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## The Role of Wellness Tourism in Tourist's Spiritual Health (Case Study; Baghestan Recreation and Tourism Village)

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### Abstract

Wellness tourism has become a growing market in the tourism industry, which has a high potential of development. Wellness tourism is tourists with motivations for acquiring health and wellbeing who choose a trip with awareness and reliance. As a result, wellness tourism starts on a trip to the outside and aims to improve the physical, mental, and social health; during the trip, the inside trip is formed and leads to identifying unifying with a creator. This study aims to investigate the role of wellness tourism in the spiritual health of the recreation-tourism village of Baghistan. This is qualitative, and its method is descriptive-analytical, in which the interviewing method with tourists has been used since Nov. 2023. After analyzing the qualitative method, the results of the study show that the positive impacts and positive personal feelings along with personal internal motivations are factors of wellness tourism which finally lead to spiritual health. Although wellbeing and journey are inseparable parts of the body, soul, and spirit, the component of self-knowledge, inner peace, allows the tourist to enjoy and satisfy with awareness of the trip, to touch more health, wellbeing, freshness, and integrity of the spiritual health dimensions.

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## Introduction

In developed societies, the increasing progress of technology, the expansion of social networks and virtual communication, urbanization, and modernity accelerate the rhythm of life, increase the regular life pressures, and threaten human health. So, they force humans to avoid nature as much as possible, escape from reality and, not to accept it in its form, and suffer from loneliness and estrangement with itself, dailiness, and depression (Liu et al., 2023). For a long time, the struggle of today's human beings with various crises such as natural disaster, infectious disease and other epidemics, economic recession, poverty and hunger, lack of favorable quality of life, lack of opportunities for growth and improvement, and deterioration of life standards have led to the decline of indicators including, happiness, felicity, dissatisfaction with life, and unfavorable impacts on physical-mental health of human, thus, they always search for a way of releasing this condition to reach a favorable quality of life, happiness, and satisfaction with life (Konkol, 2012). They follow the way to return happiness and felicity to their life and, instead of escaping from dailiness, embrace the reality of their existence and life to achieve peace and unity in their inner and outer world and to take valuable steps in the direction of their growth and development. Hence, wellness tourism has reemerged as an alternative market and is growing rapidly. This modern approach of tourism reduces the pressure and returns to the physical-mental health of people as well as improves their happiness and feelings (Dillette, 2016, GWI, 2013). It can improve the negative consequences of some trips, because the reality of most of today's travel environments reveals some situations that can indeed reduce the overall health level of people. Based on the Global Health Institute (GWI), the combination of uncomfortable experiences in the airport along with interference with sports programs, overeating, alcohol, and exposure to the sun make tourists need other vacations after their vacation. Thus, the World Tourism Organization defines wellness tourism as a kind of tourism activity with the aim of improving and balancing all main areas of human life including physical, mental, emotional, occupational, intellectual, and spiritual. The primary motivation for the wellness tourist is to participate in preventive activities to boost and improve the style of life such as fitness, healthy nutrition, relaxation, recreation, and healing treatments (Lopes & Rodríguez-López, 2022).

On the one hand, due to the little attention to wellness tourism, and on the other hand, the great importance that such tourism can have for the health of people in today's industrial community, as well as the situation that other kinds of health approaches have especially found in today's industrial and high-pressure community, the analysis and investigation of its role has become more important on health. So, this study has been conducted to explore the role of wellness tourism in the spiritual health of tourists who have traveled to the tourism-recreation village of Baghestan in Nov. 2023. The main question of this study is to answer this concern: "what is the role of wellness tourism on the spiritual health of people?"

## **Theoretical concepts**

### **The definition of wellness tourism**

Wellness is obviously a complicated concept with elements of lifestyle, physical-mental-spiritual elements, and relationships of a person with themselves, others, and the environment. In fact, it can be argued that wellness balances all dimensions of life such as health, wellbeing, happiness, quality of life, holistic skills/experiences, and spiritual beliefs (Smith & Puczk, 2008). Wellness is said to be the overall health of mind, spirit, and body, as well as their interaction with the environment. It is not static, but a continuous evolving phenomenon that affects regular life (Dillette, 2016).

Based on the World Tourism Organization:

"Wellness tourism is a kind of tourism activity which aims to improve and balance all main areas of human life including physical, mental, emotional, occupational, intellectual, and spiritual. The primary motivation for the wellness tourist is that they participate in preventive and strengthening activities to correct their lifestyle such as fitness, healthy nutrition, relaxation, recreation, and healing treatments (Lopes & Rodríguez-López, 2022). The tourism activities that concentrate on the improvement of physical-mental health or self-discovery and self-change are known as wellness tourism and are found in wellness resorts, spa/meditation centers, and so on. Since there are many expressions about wellness, this concept and interpretations are varied, but tourism that mainly aims to make wellness and welfare healthy for tourists is called wellness tourism (Lee & Kim, 2023)."

Wellness tourism is a specific market in the tourism region and recently, has experienced considerable growth rates forecasting continued development (GWI, 2018). Indeed, wellness tourism still grows faster than world tourism with an annual growth rate of 7.5%, which is predicted. In response to this growth, the health and wellness services are currently presented through all kinds of active-passive activities by hotel-resort brands, health rest homes, and specialized travel packages (Stará & Peterson, 2017).

The table below shows a wide range of health and wellness products and service which have emerged during recent years.

There are different definitions whose focus is the main elements of health, as indicated in the table below (Lee & Kim, 2023).

