

The Role of Hotel Architecture in Tourists Attraction Development

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Abstract

Hotels and accommodations of the cities have a basic role in attracting tourists and people traveling to the city. Since business and fun trips are going to increase day-to-day, modern hotels should respond the needs of a wide range of tourists who have been residents there. However, little attention to the role of architecture vision in hotels designing has caused decreasing numbers of tourists who are residents at hotels. The objective of this research was to investigate the important factors in hotel designing, in order to attract tourists, in other words, recognition of effective factors in hotel architecture designing which will influence on choice of tourists. A questionnaire, with the content of effective factors in architecture, in order to attract tourists to hotels, has been prepared and distributed among resident tourists at hotels in Gorgan. The results show that, though exterior design can be effective, but the thing which is more important to tourists, is the facilities within the hotels. Somehow, facilities and exterior design are complementing each other. So besides a good exterior designing, architects should pay more attention to design of interior spaces.

Keywords: Interior design, Facilities, Leisure, Gorgan, Residence.

Introduction

Tourism is known as one of the greatest and most various industry un the world. It has a very amazing influence on social, economical and environmental developments. So it has become to a field of study among the researches (Taghavi & Gholipour, 2009). Tourism activities are known as one of the most important and dynamic activities all over the world. It occurs with different reasons such as, recreation pilgrimage, business and ... (Gharkhalo *et al.*, 2009). Despite the expansion of cities and urban around the country, Iran, which is an ongoing and inevitable process, no improvement is achieved yet (Dinari, 2005).

Importance and expanse of this industry is caused several analyses from tourists' vision. When the history of tourism is studied, it is clear that architecture has a fundamental role in it (Farajizade & Nasiri, 2011).

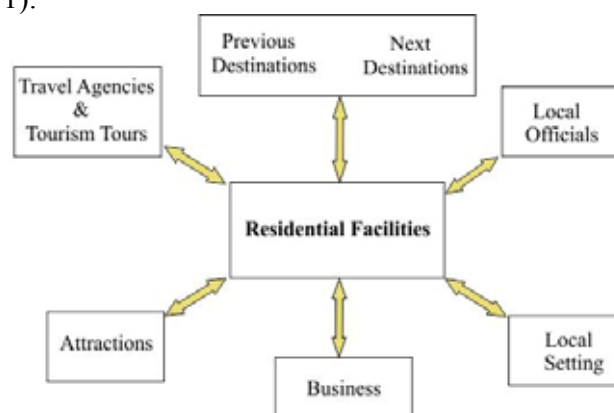


Figure 1: Communication and the role of residential facilities with Tourism
(Source: Cooper *et al*, 2008)

Architecture has a special importance, beside any kind of tools, in order to attract tourist and advertising for boost tourists' statistics in a country. All architecture activities influence on development of tourism statistics. The thing that is important, is the architecture of places where are provided for residence of tourists. Since trips are getting increased day-to-day, therefore hotels must respond needs of a wide range of persons who are resident at them (Seyyedian & Shahroudi, 2012). Architecture is one of the most important factors that influences on working, life, recreation and trips. Actually, most of the human activities that are performed during the travel and leisure, occurs in places where have been designed by architects (Khaksar *et al.*, 2010).

According to the Fig.1 which the relation between residential facilities and tourism is shown, it is clear that residential facilities have a close relation with tourism.

At the point of view of tourism, architecture has two main roles, which are: necessities and attractions. The main point in this research, which will be studied, is necessities. Necessity is in the field of tourism infrastructures. The first thing, due to its architecture the necessities are resolved, are hotels or tourism residences. Hotels and accommodations of the cities have a basic role in attracting tourists and people traveling to the city (Williams, 1998).

Problem Statement

Comfort, both physically and mentally, in any buildings, has a direct relation to how it has been designed by its designer. That is why any building should be designed by architects whom are familiar with the principles and design criteria, whom have sufficient knowledge in this field. The architectural design must be based on the needs of its users and an architect has to figure them out before starting designing. All these are called having architectural vision in designing. One of the major reasons for the failure to attract tourists to hotels is that their needs are not being resolved there, so here is the problem.

