

**A Survey on the Complex Aspects of COVID-19 in leisure and Commercial
Touristic Destinations:
A Comparative Case Study in Business Level**

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Abstract

Although the prevalence of COVID-19 pandemic and the worldwide periodic lockdowns, and travel restrictions have heavily damaged tourism destinations, however some theorists believe that the channels and intensity of adverse effects of COVID-19 are not even in different tourism destinations and it may depend on the tourism form that the destination is endowed with. The purpose of this research is to fulfill a comparative survey between two different tourism destinations that enjoy two different tourism forms, including pleasure tourism (Ganjnameh region) and commercial based tourism (Lalejin region) in Iran and try to explore the different complex aspects of COVID-19 effects on tourism industry and compare sustainability of both tourism forms. In order that, we apply Grounded Theory (GT) model and rely on qualitative data gathered by face-to-face interviews with 40 participants who are engaged in tourism related businesses in sample destinations. In according to the results, this study critically derives 4 different aspects of complexity of the situation arisen from corona virus pandemic on tourism sector in Ganjnameh and Lalejin including: resilience strategies and sustainability, change in tourist behavior, change in the tourism industry, and aggravating factors. In addition, the results showed that changes to tourism as a result of COVID-19 is complex and uneven in two different tourist destinations. Moreover, we realized that the economic statues of Ganjnameh region which is widely depend on pleasure tourism is more vulnerable to unexpected tourism crises compared to the Lalejin region, where the economics of a big bulk of habitants depends on commercial tourisms and handicrafts. Therefore, the commercial based touristic destinations looks more resilient and sustainable in comparison to pleasure tourism formed destinations. This study released valuable information about current statues and future concerns about tourism industry and offers suitable policy implications to cope with COVID-19 effects during and after Corona crisis.

Keywords: COVID-19 Pandemic, Tourism Industry, Ganjnameh, Lalejin, Grounded Theory.

JEL Classification: JEL: I19, H12, P41, Z32.

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1. Introduction

The health crisis of COVID-19 was initially reported to the World Health Organization (WHO) on December 31, 2019 and rapidly it changed to a global health emergency that is affecting 220 countries and territories. In according to the (WHO) reports, up to July 11, 2021 approximately 187,279,338 people have infected worldwide and more than 4043000 people have died. This crisis has threatened human wellbeing and changed to a global economic and social crisis which left hardest devastating and crosscutting impacts on global economy, especially on the tourism sector (Ritchie & Jiang, 2019) such that the leisure and internal tourism indicated a steep decline amounting to 2.86 trillion US dollars, which quantified more than 50% revenue losses in year 2020 (Abbas et al, 2021). Zenker and Koch (2020) explain COVID-19 as a complex phenomenon, where in one hand it looks a natural and socio-political human made disaster and on the other hand it seems as a crisis where induced adverse effects on organizational and business acts. During the COVID-19 pandemic, borders were closed and restaurants and touristic sites were shut downed. Governments have maintained social distance, banned travels and gathering nationally and internationally; which has put the tourism industry under serious threat (Winship, 2020). Accordingly, as tourism industry is a labor-intensive one and needs lots of downstream industries as hotels, restaurants and food services, lodging facilities, transportation systems, travel agencies, tour operators, local handicraft markets, guide services, supplementary accommodation, among other indirect services; then it hurt tourism destinations' domestic economy in a wide scale.

Although many researchers have make valuable efforts in investigating the effects of this crisis on tourism destinations, however Ritchie and Jiang (2019) argue that there is no comprehensive study to compare impacts of this pandemic on various tourism destinations that are endowed with different forms of tourist. In addition, Hall et al. (2020) argues that the nature of COVID-19 effects on destinations are selective, meaning that it is sometimes minimal and in some destinations it has inverted to a wide devastating phenomenon. Then he proposed a comprehensive study to compare COVID-19 effects in different tourism destinations. On the other hand, in according to Zenker and Kock (2021), COVID-9 pandemic has more complex aspects and also, long-term and indirect effects that has not been studied and most researchers are focusing on immediate, direct, and mere destroying effects.