**Table 1: The definitions of wellness tourism**

<b>The definitions of wellness tourism</b>	<b>Authors</b>
Everything related to travel that aims to protect and promote health.	Lim et al. (2016)
A set of tourism activities based on the travel default and motivations and aims of tourism to follow the wellness and service, activities and programs which allow enjoying such activities.	Korea Tourism Organization. (2021)
Tourism that includes the elements and effectiveness health and wellness.	Voigt (2014)
Tourism with the aim of reserving physical-mental balance such as following self-reliance, beauty, relaxation, and physical health.	Stănciulescu et al. (2015)
Tourism is like tending to the protection or promotion of personal health and youthfulness.	GWI (2022)

The definitions of wellness tourism have created discussions among researchers. Different expressions such as wellness tourism, health tourism, yoga tourism, holistic tourism, medical tourism, and spa tourism have been used synonymously and alternatively around the world and described various ideas in a set of research papers. In fact, wellness tourism is a subset of health tourism that includes medical tourism too (Chen et al., 2008; Dillette, 2016; GWI, 2013; Medina-Muñoz & Medina-Muñoz, 2013; Voigt et al., 2011). Wellness tourism has promoted tourist health as a subset of health tourism, and is a target market for healthy people (Mueller & Kaufmann, 2001; Težak Damijanić, 2019).

Indeed, Dr. Halbert Dunn defined the health concept in 1959. At that time, Dr. Dunn presented a new situation for health, which not only included physical health, but also health conditions including mind, soul, and environment. Dunn reminds us of this condition as a high-level well-healthy person. After Dunn's work (1959), Travis in 1984 emphasized a more dynamic view of wellness which defined achieving a fresh and living situation, an ongoing attitude and process, no static. In 2001, Mueller and Kaufmann stress that this interpretation of wellness consists of harmony of the body, mind, and soul with self-responsibility, physical fitness, beauty care, healthy nutrition/diet, relaxation, meditation, brain activity, education, environmental sensitivity, and social communication (p. 6). Moreover, Adam (2003) expressed that wellness consists of three important principles, including 1) it is multidimensional, 2) it is about the balance, and 3) it is rational, mindful, and perceptual health. The final principle based on Adams (2003) presents an interesting view; due to the personal and mindful nature of wellness, necessarily, it cannot be measured on an equal scale from one person to another. From the current industrial view, the National Institute of Health (NIH) defines wellness as the following:

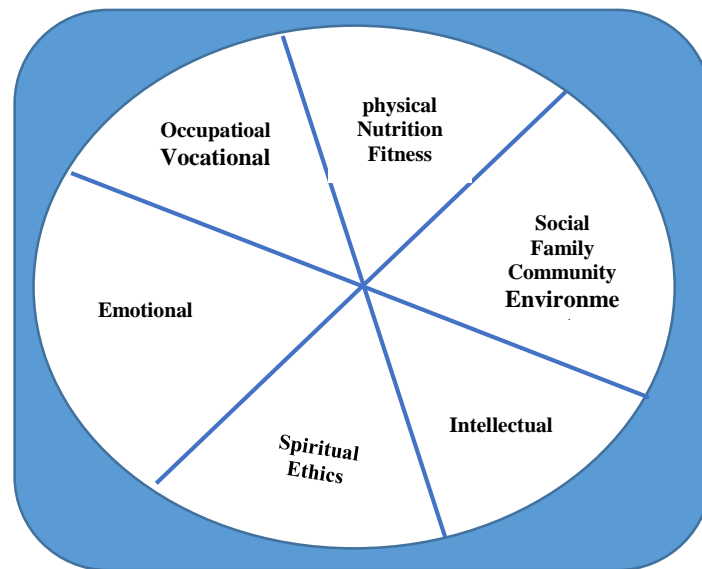
"An active process through which people get aware and make choices for a more successful existence (National Wellness Institute, 2016)."

Based on the different definitions and views, it can be concluded that some of these ideas are in accordance with the fact that wellness is multidimensional, dynamic, and mindful and can be achieved

from intangling the best aspects of the body, mind, soul, and environment; this leads to guiding a healthy lifestyle to the daily life.

The old Indian Ayurvedic methods returns to 5000 BC and Egyptian women, in 3000 BC, used cosmetics like what are used nowadays. The oldest known writings related to Chinese medicine returns to 1000 BC; ancient Greek civilizations defined the cold water bath from 700 BC for warriors; Iranians (300-600 BC) had previously defined the steam and mud baths, and the Hebrews (200 BC) ritual purification through immersion in the Dead Sea (Smith & Puczk, 2008). The relationship between health and tourism could be traced to 100 years ago by travelers who sought spa therapy or went to the Dead Sea to experience its treatment properties (GWI, 2013). It can be interpreted that tourism with this potential can deeply affect the physical relaxation, rejuvenation, and wellness renewal aspects. The work areas, today's stressful life, along with recent trends towards more balanced lifestyles have led to reemerging an old process that is currently invented as a special market, i.e. wellness tourism.

The whole wellness industry has been developed around experiences of mental balance or body-mind-soul with focusing on individuality and self-improvement (Smith et al., 2022). The notion of balance is a much cited one too, and numerous wheels of wellness can be found when researching this phenomenon, which are similar to the National Wellness Institute's six-dimensional model. Figure 1 shows the main dimensions which constitute wellness in a visual form.



