were equal to 38. 85 and 0. 90, respectively, and tourism development was equal to 68. 4 and 2. 09, respectively. Also, according to the values of skewness and strain related to the research variables and its indices, which are in the range (- 2 and 2), it can be said that the distribution of data related to the research variables and its indices are normal (Table 3).

Fitting the Measurement Models Section

Confirmatory factor analysis is used to investigate the measurement model. Confirmatory factor analysis results are determined by indicators such as T-value, and internal consistency reliability (CR). Accordingly, if the value of T is greater than 1. 96 or less than -1. 96, it can be concluded that markers provide an appropriate factor structure for measuring the studied structures in the research model. In addition, the structural reliability coefficient (CR) ranges
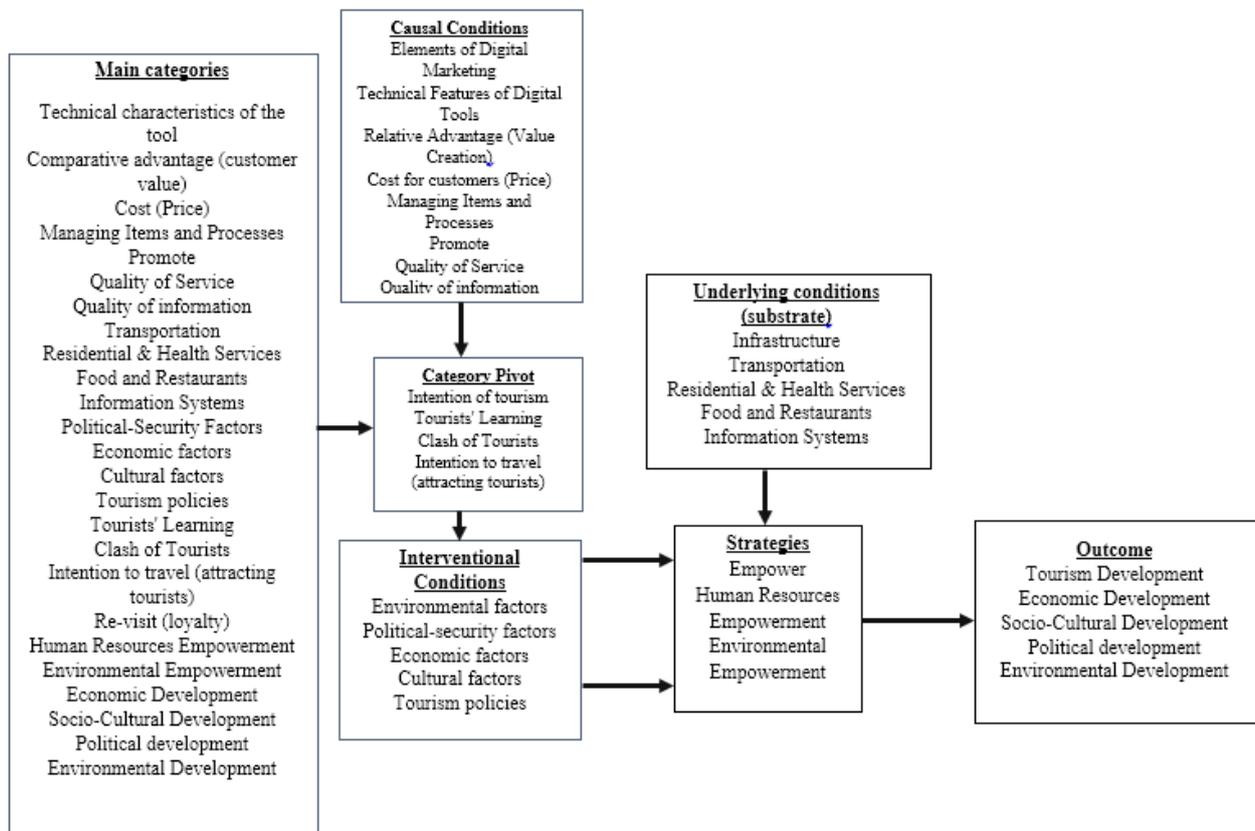
Fig. 1. Proposed conceptual model of research at the level of dimensions and components. Source: Authors.
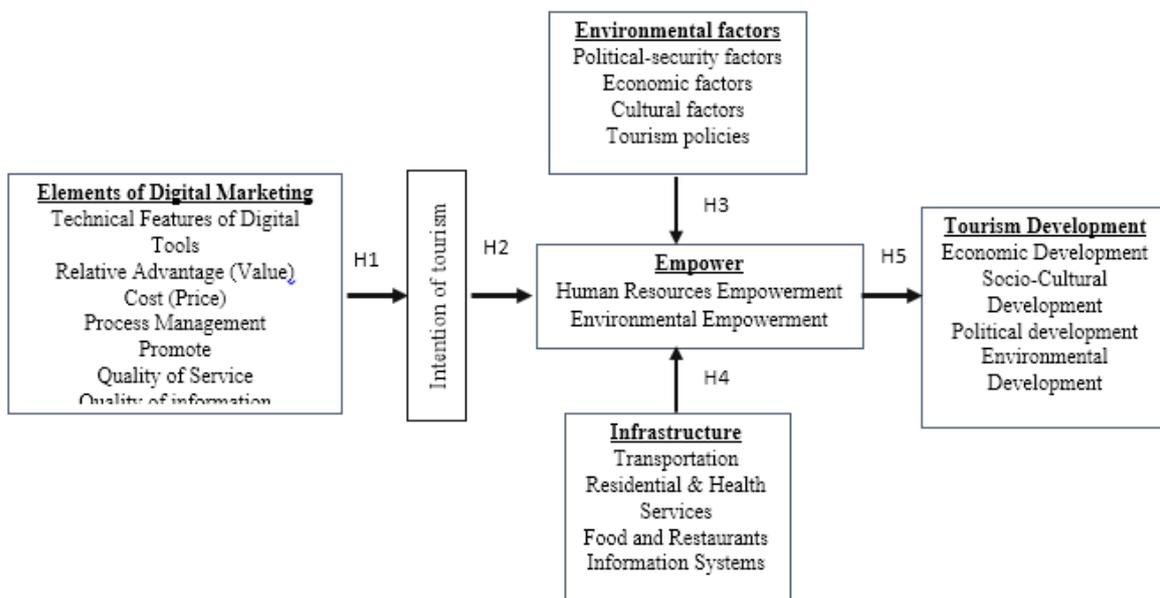