Considering these studies, we realize that COVID-19 effects have complex nature depends on different tourism forms in destinations. Therefore, this paper

contributes to the empirical literature of the COVID-19 – tourism industry relationship, in two main ways. First, this study empirically explores the complex aspects of COVID-19 by comparing the intensity of destroying effects of COVID-19 on tourism in two different touristic region with different forms of the tourism, including pleasure tourism and commercial based tourism. The elicitation of these complexities will help us to understand and compare the resilience strategies and sustainability of tourism industry in different regions. The second contribution is to deeply grasp and compare COVID-19 indirect and long-run concerns that are threatening the current status and future of tourism in destinations.

As discussed above, it looks that the corona virus has not hinted all tourist destinations in the same channels and in the same extent. In order to investigate this allegation, we arranged a comparative case study and this is a first significant stride have been made in comparing the destructive effects of COVID-19 pandemic on tourism businesses in two different touristic form regions of Lalejin and Ganjnameh, located in Hamedan, one of touristic provinces of Iran.

Actually, Hamedan province is the origin of civilization and urbanization of Iran and is one of the touristic provinces of Iran, where in 2018, more than 10% of the GDP of this province originated from tourism related activities. Hamedan has a combination of touristic attractions such as cultural, historical, natural, ecological, and handicraft based commercial attractions. However, Hamedan province was not safe from the spread of corona-virus and more than 64569 people out of the 1758268 population of this province became infected with corona and 2280 people have been died by COVID-19 disease. The prevalence of COVID-19 left inevitable destructive effects on Hamedan province economy and lots of tourism related agents have been closed and lots of these effects are not measurable. Ganjnameh and Lalejin are the two most famous regions in Hamedan, that attracting international and domestic tourists and they have different forms of tourism. Ganjnameh tourist resort complex is located in ancient city of Hamedan and includes ancient inscriptions related to Achaemenid Empire and this region is a mixture of Cultural, historical, natural, and recreational sites where foreign tourists and natives travel for holidays and to spend leisure time. Moreover, Lalejin is a small town in Hamedan that has 7500 years' history record dating back to ancient Persia, is the heartland of pottery and ceramics and pottery is her ancient and traditional art. The UNESCO's World Crafts Council has introduced Lalejin as the World Pottery Capital. A great number of people in Lalejin do pottery in domestic workshops and produce kinds of decorative and applicable tools and utensil traditionally. The pottery handicraft has led to the prosperity of the tourism

and economic growth of this city and province. Then the tourism form in Ganjnameh is a historical and pleasure tourism where the tourism form in Lalejin is handicraft based commercial one.

In order to look for deeper and underlying mechanisms accrued during Corona pandemic in Ganjnameh complex and Lalejin, we applied grounded theory approach and analyzed the anecdotal and descriptive data elucidated from the perceptions of 40 tourist sector agents. In fact, it seems that official quantified data (that is not released yet, especially in developing countries as in Iran) considerably deviate from the reality, but qualitative research could broadly enlighten the different aspects of COVID-19 breakdowns in tourism sector. This study organized in 5 sections. Following introduction in section 1, the theoretical review has been presented in section 2, section 3 explains methodology and results are investigated in section 4. finally, section 5 concludes the paper.

2. Theoretical Review

Although tourism industry could work as an growth engine in tourism destinations, however it is sorely vulnerable and fragile in the face of conflicts, diseases, pandemics, and other natural or human made catastrophes (Muhammad Sharif et al (2021), Singh et al (2021), and Pizam and Mansfeld (2006)). In the case of epidemics or pandemics, both travelers and local host people are at risk of disease prevalence by tourists¹ (Hollingsworth et al., 2006). Therefore, in order to prevent the spread of pandemic (as COVID-19 pandemic) governments enforce some touristic restrictions that have direct and indirect impacts on tourism industry and affect tourism economy through different channels (IEP, 2016).