According to the above paragraph, this failure can be derived from lack of architectural vision at hotel designing.

Background

Sohrabi *et al.*, (2011) have recently shown the major factors in choosing hotels from the tourists' vision, such as; costs of residence at hotels, security, facilities, to be close to recreational and commercial centers and parking. Varesi *et al.*, (2011) have analyzed the strengths and weaknesses of Isfahan hotels. The most important strengths of hotels are convenient access to recreation, commercial and tourism centers, comfort and security, appropriate sanitarian systems. The less important strengths are exterior design, access to telecommunications equipments, emergency exit. And the most important weaknesses of hotels from the tourists' vision are lack of tourism services and good restaurants with a variety of different food, lack of adequate parking, inappropriate sport facilities and lack of conference halls. Lewis (1983) has expressed in his researches that services and facilities within the hotels are the main factors to be chosen or not chosen a hotel by a tourist.

Wilneskey & Buttle (1988) have referred to exterior attraction, relaxation, standards, pleasant outlook and costs of residence as the considerable factors to attract tourists. Ananth *et al.*, (1992) has classified 57 criteria about the effective factors to attract tourist to hotels. His results showed that cost and quality of facilities within the hotels are the most important factors. Security and hotel's location are in the next levels. Tari *et al.*, (2009) have considered environmental factors as the most effective factors. Chu & Chai (2000) tried to identify the influencing factors on tourists' choice. Such factors include: quality of facilities within the hotels, costs, quality of residential facilities, performance of reception, food quality, entertainment and security. McCleary *et al* (1993) have stated hotel's location as the most important factor for business travels and tourists care more about costs of residence.

Farajirad & Eftekharian (2012) have recently shown that greater attention to architecture and design of the tourism infrastructure has a significant effect in attracting tourists.

Materials and Methods

Data collection should be performed according to the objectives and method of each research and the characteristics of the selected sample. To obtain criteria of hotel design, in order to develop tourism industry and to resolve the problem, a questionnaire has been prepared. The questions are designed to be effective in three parts:

1. Exterior architecture of hotels.
2. Existence on non-existence of some architectural spaces.
3. Performance relation of spaces.

Statistical population was the resident tourists at hotels in Gorgan in 2014. A questionnaire, with the content of effective factors in architecture, in order to attract tourists to hotels, has been prepared and systematic randomly distributed among resident tourists at hotels in Gorgan. The questionnaire has been prepared based on identified criteria by valid sources (Botti *et al.*, 2009; Chen, 2007; Chiang, 2006; Chou *et al.*, 2008; Chu & Choi, 2000; Hsieh *et al.*, 2008; Hsieh & Lin, 2010; Popoli & Saghay, 2006; Sohrabi *et al.*, 2011; Tari *et al.*, 2009; Yuksel *et al.*, 2003). General view of the research process is presented in Fig.2.

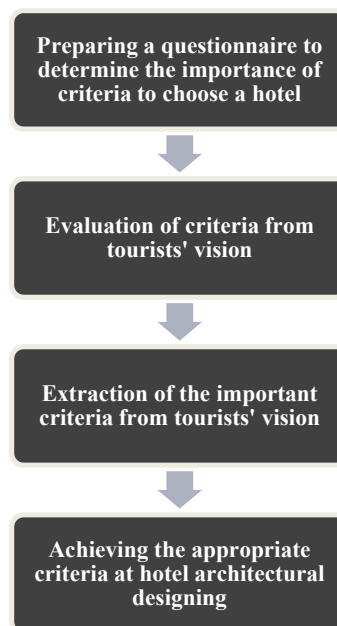


Figure 2: Research method presented in a chart

Study Area

Gorgan is the capital of Golestan Province, Iran. It lies approximately 400 km (250 mi) to the north east of Tehran, some 30 km (19 mi) away from the Caspian Sea.