**Figure 1: Wheel of Wellness (Smith and Puczkó, 2008)**

According to the report of the World Health Organization (2020), wellness is a state of perfect physical, mental, and social wellbeing, not merely lack of disease or disability. Mainly, health is considered as a goal, while wellness is the path to achieve it. Wellness has had a close relationship among most

researchers and organizations with disease prevention and health (Dillette et al., 2020). Developing wellness tourism shows people's efforts for a better life. This experience of wellness tourism not only improves the performance of tourists, but also plays an essential role in promoting their relaxation and physical-mental wellbeing.

An experience of high-quality wellness tourism can effectively adjust the mental situation of tourists and make them happy, calm, and confident (Liu et al., 2023).

### Spiritual health

The term of spiritual health was first expressed in 1971 by Moberg as spiritual welfare. Since then, due to research about human health in psychological studies, this term has been presented as spiritual health besides human health. During the past decades, the importance of spirituality and spiritual growth has received a great deal of attention from phycologists and health professionals. In this way, the Fisher's definition can be mentioned that express the aspects of spiritual health truly, as shown in the table below (Imani khoshkhoo & Shahrabi Farahani, 2023).

**Table 2. The dimensions of spiritual health.**

<b>Individual</b>	<b>Social</b>
Loving others	The sense of identity
Self-awareness	Forgiveness
Joy of life	Trusting others
Inner peace	Respect with others
Meaningful life	Kindness
<b>Environmental</b>	<b>Transcendental</b>
Connection with nature	Inner connection with God
Excitement	Trusting to God
Knowing yourself one with nature	Knowing yourself one with God
Harmony with nature	Relaxation with God
The magical feeling of being in the environment	Gratitude

From the Islamic view, spiritual health is considered as the most important dimension of human health, which depends on its other dimensions (Imani khoshkhoo & Shahrabi Farahani, 2023).

Spiritual wellbeing is an essential component in the health context and other dimensions of wellbeing/welfare such as physical, mental, and social wellbeing (Bahmani et al., 2021, Steinmann, 2008; Tharin et al., 2019). Based on studies about spiritual wellbeing/welfare, relationships with

ourselves and others, and sacred things leads to spiritual empowerment (Bahmani et al., 2021; George et al., 2000).

Also, some theorists consider spiritual wellbeing as relationship feeling; coordination between ourselves, others, and nature; and transcendental existence which leads to being aware of the target and final meaning of living through the dynamic, coherent, and achievable process (Bahmani et al., 2021, Hungelmann et al., 1985).

Gomez and Fisher (2003) have defined spiritual wellbeing as one of the states for being, positive feelings, identifying the relationship between people and themselves, and a supernatural issue. If people have this power, they can have a sense of identity, perfection, satisfaction, love, respect, comfort, and inner balance (Bahmani et al., 2021; Moaven, 2020).

During recent years, spiritual wellbeing has been accepted as a concept in the field of spirituality along with social, emotional, spiritual, and physical dimensions of human wellbeing/welfare. Spiritual wellbeing is a core of the health concept with a kind of integration and coordination between inner components that form the individual identity (Bahmani et al., 2021, Sheivandi & Hasanvand, 2020). The relationship between spirituality and wellbeing has been well-proved. Ghiya (2019) argues that spiritual health is as important as physical health. In fact, spiritual wellbeing has been perceived as an important indicator of consequences for the positive health and quality of life (Bai & Lazenby, 2015); also, it is considered to be a decline in the depression and high-risk behaviors of youngsters (Miller, 2015). The lack of spirituality can lead to mental health problems in children and youngsters as well (Westerlund, 2016). For a long time, physicians and researchers have identified the importance of spiritual factors, including the benefits of yoga and meditation (Ghiya, 2019). In the Chinese culture, spirituality is often associated with mental disease when the inner energy power is out of control (Niu et al., 2020).

The background of internal and external research has been given in the table below in the field of wellness tourism and spiritual health:

**Table 3. The background of internal and external research**

<b>Authors and the published year</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Method</b>	<b>Research target</b>	<b>Research variables</b>
Melanie Kay Smith, Robert Kiss, Inge Yan Fong Chan, 2022	The Role of Spirituality in Young Peoples' Wellness and Travel	Qualitative	This article aims to explore the youngsters' perception of spirituality as well as analyze its role in their wellness and trips.	The relationship between ourselves and the nature of components for the definition of youngsters about spirituality
I Gede Sutarya 2022	Spiritual Tourism as Sustainable Tourism in Bali	Qualitative	This article aims to identify the potential for spiritual tourism, and its development and role in developing sustainable tourism.	The elements of sustainable tourism in spiritual tourism (fans of the environment, local economic, and local community) The spiritual tourism: (food, local souvenirs, local community, i.e. temples, yoga instructors, and environment)
Ana Težak Damijanac, 2019	Wellness and healthy lifestyle in tourism settings	Quantitative	Investigation of the wellness concept as a form of lifestyle for healthy life in the tourism environments	Six dimensions of lifestyle associated with wellness (diet, fitness, social interactions, cultural diversity, awareness of health, and personal development were verified; four parts (high-level wellness, diet, health-based, fitness-based, and low-level fitness emerged.) They were varied in the travel motivations.
Simon Hudson, Karen Thal, David • Cárdenas	Wellness tourism: stress alleviation or indulging healthful habits?	Quantitative	This study aims to explore the direct relationship between the aim of behaviors and that of factors leasing to the growth of the tourism industry in the US.	Life stress and participation on health and wellness