There is a big bulk of studies tried to examine the various channels through which corona hinted the tourism led economies. For example, McCartney (2020), Calvao and Avillez (2020), Muller (2020) and Madeira et al (2021) focused on hotels and restaurant business during COVID-19 pandemic and showed that this sector adversely affected, because of restrictions imposed by most countries in order to control the prevalence of corona by tourists worldwide. Sarphin (2021) studied the effect of COVID-19 pandemic on live events industry and he realized that the pandemic has perturbed the live events and destroyed the future perspective of these kinds of events. Wen et al (2020) examined the adverse consequences of COVID-19 outbreak on Chinese tourists' lifestyle and travel behavior and tourism preferences in the short and long term and they showed a new trend of free,

¹ . In order to understand the effects of pandemics on tourism please refer to: Ozbay et al (2021), Karabulut et al (2020), and Mulder (2020) among others.

independent, and slow travel through Chinese tourists. Seraphin, and Dosquet (2020) and Zeng et al (2020) also realized that promoted mountain tourism and second- home tourism trends, and adoption of robotics during pandemic could somehow mitigate the destroyed effects of COVID-19 on tourism. Loannides and Gyimothy (2020) also argue that COVID-19 has led to a remove / emerge some tourism mainstream business formats. Renault (2020) also showed that this pandemic has destroyed the mass cruise ship tourism and propose nations to promote a local fleet small ship. Yang et al (2020) applying a DSGE model, analyzed the effects of COVID-19 on tourism economics and they proved that tourism related businesses needs tourism consumption vouchers and it looks that handicrafts would be a real examples of tourism consumption vouchers that could help them to revive and resist during the pandemic.

However, Zenker and Kock (2021) warns researchers about the incompetence of studies that merely emphasizing on isolate aspects of corona-virus and argues that corona-virus pandemic has left complex and uneven effects on tourism economy and they introduce six potential research paths through which the complexity character of COVID-19 could be ponderable. In this context, understanding the level of complexity in corona virus crises have been hinted at. The six main areas in analyzing corona virus in the new vision of Zenker and Kock (2021) are presented as follow:

- 1- The Complexity which manifests in the resilience and sustainability behavior of tourist related businesses both by governments and by businessman (Garay et al., 2017) and occurrence of a real paradigm-shift (Kuhn, 2012).
- 2- Change in destination image: to understand how corona did changes the image on destination in tourist minds
- 3- Change in tourist behavior: This is due to the direct and indirect effects of pandemic in a hidden and non-obvious ways. For example, racialism (Kock, Josiassen, Assaf, Karpen, & Farrelly, 2019), loneliness and avoiding crowdedness (Wang & Ackerman, 2019) and avoiding the experiencing of unknown things (Faulkner, Schaller, Park, & Duncan, 2004) are some of aspects of tourism behavior changes.
- 4- Change in resident behavior: for example, reduction of hospitality desire of destinations residents (Chien & Ritchie, 2018).
- 5- Change in the tourism industry: which cover all kind of innovative actions that resident operators take to recover their business (Martínez, et al., 2015).

- 6- Long-term and indirect effects: that covers all indirect and long run effects of corona virus deficits on tourism activities and made the future of tourism predictable.

In addition to Zenker and Koch (2020), Bratianu (2021) elicits the complexity aspects of COVID-19 effects applying a grounded theory methodology and relying on qualitative data gathered from meta-data analysis and concludes that this is a complex phenomenon that could be analyzed through three main streams of health system crisis, governmental policies and behavior of people. He also recommends this framework and this methodology as an applicable tool in further deeper investigation of COVID-19 complexities. Amcillo et al. (2020) also applying grounded theory methodology, analyzed the workplace changes and investigated the current status and future evolutions during and after COVID-19 pandemics and showed that it has complex effects on workplaces. Zhang et al (2021) applying grounded theory approach, discovered how non-interaction with people and place influences, changes in tourists social identities during the crisis, and shapes their future social behaviors. This research applies Zenker and Koch (2020) framework in analyzing complex aspects of pandemic. Also this study applies grounded theory approach in order to identify the understandings and insights of tradespeople in tourism sector about concerning indirect devastations during COVID-19 and long term concerns in post COVID-19 period.