Fig. 2. A proposed conceptual model of research at the level of dimensions. Source: Authors.

from 0 to 1. Values above 0. 7 are acceptable (Fornell & Locker, 1981). The results of confirmatory factor analysis are determined by indicators such as T-value, and internal consistency rliability (CR), which in addition to the factor load of each of the components is shown in the structure separately in Table 4. Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient for all variables is higher than 0. 7, so it can be said that the instrument has good reliability (internal consistency). Also, the CR value of all variables is greater than 0. 7, which indicates acceptable combined reliability.

Table 2. The results related to factor loadings and significance of research variables. Source: Authors.

Variable	Factor	Factor load	T	Reliability	Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient	R squre
Elements of Digital Marketing				0.81	0.79	
	Technical Features of Digital Tools	0.86	7.24	0.85	0.75	0.76
	Relative Advantage (Value)	0.77	11.53	0.8	0.73	0.58
	Cost (Price)	0.83	13.14	0.94	0.89	0.71
	Process Management	0.63	4.9	1	1	0.46
	Promote	0.89	9.25	0.81	0.73	0.9
	Quality of Service	0.88	24.07	0.69	0.79	0.9
	Quality of information	0.79	17.41	0.7	0.72	0.81
Infrastructure				0.87	0.9	0.59
	Transportation	0.8	1.23	0.9	0.76	0.63
	Residential & Health Services	0.75	13.67	0.82	0.71	0.62
	Food and Restaurants	0.79	2.43	1	1	0.45
	Information and Communication System	0.81	3.98	0.74	0.73	0.65
Environmental factors				0.88	0.81	0.39
	Political-security factors	0.87	5.14	0.65	0.83	0.77
	Economic factors	0.82	3.91	0.8	0.73	0.68
	Cultural factors	0.58	2.83	0.2	0.78	0.58
	Tourism policies	0.62		0.53	0.8	0.53
Intention of tourism				0.83	0.76	0.24
	Tourists' Learning	0.59	5.8	1	1	0.77
	Tourist engagement	0.85	7.24	0.82	0.89	0.69
	Intention to travel	0.66	4.58	1	1	0.74
	Re-visit (loyalty)	0.73	4.02	0.7	0.81	0.83
Empowerment				0.77	0.73	0.46
	Human Resources Empowerment	0.94	5.63	0.66	0.63	0.9
	Environmental Empowerment	0.84	21.8	0.55	0.82	0.75
Tourism Development				0.71	0.85	0.68
	Economic Development	0.9	3.46	0.28	0.86	0.81
	Socio-Cultural Development	0.9	9.8	0.56	0.78	0.82
	Political development	0.72	4.56	0.63	0.77	0.53
	Environmental Development	0.75	2.97	2.97	0.83	0.62