Authors and the published year	Title	Method	Research target	Research variables
Cornelia Voigt, Graham Brown and Gary Howat, 2011	Wellness tourists: in search of transformation	Quantitative	This article aims to investigate and compare the targeted benefits of three kinds of wellness tourists, including beauty spa, lifestyle resort, and visitors to the spiritual resort.	Transcend; physical health and appearance; escape and relaxation; importance of others and freshness; renewal of self-reliance; extravagance
John Fisher, 2011	The Four Domains Model: Connecting Spirituality, Health and WellBeing	Qualitative	The model for four areas, including spiritual health, welfare, and wellbeing is a clear concept. The context includes the diversity of the expressed views in the spiritual discussions.	The quality of people's relationship with each other (individual area), with others (shared area), with environment (environmental area), or with transcended others (transcendent domain)
Mohammad Hossein Imani Khushkho and Mahdieh Shahrabi Farahani, 2023	The role of travel in the spiritual health of the human	Qualitative	This research follows to answer this problem: on the one hand, based on the importance of the trip in Islam, and on the other hand, the essence of the realization of spiritual health, what is the role and situation of this journey in spiritual health?	Good life and a healthy heart; connection with oneself, solidarity, the world, and God; searching and creating the meaning of life.
Zahra Moaven, Majid Movahed Majd, Zainab Niknejat, and Sahar Hojatifar, 2022	Examining the Correlation between the Spiritual Health and Social Health of Pilgrims Participating in the Arba'een Walk	Quantitative	In this article, the relationship between the spiritual health and social health of religious tourists participating in the Arba'een walk is studied; the question is: is there any relationship between the spiritual health and social health of religious tourists participating in the Arba'een walk?	The dimensions of spiritual health (cognition, emotions and actions); those of social health, social solidarity, social coherence, social engagement, social prosperity, and social acceptance
Akbar Bahmani, Samira Motaghi, and Farshid Aslani, 2021	Studying the role of spiritual orientation in the tourists' spirit with the role of wellbeing (health) mediation / spiritual wellbeing	Quantitative	Investigating the role of spiritual orientation in the tourists' spirit with meditation's role in spiritual welfare/wellbeing.	Spiritual orientation, tourist's spirit, spiritual health and wellbeing

## **Research methodology**

This study is a qualitative method referring to the analytical-descriptive method. The research data has been gathered from two parts of the library and interview documents. The content analysis method has been used to analyze the data. Content analysis is one of the textual data methods obtained from media products to interview data. The leading feature of the content analysis method is the use of categories that are often adopted by theoretical models (Flick, 2014). In this study, the qualitative content analysis by Mayring (2000-2004) was utilized. In Mayring's view, the first step is to define data, i.e. interviews or some parts that are associated with the answers to research questions; the second step is to analyze the situation of data collection and how it has been created; and the third step, is described as a formal form. In the fourth step, the selected content analysis and what a researcher aims to acquire from this data, is identified (the source is the same).

The research area is Baghestan Recreation and Tourism Village, in Karaj, and the research time area is November 2023. The statistical society is all the people, who travel to this area, is not clear. 22 tourists in the courtyard were interviewed who referred to Baghestan Recreation and Tourism Village during this month.

The frequency ranking method and the content analysis analyzed and evaluated the data obtained from the interview. The reliability and validity of the research have been investigated with the Flick's approach because it is a qualitative type. In the reliability of the study, it was conducted first by emphasizing the determination of each of the indicators of esoteric truth to the interviewee and the other related to the researcher's interpretation. All the answers were written and entered the interview field in the second method done in the interview field. The interviewees were asked complementary questions if necessary. Then, they were re-checked and evaluated after data collection. The research process is recorded as much as a whole as possible in the third method. The experts' opinion on the research questions and the studied indicators has been asked and confirmed because the phenomena are independent of the claims, and empirical reality can be achieved.

## **Research finding**

The interview was conducted by a semi-structured method on 25 and 26 Oct. 2023 in the Baghestan recreation and tourism village with 22 people. The textual saturation method was used. The average age of interviewers (the people who have been in this region) is over 40. 9 people have been women out of 22 and the rest men. The next point is the diploma education of most people, which subsequently must be at the end of their work years or retired (see Table 4).

**Table 4. The characteristics of people**

<b>Code</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Education</b>
1	45	Man	Master
2	60	Woman	Media reporter
3	43	Woman	Athlete
4	40	Woman	Athlete
5	58	Man	Diploma
6	38	Woman	Diploma
7	50	Man	Diploma
8	41	Woman	Diploma
9	41	Woman	Diploma
10	61	Man	Associate
11	32	Woman	Athlete
12	60	Man	Diploma
13	35	Woman	Diploma
14	54	Man	Bachelor
15	57	Man	Diploma
16	53	Man	Diploma
17	64	Man	Diploma
18	60	Man	PhD
19	32	Man	Diploma
20	53	Man	Diploma
21	42	Woman	Diploma
22	57	Man	Diploma

After asking about the age and educational characteristics of interviewers, four questions were asked them.

The 1st question: Have you heard about the Baghestan recreation and tourism village before? How many times have you come to this place? From when? To answer this question, except for a person who had come here for the first time, the rest had traveled to this place at least 6 months or more and completely knew it.