3. Methodology of Grounded Theory and Data

3.1. Grounded Theory

This study applies grounded theory approach in order to identify the understandings and insights of tradespeople in tourism sector about indirect devastations during COVID-19 and long term concerns in post COVID-19 period. Glaser, Anselm, and Strauss (1967) had introduced grounded theory method for the first time in qualitative researches where the research subject is vague and we do not have any research model as in quantitative researches. In this case we do need to investigate deeper, obtain significant reliable qualitative data about the subject and then propose a theoretical framework on the subject. Therefore, the grounded theory equips researcher to derive a theory framework directly/indirectly from the observed qualitative data and not relying on previous studies. Then grounded theory is a systematic methodology that has been largely applied to qualitative research and the methodology involves the construction of hypotheses and theories through the collecting and analysis of data. The researcher begins with a broad query in a particular topic area and then collects relevant

information about the topic. As the action processes of data collection continue, each piece of information is reviewed, compared, and contrasted with other information. From this constant comparison process, commonalities and dissimilarities among categories of information become clear, and ultimately a theory that explains observations is inductively developed. Thus, queries that will be answered through grounded theory do not relate to specific domains but rather to the structure of how the researcher wants to organize the findings. Each query indicates that the research aim is to reveal theoretical principles about the phenomenon under study (DePoy and Gitlin, 2016).

In detail, in order to obtain qualitative data, we can use many different sources of data (Corbin & Strauss, 2015) and rely on direct observations, multi media reports, governmental documents, referring to previous literature and by relying on interviews with the people who are directly or indirectly connected to the research subject (Charmaz, 2006; Corbin & Strauss, 2015). In fact, during data collection process the researcher seeks for different dimensions, aspects, and dynamics of the topic (Bratianu & Bejinaru, 2019, 2020) and the researcher continues collecting data process until she/he obtain to a theoretical saturation where there is no new data around the research topic. After gathering all related data, in order to discover variables, properties, categories, concepts and labeling them the researcher needs to codify all collected data and enter the codification stage, where all collected data will be coded within three main processes of open coding, axial coding and selective coding¹.

The memo-writing phase is the next stage and researches efforts to discover causality interrelations and make connections among different concepts and variables extracted in coding stage. By doing a theoretical note, now the researcher is able to visualize these connections and analyze the logic behind the connections (Bratianu, 2021). The final and vital stage of grounded theory approach is process step, where the researcher makes efforts to show the dynamic and changing processes related to the research topic. If the researcher could not establish a theoretical frame among un-converged collected data and propound a coherent design, then the researcher will steps back and repeats these four steps again. Then this process is an iterative one.

Although the grounded theory has been applied to sociology fields, however Connell and Lowe (1997), Aloudat (2014), Stumpf (2016), and Matteucci and

¹ . In order to obtain more information about coding process, please refer to Vollstedt and Rezat (2019).

Gnoth (2017) during others have emphasized on application of this model in tourism management field.

3.2. Data

We utilized qualitative data gathered from single perspectives of 40 indigenous interviewees. Our interviewees are practitioner in tourism related businesses as: Hotel owners, restaurants, food and beverage stands, retailers and shopping centers (who are supplying daily necessities of tourists and supply mementos and souvenirs to international and national tourists), car rentals in public transportation sector (who transport people and goods), travel agencies, pottery handcraft exporters, pottery handcraft producing workhouses and manufactories both in Ganjnameh region and Lalejin, and also official members in administration of cultural heritage, handicrafts and tourism organization of Hamedan province, Hamedan national tax administration, and general office of social security of Hamedan.

4. Results

After collecting all the data from each of the tourism related businessman, data have been classified, notes were taken, and common categories which show the various complexity aspects of COVID-19 on tourism sector, were postulated as described in Table 1. These results are derived after performing three coding steps illustrated in previous section. The results of coding are presented comparatively for Ganjnameh (G) and Lalejin (L).

Table 1: Results of Coding Process

Selective Coding Results	Axial Coding Results	Open Coding Results
	<p>"Open to change" ability and innovation capability</p>	<p>L: many restaurants in Lalejin offering takeaway services for their native customers as well they could make new markets and new customers (7). G: Restaurants and fast foods, hamburger shops couldn't supply takeaway restaurant services due to the great distance from the suburb and it is not economical (10) L: we could offer offline services and supply our handicrafts through some internal and external applications, in this way we did not lose our customers. G: we could not provide offline and distance services due to the long distance from city center</p>