There are a lot of diverse and beautiful landscapes for leisure and tourism in the city (Fig.3). Gorgan having abundant natural attractions and historical buildings is a good platform to attract tourists (Fallahtabar, 2009).



Figure.3: Location of the study area

Results and Discussion

In this item some important asked questions are presented and discussed.

- Which one of the following factors is more important to you as a tourist?

The results can be seen at Table.1 and Fig.4. 16 percent chose the exterior design and 84 percent chose the facilities within the hotels.

Table.1 . Results for importance of exterior design & facilities

Percentage	Frequency	Options	Row
16%	16	Exterior design	1
84%	84	Facilities within hotel	2
100%	100	Totally	

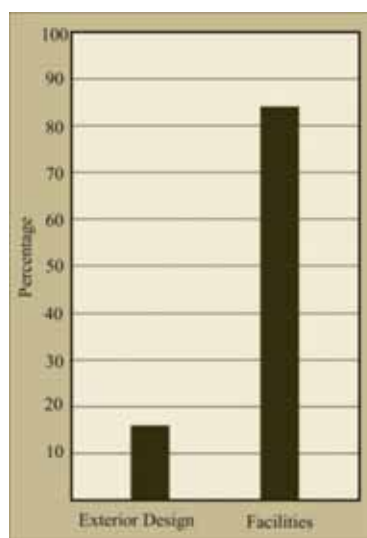


Figure 4: Comparison of the results for importance of exterior design & facilities

How much does the hotel exterior architecture influence on attracting tourists and on your choice to reside at that hotel?

The results can be seen at Table.2 and Fig.5.

Table 2. Results for importance of exterior design

Percentage		Options	Row
65%	65	High	1
22%	22	Average	2
13%	13	Low	3
100%	100	Totally	

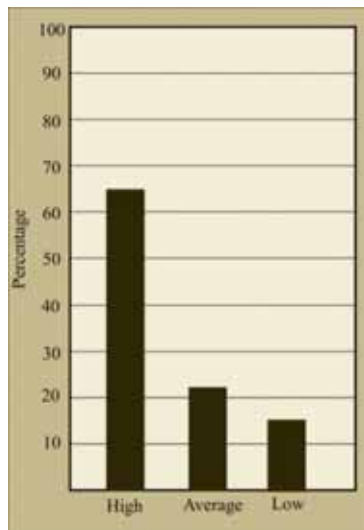


Figure 5. Comparison of the results for importance of exterior design

Data Analysis: At the first question as can be seen, the facilities have the maximum number of tourists' votes. Every person expects to receive appropriate facilities and comfort for amount of cost which has been paid. Maybe the exterior design is very attractive but the facilities are not accountable for their needs. Therefore, that hotel will not be chosen. But at the next question, according to its result, it can be discovered that the more appealing exterior design can be effective in attracting tourists. Therefore, it can be concluded from these tow questions that somehow, facilities and exterior design are complement each other. So if the exterior architecture is more appealing, the more tourists will be attracted to hotels, and if they find out that the facilities are appropriate, they will choose there for residence.

- What design style do you prefer for the restaurants at hotels?

The results can be seen at Table.3 and Fig.6.

Table 3 . Results for how to design the restaurants

Percentage	Frequency	Options	Row
9%	9	Usual restaurants	1
26%	26	Various kinds of restaurants	2
65%	65	Both	3
100%	100	Totally	