The 2nd question, about the motivation that persuades people to this place, was asked. In response to this question, the female athlete (at 43 years old) has expressed kindness and empathy among the people of this place, which is an important motivation to create intimate relationships with others. "Connecting with nature and releasing from stress is the motivation that I still like to come here." These

are expressions of a 40-year woman who is athlete as well. A 50-year-old male knows the formation of friendship groups as a factor in encouraging them to come here on these trips.

The 3rd question: How has it affected you walking in this place? The 41-year-old woman says: "The space, nature, and atmosphere here attract you in such a way that you like to come back. Since I came here, I wake up early in the morning and sleep soon at night. When I want to come here, the whole of my day, I feel good and stress goes away from me. I always come here and get energized, because I feel good from the morning to night." The 61-year-old man answers to this question in this way: "Since I came here, I have become more patient and calm; my stress has declined and if I don't come here, I feel like missing something."

The 32-year-old man answers to this question in this way: "Being resistant to condition makes you powerful and gives you self-reliance, and now, nature has become my part. Sometimes I sit and meditate silently for half an hour; I am witness and surrender. I get energy from nature and walk without any shoes to get energized by mother Earth."

4th question; what is the motivated recommendation and suggestion for encouraging people to have a trip to this region? All the people who answered this question, suggested all being in this place at least once. One of the interviewers recommended being in nature, which can be associated with spiritual health without any doubt.

Table 5, the first step of open-coding, has been given below.

**Table 5. The first step of open-coding**

<b>Code</b>	<b>Travel times to the Baghestan recreation and tourism village</b>	<b>The reason for travelling to the Baghestan recreation and tourism village</b>	<b>Its impact on mood and charecter</b>	<b>Suggesting a trip of the Baghestan recreation and tourism village to others</b>
1	At least 6 times	Nature introduces itself with its beauties and power without any talk, and shows creation.	Nature gets negative energy and gives you positive energy by rotating energy. It transfers this feeling that can display your powers and weaknesses better and encourage you to flourish; in this way, you must go to nature to be able to store pure energy from it and create a good feeling, future, and destiny for yourself.	Humans emit energy, so, it is better to clean their minds in nature, think well, and make beautiful their sourounding.
2	8 years	When you see this greatness and glory, you feel strong, suddenly, and can still continue.	God reminds us of the strength that we say to each other on this path; empathy, humanity, and closeness of hearts. God affects our personal life; we learn to help each other without any exception; it affects all aspects of mental, physical, and spiritual health.	Repeating a good subject causes us to acquire new experiences; sometimes, the groups come to the mountain happily and engage in drumming and stomping. This may attract depressed and sad people, but besides all the things, the time that you sit and meditate silently is very enjoyable for me and makes me calm.
3	4 years	Coming here has become a part of my routine life; it gives me a specified energy.	It makes me calmer, my life more beautiful, and my anger less; I talk more nicely with my wife and my child and care about my life better. I pay more attention to my soul.	If you can have mental health and relaxation, you should go to the mountains. It has a specified energy which gives you better feelings. That is not related to weight. Everyone can come with each weight. When you come to it, you find good friends, your relationship with others and family gets better and more intimate; everyone who comes to the mountain, after a time, out of their previous character, becomes a wonderful person.

Code	Travel times to the Baghestan recreation and tourism village	The reason for travelling to the Baghestan recreation and tourism village	Its impact on mood and charecter	Suggesting a trip of the Baghestan recreation and tourism village to others
4	12 years	Here makes me feel better; the sound of the waterfall, that of water; when we go higher, the sounds of partridges and nightingales, all of them, are enjoyable. I see foxes.	I became familiar with nature and was released from the regular stress; I bury them here and go to nature to give thanks for the blue sky, the sound of birds, and my healthy feet.	I recommend working people that go to nature; you give a high positive energy, and the early bird gets the worm.
5	3 years	I became familiar with nature from my childhood. Here, along the path, we have medicinal plants such as oregano, milk thistle, mountain barberry, rosa canina, chamomile, hawthorn; each of them, separately, has medicinal properties and are useful for physical health.	Here, where I come, is useful for both physical health and mental-spiritual health.	I recommend coming here, being further from urbanization, walking in this air, becoming familiar with the nature, and experiencing all of these beauties.
6	More than a year	To change my mood	Sometimes when I am sad, upset, and worried, I come here to discharge my negative energy and charge my positive energy.	-
7	Around a year	Bacuse of my friends	The time that I come here leads to becoming calmer and kinder with less anger.	It seems that everyone should walk to be in nature during their daily life. It seems that many are stuck in machine life, and should experience these things; until they don't experience them, they think their life will be the same, but when we experience it, all things will be changed.

Code	Travel times to the Baghestan recreation and tourism village	The reason for travelling to the Baghestan recreation and tourism village	Its impact on mood and charecter	Suggesting a trip of the Baghestan recreation and tourism village to others
8	6 years	Lighting a fire, seeing the animal species such as a rabbit and fox, vegetation such as chamomile and oregano. Here, we all say hello and how are you doing to each other, smile at you, and this gives you energy (boosting relationships with others).	Here, it makes my stress less, my feelings and the whole day better.	Until they don't experience them, they think their life will be the same, but when we experience them, all things will be changed.
9	One year	The first says: "I came here to lose weight, but I noticed how much walking, nature, and mountains make feel good."	Here, the space and nature are in such a way that it attracts you, and you like recome; since I came here, I sleep quickly at night and wake up early in the morning. When I come here, the whole of my day, I feel good without any stress; I always come here and give more energy, and this makes my feelings better from the morning to night. At first, I thought I had many diseases, but later I noticed that I was never ill and just thought; in fact, my mind was becoming ill. Thanks to God, now I don't have such senses. My happiness and vitality grows; I spend my day better with more hope.	-
10	4 years	If I don't come here, I feel I have lost something.	When I came, I became more patient and calmer. My stress has become less.	Everyone should come and experience and touch this space from nearby. This good sense should just be experience; they should make a little effort, which is not hard.
11	6 times	-	When I come here, I become full of vitality and happiness, full of love, life, and energy; I still like this positive energy that I get from nature and I experience it.	-