• **Structural fit**

The R² criterion is related to endogenous latent variables for fitting the structural model in research. In other words, it is a criterion that shows the effect of an exogenous variable on an endogenous variable, and according to the R² value that is

related to tourism intention is equal to 0. 24, empowerment equal to 0. 46, tourism development is equal to 0. 68; therefore, it can be said that according to the values of the criterion, this index is at an appropriate level (Fig. 3).

The results of confirmatory factor analysis showed that the

Table 3 . Examining the mean, standard deviation, minimum and maximum of the research variables. Source: Authors.

Variable	Average	Standard Deviation	Skewness	Elongation
Elements of Digital Marketing	87.96	1.78	-0.38	-0.095
Intention of tourism	19.04	0.95	0.214	-0.713
Empower	39.1	1.04	-0.269	-0.779
Infrastructure	34.55	0.61	0.038	0.007
Environmental factors	38.85	0.9	-0.787	0.996
Tourism Development	68.4	2.09	-1.84	6.64

Table 4. Results related to factor loads and the significance of research variables. Source: Authors.

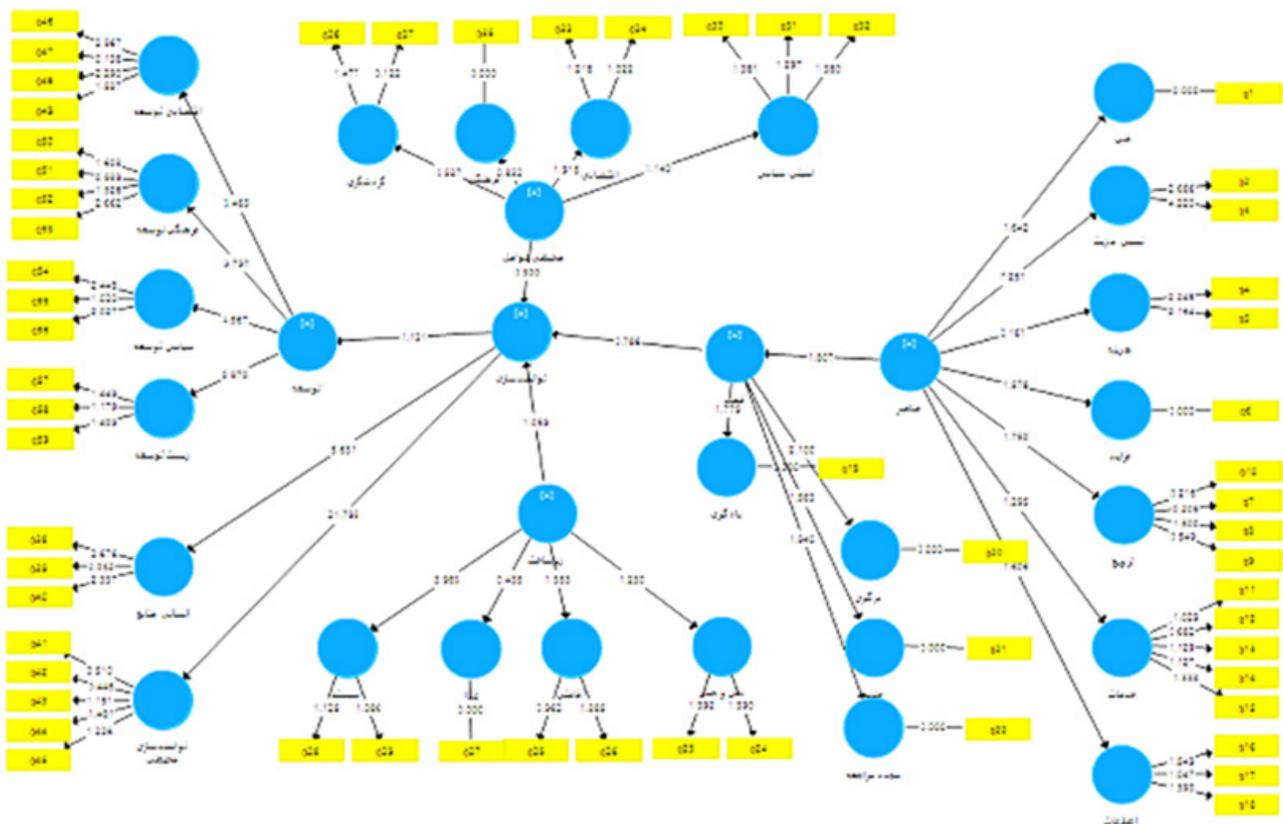| Variable	Reliability (CR)	Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient
Elements of Digital Marketing	0.81	0.79
Intention of tourism	0.83	0.76
Empower	0.87	0.90
Infrastructure	0.88	0.81
Environmental factors	0.77	0.73
Tourism Development	0.71	0.85