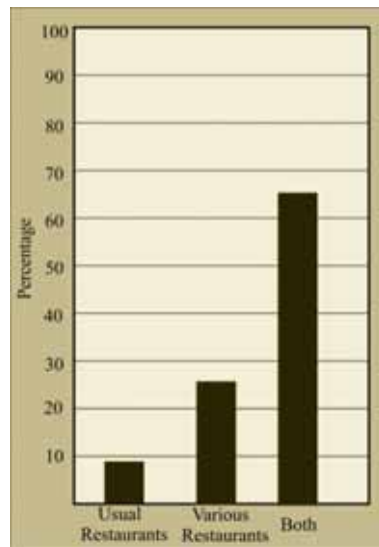


Figure 6. Comparison of the results for how to design the restaurants

Data Analysis: All kinds of hotels must have a restaurant, but according to the obtained result from the above question, various kinds of restaurants are more effective in tourists' choice. In this regard, according to the conclusions that Varesi *et al* (2011) have obtained in their research, lack of various kinds of restaurants at hotels, is one of the hotel's weaknesses. Therefore, hotels should have different kinds of restaurants beside the usual restaurants in order to attract more tourists.

- How much can shopping centers at hotels be effective in your decision to choose a hotel to reside?

The results can be seen at Table.4 and Fig.7.

Table 4 . Results for shopping centers at hotels

Percentage	Frequency	Options	Row
37%	37	High	1
46%	46	Average	2
17%	17	Low	3
100%	100	Totally	

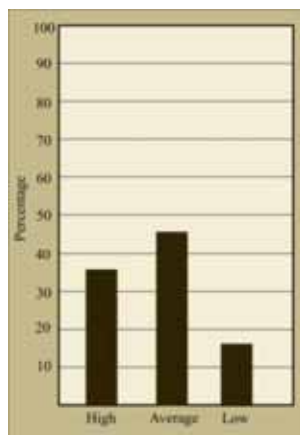


Figure 7. Comparison of the results for Table.4

Data Analysis: According to the obtained result at Table.4, it can be seen that shopping centers at hotels, can be effective in attracting tourists to hotels. Therefore, shopping centers at hotels, at least to meet their needs can have a significant impact on attracting tourists.

- If the hotel where you are resident at, has a place for tourism tours to visit the monuments and natural attractions, will you use them?

The results can be seen at Table.5 and Fig.8.

Table 5. Results for tourism tours at hotels

Percentage	Frequency	Options	Row
67%	67	Yes	1
10%	10	No	2
23%	23	Maybe	3
100%	100	Totally	

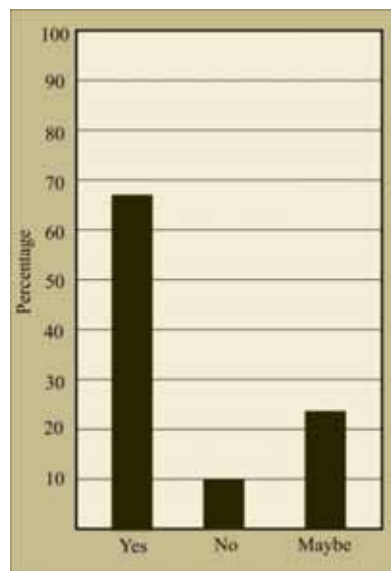


Figure 8. Comparison of the results for tourism tours at hotels

Data Analysis: Considering a place like tourism tours is not necessary to be in the list of the required spaces. But according to the shown result at Table.5 and done researches by Varesi *et al* (2011), tourists have been dissatisfied with tourism services at hotels. Therefore, a place like this can be effective in attracting them to hotels.

- How much do the cultural spaces like amphitheater at hotels influence on your decision to choose a hotel to reside?

The results can be seen at Table.6 and Fig.9.

Table 6 . Results for cultural spaces at hotels

Percentage	Frequency	Options	Row
54%	44	High	1
16%	26	Average	2
16%	16	Low	3
14%	14	No impact	4
100%	100	Totally	

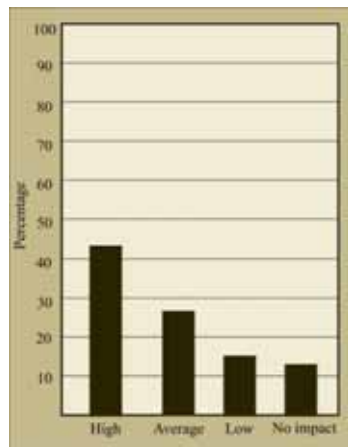


Figure 9. Comparison of the results for cultural spaces at hotels

Data Analysis: According to the obtained result and shown conclusions by Sohrabi (2012) about lack of conference halls at hotels, cultural spaces can have a great influence on tourists' choice to reside at hotels.