Code	Travel times to the Baghestan recreation and tourism village	The reason for travelling to the Baghestan recreation and tourism village	Its impact on mood and charecter	Suggesting a trip of the Baghestan recreation and tourism village to others
12	More than 10 years	-	Neither have I caught a cold, nor have diabetes or high-blood pressure. My stress is gone, and smelling natural plants makes me not sick. Nature makes humans, and we will behave better with different people. Here, I was known with different cultures and acquired much knowledge from the nature.	If they come one Friday, they notice how much it affects their spirit.
13	-	Sport and losing weight	Coming to the mountains has many benefits for me, such as losing weight without any diet, raising my metabolism, health and relaxation; releasing from daily thoughts and concerns is its gift to me. I lost weight and I feel alive, and so good without any stress.	-
14	20 years	It makes the human spirit and makes it more powerful against life problems.	Whenever I feel homesick and tired of the city, smoke, and noise, I go to nature. I became full of energy.	If someone continues ecotourism and mountain climbing, he can overcome any problem and deal with problems easily.
15	10 years	I found many happy friends.	Each time I come here, I am happy until 4-5 days, not only in terms of physical health but also mental.	-
16	The fourth time	My motivation is physical health and ecotourism makes my spirit happy.	Here makes you powerful, i.e. indeed, you get rid of all these; there is kindness in the mountain; we meet many people and give love both in our relationship with nature and others.	Promotion of spiritual health



Code	Travel times to the Baghestan recreation and tourism village	The reason for travelling to the Baghestan recreation and tourism village	Its impact on mood and charecter	Suggesting a trip of the Baghestan recreation and tourism village to others
17	10 years	Relaxing environment	Both my body and spirit achieve the health in a pleasant space. Because a peaceful natural environment affects. The one who has a good deed, naturally has a better relationship with others and the creature and also is c ompatible with their surroundings.	If humans come and make nature happy and pleasant, it's not only a motivation, but also others, and you can have a beautiful relationship with the creator silently. They should come and experience this new space. Here it helps to make better decisions and find better friends.
18	More than 20 years	Individual and physical health	Walking in nature is very important for advancing the spirit.	-
19	3 years	Good energy	Being resistant to conditions gives you strength and self-reliance, and now nature has become a part of me. Sometimes I sit and meditate for half an hour silently, and I only witness and surrender. I get energy from nature and walk without shoes to get energy from the mother Earth.	You should come here to touch and experience that difference between the prior sense and later.
20	One year	I love nature and ecotourism.	The human soul comes alive and free; nature is in such a way that it takes negative energy from you and makes you calmer.	
21	A year and a half	The first reason is that I love myself.	My relationships with others have become better here as well. Of course, those who have a good relationship with themselves can make a relationship with others and nature.	-

<b>Code</b>	<b>Travel times to the Baghestan recreation and tourism village</b>	<b>The reason for travelling to the Baghestan recreation and tourism village</b>	<b>Its impact on mood and charecter</b>	<b>Suggesting a trip of the Baghestan recreation and tourism village to others</b>
22	The first time	Seeing the vitality and pleasure of others.	My good feeling today was to meet people who can definitely help me mentally and spiritually.	I recommend, even once, expressing and experiencing this different feeling; they need to come in nature to touch it. Anyone walking, exercising and being in nature as part of their life plans will automatically calm down and can be more compatible with different people and deal with life issues.

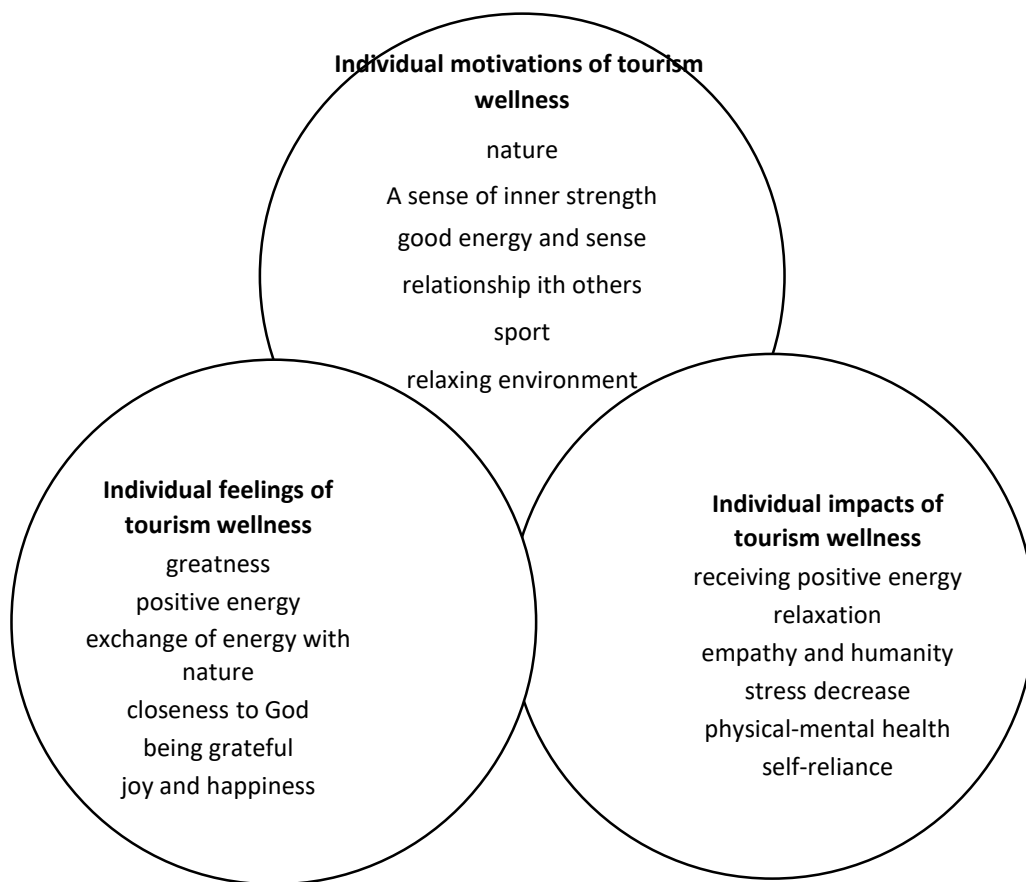
**Table 6. The data content, variables, and indicators obtained from open coding and content analyses, respectively.**