Resilience strategies and sustainability	Labor and capital Mobility and rigidity	<p>and because of the tourism nature in Ganjnameh (pleasure tourism)</p> <p>L: Handicraft retail sellers had transformed into a small or medium size producers in order to survive.</p> <p>L: Pottery retailers and sellers have converted to wholesalers and producers.</p> <p>L: some workhouses had declined the amount of production but not closed.</p> <p>G: lots of hotels and restaurants have to fire up their personals and nowadays they are managing by the owner family due to cost reductions. In addition, they have to force workers to have an unpaid leave.</p> <p>G: lots of sites offering tourist goods and services have been closed in order to decline expenses.</p> <p>G: nearly all shopping centers and malls has been closed in the Ganjnameh</p> <p>L: Pottery workshops have not lost their major markets and we still have demand and exports to other provinces. We have not even fired workers.</p> <p>G: The restaurants have lost both international touristic demand for foods and domestic demand.</p> <p>G: We fired tour leaders and translators</p>
	Ability to attract consistent and loyal customers (Unrivaled goods and services)	<p>L: We have loyal and old customers who became our strength point during the Corona period. And we could keep our main customers, Because Lalejin is the capital city of pottery in the world and our handicrafts are unique.</p> <p>L: although we have lost the demand for pottery by international tourists, however we did not experience a significant decrease in demand for pottery by domestic consumers and international major customers.</p> <p>G: nowadays domestic and international tourisms prefer to travel to inaccessible and pristine places away from crowding.</p> <p>G: During corona pandemic, the demand for touristic goods and services fallen down drastically.</p>
change in tourist behavior	Travel duration / Distance	G: family trips has changed to a more single/solo traveling trend.

		<p>G: Tourists prefer to use eco-lodges and mountain villas rather than to reserve hotels and stay in crowd.</p> <p>G, I: Long-distance and long-time travels has changed to short-term and short distance travels.</p>
	Tourism forms	<p>G: People prefer to take a solo trip and avoid traveling by family or in a group.</p> <p>G: tourists are distancing from mass tourism</p> <p>G: travelers are more interested in discovering Pristine and outland landscapes far away the crowds. They rarely visit public areas nowadays.</p> <p>G: previously, we were receiving meal orders from families or a group of friends. But nowadays we take solo meal orders even by native tourists.</p> <p>G: tourists are looking for mountain villas and ecotourism houses, whereas we don't have prepared enough services in the region, yet.</p>
	Eating preferences	<p>G: During Corona, there is more trust in packaged goods rather than street foods and other services that is not factory produced. They don't demand for street foods (15)</p> <p>G: Tourists avoid unfamiliar foods and street foods</p>
	Form of transportation	<p>G: they prefer to travel by their own cars and refuse public transportation. This can be a threat to travel agencies</p>
Change in the Tourism Industry	Change in tourism service ecosystem (chain /connections)	<p>G: we lost our communications and connection chains, and common arrangements and collusion among lots of downstream jobs related to tourism services during corona pandemic. For example we lost our connections with tour leaders, restaurants, Marketing agencies, hotels, restaurants, travel agencies, etc. (11).</p>
	elimination of connections	<p>L: we have improved our relations by our consumers and we directly are in connection with customers.</p> <p>L: I think intermediaries have been eliminated in our production sale chain and we are now in direct contact with our customers</p> <p>L: Most manufacturers now export without the need for intermediaries.</p>

	Management change	G: lots of hotels and restaurants have to fire up their personals and nowadays they are managing by the owner family.
	Missing Quality	<p>G: Many chefs and famous entrepreneurs have expressed their concern about absence of expert staffs in the restaurants. an issue that could suspend the future of all types of restaurants</p> <p>L: Pottery factories have also reduced the quality of their work to some extent and do not make pottery with the previous precision and delicacy because we do not sell to foreign tourists. Domestic buyers also have lower purchasing power and the goods cannot be sold to them at a high price</p> <p>G: we used to use the best brands of sausages. But now we use low quality and cheap raw materials</p> <p>G: Master chefs were fired up from restaurants because of their high salaries, and now their assistants are cooking (who are inexperienced and unskilled). The quality of service will drop drastically even in the post-Corona. This causes us to lose loyal customers due to the low quality of service</p>
	Missing Diversity	<p>G: We had to remove western dishes from restaurant menus because it was too expensive. This issue may change consumers taste in the long run.</p> <p>L: we refuse to produce decorative and non-applicative pottery handicrafts because the demand has been reduced for this kind of potteries due to customers' purchasing power reduction.</p>
	Offering Additional services	G: We have to offer discount in order to attract new customers.
	Improving presence	<p>L: Although we were not able to participate in international festivals and exhibitions, however we held virtual exhibitions and introduced ourselves on a large scale and attract new customers.</p> <p>L: Corona crisis has strengthened our presence on social media, and we use the website, phone and email to sale and connect with customers.</p>