Fig. 3. Showing the structural equation model with standard coefficients. Source: Authors.

t-values of all variables, components, and items were higher than 1. 96, so it can be said that factor loads of all variables, components, and items are significant at a 95% confidence level. In Table 4, the path coefficients, and T-statistics related to structural equation modeling are presented. In Table 5

Path Coefficients, T-statistics related to structural equation modeling
Based on Table 5, the research findings are as follows:
• Hypothesis 1: Considering the t-value related to the path of digital marketing elements to tourism intention (2.

Table 5. Path Coefficients, T-statistics related to structural equation modelling. Source: Authors.

Path Title	Path coefficient	T	Results
Digital Marketing Elements for Tourism Purposes	0.36	2.98	Confirm
Intention to Empower Tourism	0.82	9.25	Confirm
Environmental factors to empower	0.54	5.90	Confirm
Infrastructure to Empowerment	0.40	3.60	Confirm
Empowerment to Tourism Development	0.62	7.30	Confirm

98) and because of being more than 1. 96, the variable of digital marketing elements is effective for tourism intention.

• Hypothesis 2: Considering thevalue of t related to the path of tourism intention to empowerment (9. 25) and because of being more than 1. 96, the variable of tourism intention to empowerment is effective.

• Hypothesis 3: Considering the t-value related to the path of environmental factors to empowerment (5. 9) and because it is greater than 1. 96, the environmental factors variable is effective on empowerment.

• Hypothesis 4: Considering the t-value related to the path of infrastructure to empowerment (3. 6) and because of being more than 1. 96, the variable of infrastructure is effective to empowerment.

• Hypothesis 5: Considering the T-value related to the empowerment path to tourism development (7. 3) and because of being more than 1. 96, the empowerment variable is effective on tourism development.

• **Fitting the overall model**

In PLS software, model fitting was obtained through the formula of Tennhouse et al. (2005). Three values of 0. 01, 0. 25, and 0. 36 were considered weak, medium, and strong values for GOF. By obtaining the model fit index (GOF) of 0. 22, it can be said that the model in this study is confirmed at the appropriate intermediate level.

$$\text{GOF} = \left(\overline{\text{communality}} \times \overline{R^2} \right)^{1/2}$$

Conclusions and Suggestions

In this section, the discussion and conclusions around the findings of the research are discussed:

Hypothesis 1 (H1): The elements of digital marketing have a significant effect on tourism intent. By analyzing the interviews, a set of digital marketing elements were identified as causal factors that affect the pivotal factor which is the intention of tourism. Therefore, it can be claimed that the first factor that influences tourism intention and causes behavioural control of tourists is digital marketing elements such as technical characteristics, relative advantage, price, and management. Processes promotion service quality and information quality are digital tools. In this regard, Plesmacker et al. (Pelsmacker, Tilburg & Holthof,

2018, 2018) showed that digital marketing strategies and techniques affect the volume and capacity of online requests, and indirectly affect hotel performance. Based on the results of structural equation modeling, digital marketing variable also has a significant effect on tourism intent.