<b>Code</b>	<b>Individual motivation</b>	<b>Individual impacts</b>	<b>Individual senses</b>
<b>1</b>	Nature introduces itself without any talk.	Nature takes the negative energy and returns positive energy to you in its rotation. Store the good energy of nature in yourself.	Will and effort Human greatness and glory Focus on breathing Deliverance Energy exchange in nature Positive energy storage
<b>2</b>	A sense of inner strength	Empathy, humanity, and closeness of hearts Helping each other in life	Feeling closer to God Being grateful
<b>3</b>	Energy	Higher relaxation Less anger	Being in touch with nature Mental and mind peace
<b>4</b>	Good sense	Getting away from daily tensions and stress	Great sense of gratitude
<b>5</b>	Being in touch with nature since childhood	Physical and mental health	Enjoying Being grateful Feeling fresh and young
<b>6</b>	Change of circumstances	Discharging negative energy	Feeling beautiful closeness to God
<b>7</b>	Persuasion of friends	Higher relaxation with less stress and anger	Feeling joy and cheerful
<b>8</b>	Relationship with others	Declining stress	Sense of relaxation and silence
<b>9</b>	Exercising and losing weight	In a good mood the whole of the day Adjusting the hours of night sleep Declining stress Receiving energy	Happiness and vitality
<b>10</b>	Missing need	Declining tensions More patient	Good feeling
<b>11</b>	-	Receiving positive energy	Sense of closeness to God

Code	Individual motivation	Individual impacts	Individual senses
12	-	Physical health Stress decrease Better relationship with others	Acquiring knowledge from nature
13	Exercising and losing weight	Losing weight Health and relaxation Releasing from daily thoughts and concerns	Greatness of God
14	Strengthening the spirit	Acquiring energy	A sense of endurance
15	Being familiar with new friends	Good spirit	Being calm Being comfortable and close to God
16	Health	Getting rid of everything	Feeling closeness to God A sense of greatness and the power of happiness
17	Relaxing environment	Gain personal peace Better communication with others Better compatible with the environment	Sense of a higher relationship with God
18	Physical and individual health	Promoting the exaltation of the soul	Feeling the touch of stars in the sky Sense of living happily
19	Good energy	Strength and self-reliance The power of resilience in life Being surrender	Sense of a unique experience
20	Love of nature	Revival of the soul Discharge of negative energy	Feeling small in front of the universe Feeling the greatness of God Feeling of a real humanity
21	Self-love	Better relationship with others and the universe	Feeling being nothing at the same time
22	Seeing the joy of others	Getting help from others	Feeling freedom and free Feeling energized

After analyzing the data content obtained from open coding, variables and indicators from the content analysis of research interviews are given in Table 6. The role of wellness tourism in the spiritual health of the tourist is obtained as the main indicator. These three indicators are individual motivation, individual impacts, and individual senses whose components have been expresses as follows.