- Which one of the following factors can influence on getting better the residential rooms at hotels?

The results can be seen at Table.7 and Fig.10.

Table 7. Results for residential rooms at hotels

Percentage	Frequency	Options	Row
16%	16	Having terrace	1
28%	28	Appropriate sanitary facilities	2
8%	8	Spacious closet	3
48%	48	All options	4
100%	100	Totally	

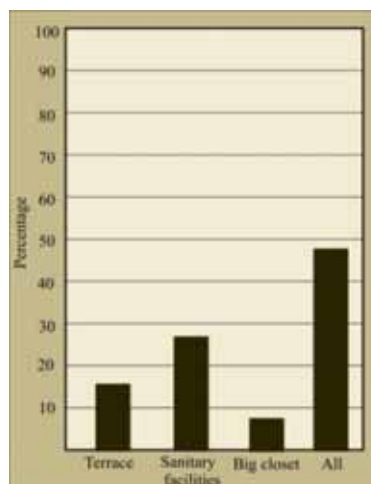


Figure 10. Comparison of the results residential rooms at hotels

Data Analysis: According to this point that the main lookup reason of tourists to hotels is residence, so residential facilities are more important than the others.

At the above question, residential rooms' properties are asked which can be provided by architecture design and option no.4 has gotten the maximum votes. Therefore, an architect during designing the residential rooms should pay more attention to these properties.

- How much can designing a big lobby influence on attracting the tourists?
The results can be seen at Table.8 and Fig.11.

Table 8. Results for importance of lobbies at hotels

Percentage	Frequency	Options	Row
54%	54	High	1
26%	26	Average	2
8%	8	Low	3
12%	12	No impact	4
100%	100	Totally	

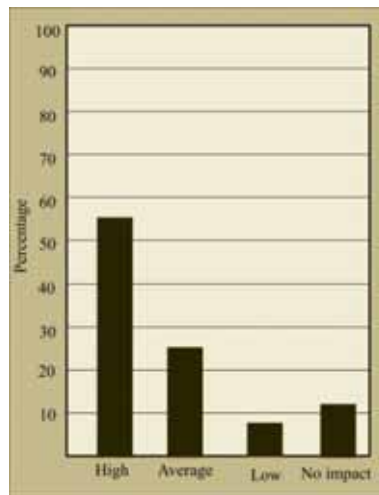


Figure 11. Comparison of the results importance of lobbies at hotels

Which one of the following criteria has the maximum effect in lobby to be more entertaining?

The results can be seen at Table.9 and Fig.12.

Table 9. Results for how to design lobbies at hotels

Percentage	Frequency	Options	Row
24%	24	Live music	1
12%	12	Landscaping with flower and plants	2
15%	15	Serving drinks	3
49%	49	All	4
100%	100	Totally	

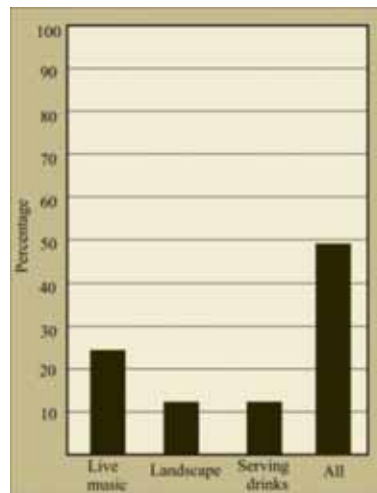


Figure 12. Comparison of the results how to design lobbies at hotels

Data Analysis: According to the obtained result from tow above questions, lobby is one of the most effective factors in tourists' choice. Then, more entertaining, bigger and greater lobby is more effective. Performance of live music, landscaping and a place for having some drinks are the lobby's features.