Hypothesis 2 (H2): Tourism intention has a significant effect on empowerment (human resource empowerment and environmental empowerment); during the analysis of interviews, tourism intention was determined as the basis for human resource empowerment and environmental empowerment in tourism destinations. In most of the interviews, the interviewees emphasized that empowerment of human resources and environmental empowerment requires tourism intent. In other words, the learning of tourists and their evaluation of travel and the conditions of the destination has led to acceptance and belief in travel, internal motivation, and accurate selection of tourist destination, which in the following, persuades the tourist to plan for travel, use opportunities and resources, coordinate with travel agents, provide resources such as money, tickets, hotel reservations, etc. Preparing a plan and itinerary; and if sufficient satisfaction is obtained from digital tools and destinations, will bring tourists back (loyalty) to visit. Based on the results of structural equation modeling, the variable of tourism intention has a significant effect on empowerment (human resource empowerment and environmental empowerment).

Hypothesis 3 (H3): Environmental factors have a significant effect on empowerment; the results showed that political-security factors in the region, especially tourism destinations, which are strongly affected by terrorist acts, kidnapping of tourists, regional wars, internal and regional disturbances, and sanctions conditions, cause political instability and security threats. This affects the economic downturn, currency fluctuations, unemployment rate, and over-the-counter price growth, and prevents the attraction of tourists. In addition, cultural factors such as linguistic, customary, and religious sensitivities, along with the wrong tourism policies, have greatly reduced the attraction of tourists to tourism destinations, especially Kish Island, which has a significant impact on human resource empowerment and environmental empowerment. In this regard, Askari

and Zeibandeh (2014) showed that environmental factors are effective in empowering people and attracting public participation, and creating a spirit of thinking and studying among individual and organizational factors of empowerment had the highest and lowest scores. Based on the results of structural equation modeling, environmental factors variable also has a significant effect on empowerment.

Hypothesis 4 (H4): Infrastructure has a significant effect on empowerment; to achieve human resource empowerment and environmental empowerment effectively, an appropriate context must be adopted. The results of the present study showed that infrastructure provides a platform for Kish tourism destinations and destinations should use these criteria to improve empowerment, especially in the human and environmental sphere, and adopt a goal-oriented strategy according to their weaknesses and strengths. The results showed that infrastructure development including transportation systems, accommodation and health services, catering services (food and restaurants), and information and communication systems as underlying factors contribute to human resource empowerment and environmental empowerment of Kish Island. Based on the results of

structural equation modelling, the infrastructure variable also has a significant effect on empowerment.