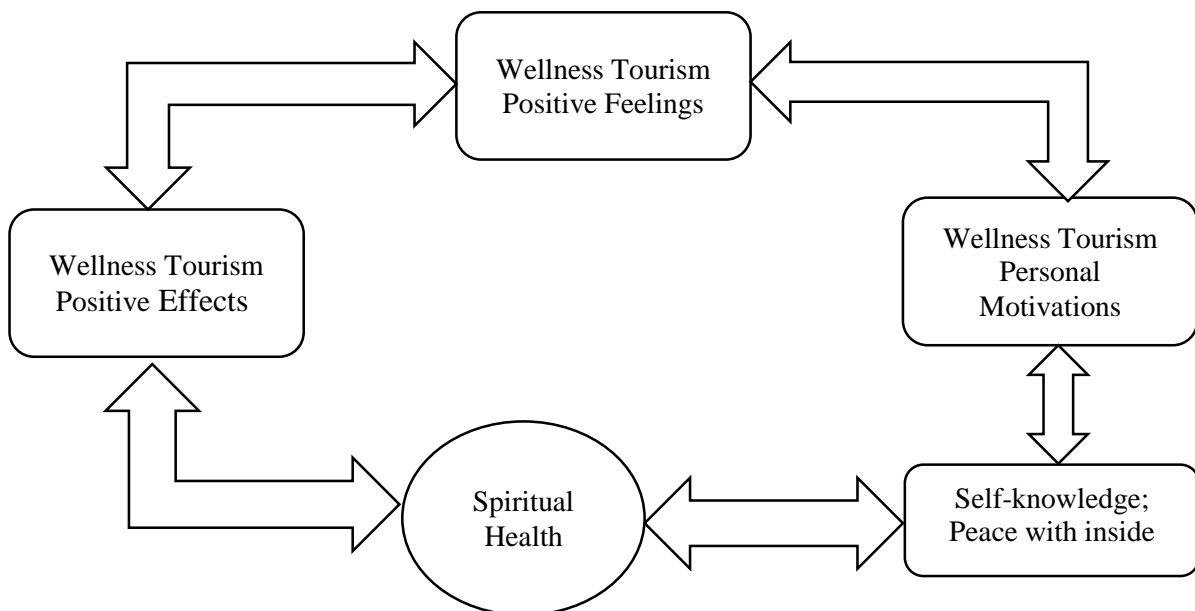
The individual motivations, which are often internal and originated from natural energy, persuade people to this region. On the one hand, all of these people are interviewed and have felt positive impacts from their presence in the Baghestan recreation and tourism village, which has led to repeating the trip. On the other hand, the inner feelings of all also verify components of spiritual health, which are shown in Figure 2.



**Figure 2: The components of wellness tourism affecting spititual health (Source: research findings).**

As the research findings show, people of today's society tend and, in other words, need nature more. The industrial lifestyle pushes today's world towards nature and the earth, from the relaxing environment to receiving energy and the feeling of inner strength as well as social interactions, which are the reasons

for traveling to Baghistan recreation and tourism Village. On the other hand, the presence of people in this area, leads to receiving positive energy and a good mood along with relaxation. The impacts such as empathy and humanity with others, stress decrease, self-reliance, as well as the positive impact of physical-mental health are among the effects that each person expresses due to their experience. The deep individual feelings have lied within these impressions that everyone understands, e.g. the sense of greatness, positive energy, closeness and more gratitude to God, as well as the sense of pleasure and freshness are among the feelings that people have received inside themselves. Finally, individual wellness motivations will lead to positive individual wellness feelings, positive individual wellness impacts, and spiritual health, which is shown in Figure 3.



**Figure 3: The role of wellness tourism on spiritual health**

The individual motivations of the tourist are due to a mediating variable of self-knowledge and inner peace that has a great impact on creating feelings and choosing a trip for wellness and participating in such activities as mountain climbing, yoga, meditation, walking, immersion in the silence of nature, and unifying with the universe and beings.

When we speak about self-knowledge and inner peace, the tourist tends to gain self-awareness on the path of growth and prosperity and excellence in the first step of self-acceptance, to deal with oneself as a set of strengths and weaknesses, to love oneself, and ultimately to reach the inner peace and integrity; to achieve these results, it is necessary that the tourist starts a spiritual trip from inside to the outside.

Indeed, self-knowledge is a process that is possible over time; it does not necessarily mean that the tourist should be completely self-aware, but it can be said that they are taking steps on the path of their growth and improvement, and these steps help them to concentrate on their improvement and promotion physically, mentally, and spiritually to gain spiritual health and grow it. This is a cyclical process that starts with self-knowledge; it leads to the formation of wellness trips because of the tourist's motivation and enthusiasm, and in this type of journey, they find positive sense towards themselves, the environment, nature, others, and God and observe its positive impacts on their behaviors and mood in line with the creation of these feelings; the final result of the wellness trip is their prosperity and excellence and spiritual health achievement.

## **Conclusion**

Health as one of the concerns associated with human communities has had a great deal of attention from different views, especially spiritual health, which has been studied during recent years. Based on researchers, spiritual health is the most important and highest level of human health, so that other dimensions of personal health depend on spiritual health. Although research results show that a careful and deep personal awareness is not observed at a high level with respect to this health dimension (of course, analysis and discussion are out of the main subject of this study and require other research), all people utilize the impacts of this dimension whether they are aware or not. Especially when they choose specific kinds of travel in such a way that they can acknowledge spiritual health, thus nature is one of the places and shelters where people want to feel relaxation and be away from the hurly-burly of urbanization. The studying and investigating the role of wellness tourism on people's spiritual health who have traveled to the Baghestan recreation and tourism village indicate that it has a high important role in spiritual health. The people who aim to acquire relaxation, a healthy lifestyle, energy, and happiness and go to the nature of this village are the wellness tourists that, after once in this place, are persuaded to retravel and receive dimensions of spiritual health in their beings, especially the impacts of wellness tourism and emotions in this regard. Another significant point of research shows that most people who have visited Baghestan recreational and tourist villages, after their once experience, retravel to this area and this could be its unique feature. Although the level of people's understanding is different and on the other hand, spiritual health has relatively emerged in a different form in human beings. Indeed, so, it can be studied by other research. As Iran can be prone to considerable development and progress in wellness tourism based on the assets and various and much potential in this regard, it requires deep understanding, attention, management, and formulation of optimal and proper policies and programming to create, renew, and use the favorably benefits of this growing industry regarding the sustainable development.

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