- How much do the sport facilities influence on your decision to choose a hotel to reside?
The results can be seen at Table.10 and Fig.13.

Table 10. Results for sport facilities at hotels

Percentage	Frequency	Options	Row
47%	47	High	1
34%	34	Average	2
10%	10	Low	3
9%	9	No impact	4
100%	100	Totally	

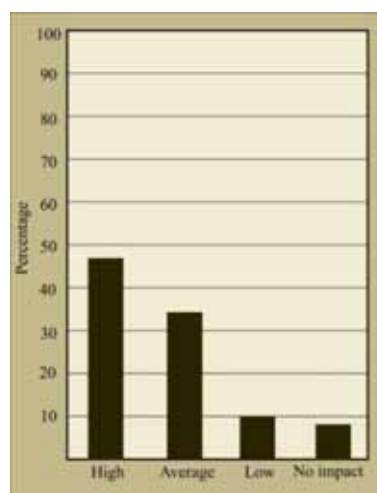


Figure 13. Comparison of the results for sport facilities at hotels

- If hotel has a swimming pool, how would you like it to be?

The results can be seen at Table.11 and Fig.14

Table 11. Results for how to design pools at hotels

Percentage	Frequency	Options	Row
15%	15	Very big	1
10%	10	Having Sauna & Jacuzzi	2
22%	22	Good sanitary facilities	3
53%	53	All	4
100%	100	Totally	

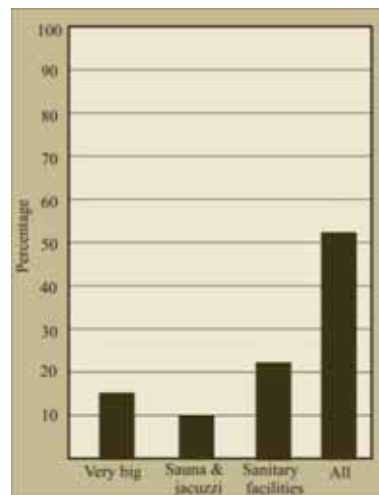


Figure 14. Comparison of the results for how to design pools at hotels

Data Analysis: The two above questions were about the sport facilities at hotels. According to the result of the first question, sport facilities are one of the influencing factors in tourists. Swimming is usually one of the sport fields at hotels. The main goal for asking the second question was that how the facilities and performance of the swimming halls should be to attract them to it. As it can be seen, more than half of the repliers have chosen all of them. Therefore the capacity of pool must be proportional with capacity of the hotel. Sauna and Jacuzzi should be considered during designing and also considering enough showers and locker rooms.

Conclusions

The main point which can be derived from this research is that; the residential facilities within the hotels are the most important factor to tourists and how to design them is the most important duty of architects.

According to the asked questions and analyses from the obtained results, these conclusions are achieved for how a hotel should be designed in order attract more tourists to it and architects have to consider them during the design process.

- Since the most important property of a hotel is residential, so the facilities within the hotels, especially residential facilities must been paid more attention by architects and the exterior design is the next level of importance ranks.
- Designing various styles of restaurants at hotels.
- Considering shopping center at designing, with a special entrance.
- Considering a place for tourism tours beside the travel agencies.
- Paying more attention to design the cultural spaces at hotels. Such as, amphitheater, live music, concert halls, shows halls, conference halls and

- Designing art galleries to hold exhibitions.
- Special attention of architects to design the residential rooms, considering terrace, appropriate sanitary facilities and big closet.
- Designing a big and great lobby.
- Considering a place to have drinks at lobbies.
- Designing appropriate sport facilities like swimming pool with sauna and Jacuzzi, enough showers and locker rooms and good sanitary facilities.
- Considering a place to have some drinks at swimming halls.

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