Hypothesis 5 (H5): Empowerment has a significant effect on tourism development; analysis of the interviews showed that empowerment through cultural education, participation of qualified human resources in tourism destinations, innovation in tourism destinations, development of high social relations, job opportunities, environmental security, revitalization of cultural monuments, development of amenities and services, development of information and communication technology, causes economic development, socio-cultural development, political development and environmental development in tourism destinations. Therefore, the tourism industry, as the largest social mobility, has numerous cultural, economic, and political consequences; therefore, the development of tourism and promotion of its positive consequences requires recognition and special attention to human resource empowerment and environmental empowerment. In this regard, Shamsoddini, Derakhshan and Karimi (2017) also showed that the variable of capable manpower has positive and direct effects on tourism development. Based on the results of structural equation modelling, the empowerment variable also has a significant effect on tourism development (Fig. 4).
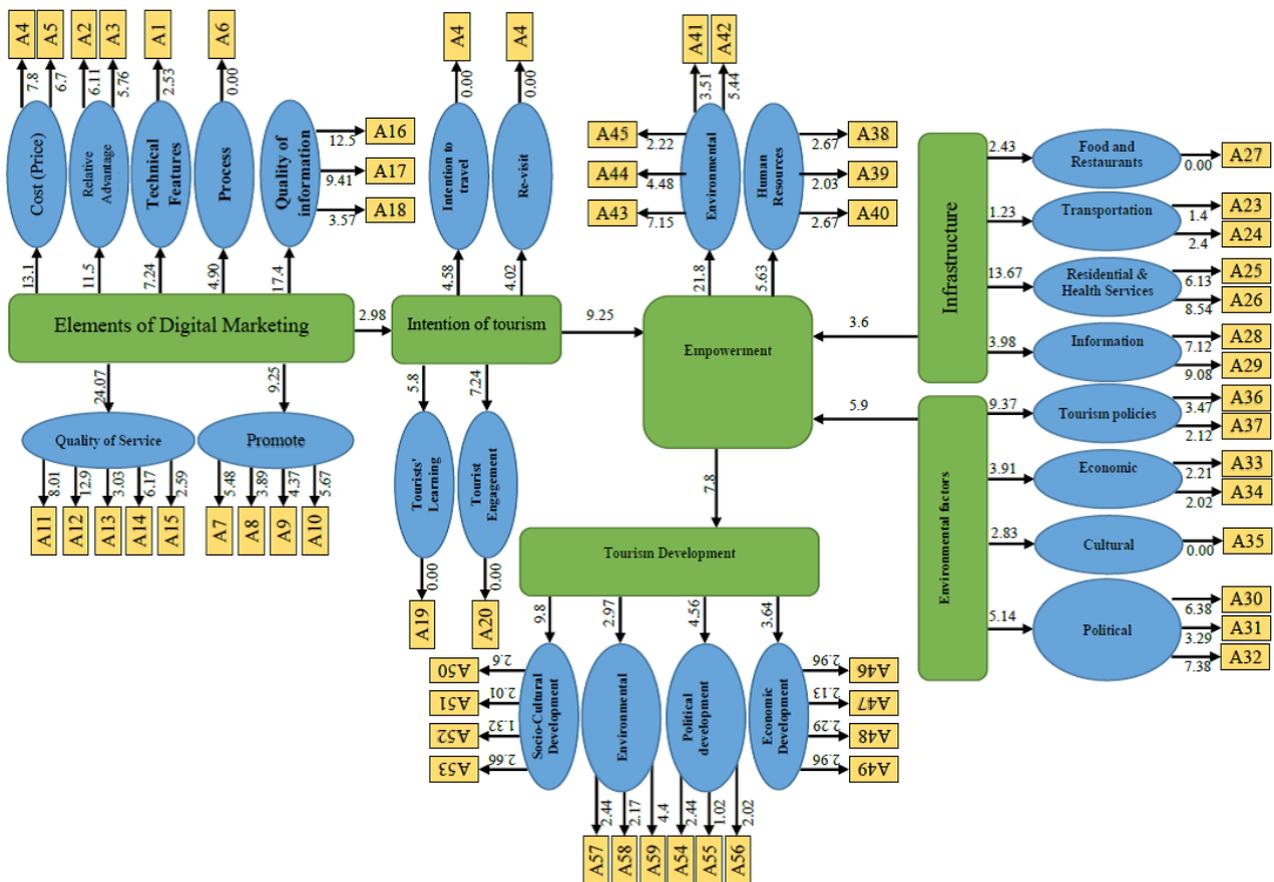

Fig. 4. Displaying the structural equation model with the significance of standard coefficients (t-value). Source: Authors.

Practical implications

Based on the results of the importance of digital marketing elements, especially the technical characteristics of digital tools and the quality of their services and information, the intention of tourism to Kish Island hotels are suggested: To implement digital marketing strategies and realize the benefits that can be used for tourism industry and businesses, expert teams in this field are used, and it is also recommended to design applications that can be used for the general public, all information Demonstrate the need for tourism destinations and travel processes.

The results of tourism intention on empowerment (human and environmental resources) showed that using the business models of the past cannot compete in today's hotel industry, and attracting more domestic and foreign tourists requires more attention to marketing issues. Thus, identifying the needs of tourists in this direction is very important, without addressing such needs, there will not be a proper operation of hotel services. Therefore, in addition to establishing an organized performance evaluation system in Kish Island hotels, a special study on the needs of domestic and foreign tourists should be conducted by the specialized hotel working group. This primarily helps to understand the cultural sensitivities of different ethnic groups and tourists.

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evaluation system in Kish Island hotels and advise exclusive studies should be conducted on the needs of domestic and foreign tourists by the specialized hotel working group. This primarily helps to understand the cultural sensitivities of different ethnic groups and tourists.

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