		<p>L: The method of new customer attractions and face to face marketing in international exhibitions changed to new content marketing strategy in cyberspace.</p> <p>L: Corona prompted potters to participate in television programs and appeared more in popular intermediary national and international applications.</p>
Aggravating factors	Inflation	<p>G: Restaurateurs have experienced high level of inflation in raw materials.</p> <p>L: demand for traditional and decorative products declined (because of customer's low purchasing power), but the demand for more applicable products as dishes and utensils did not changed significantly.</p> <p>L: We, the potters, were also hit by inflation, which made our raw materials more expensive, and this also increased the price of our products.</p> <p>G, L: shortage of raw materials and inflation in raw materials also hurt our business.</p>
	Governmental Mismanagement	<p>G: The public sector has sometimes used contradictory strategies.</p> <p>G: Municipal decisions and laws in roads closures made population overcrowding and traffic congestion.</p> <p>G: Administrative hasty and non- professional actions caused our expenses rises drastically.</p> <p>L: We experienced a significant decline in exports to European countries because of Imposition of heavy transportation restrictions at borders by European countries.</p> <p>L: We did not lose our market in neighboring countries and Persian Gulf countries. Because they did not closed borders.</p> <p>L: internal road transport restrictions prevented the load of pottery to other provinces. I think it is better to ban traffic only for private vehicles and not for trucks.</p>
	Additional expenses:	<p>G: during the corona pandemic the number of cancelations for reserved rooms has been increased and this doubled our losses.</p> <p>G, L: we experienced extra expenses as disinfecting rooms and providing free sanitary and hygienic packs for travelers.</p>

		<p>L: Our electricity consumption has increased dramatically because we have to prepare ice cream several times a day.</p> <p>G: Storeroom renting costs has been raised because of banning Vehicle traffics to Ganjnameh.</p> <p>L: Transportation costs have also increased for supermarkets and grocery shops because they have to charge the raw materials frequently, in small scale because there is the risk of food spoilage due to the lack of demand by tourists</p>
	Sanctions	<p>L: The decline in our exports was more due to sanctions than to the corona (5)</p> <p>G: I think the reason for these inflations is just sanctions (13)</p>
	Fake information spread and misleading media reports	<p>G: Providing phony and incomplete information caused for a long time, people thought that cool beverages and ice cream increases the risk of infection by corona virus, then we lost our customers completely, and lots of ice cream and beverage counters has been closed.</p>

In according to the results, we critically illustrate 4 different aspects of complexity of the situation arisen from corona virus pandemic on tourism sector in Ganjnameh and Lalejin, including: resilience strategies and sustainability, change in tourist behavior, change in the tourism industry, and aggravating factors. These aspects have played complex and different roles in tourism sector in two different touristic regions and showed that the intensity of corona pandemic effects is not same in touristic destinations. These complexity aspects are more explained below:

- Resilience strategies and sustainability

In according to the results Ganjnameh and Lalejin region have taken different forms of resilient strategies and they have experienced different sustainability levels during corona pandemic. There are three main mechanisms that affected sustainability level and resilience strategies in these regions, includes: "open to change" ability and innovation capability, labor and capital mobility/rigidity, and ability to attract consistent and loyal customers (unrivaled goods and services). In according to the results, although approximately all of tourism related businesses in Ganjnameh have fired up their personnels, and lots of them have been closed in order to manage and reduce their expenses and resist against COVID-19

pressure, however the strategy of resilience in Lalejin was completely different and they have not experienced unemployment at all and they have just changed their affairs from retail sellers of pottery to pottery producers or pottery wholesalers in a housework and then exporting them nationally and internationally, because pottery workshops have not lost their major markets during corona pandemic. In addition, these affairs in Lalejin have not seen unemployed people as workers have innate skills and expertise of pottery and then, during the crisis, they could easily move from their initial affairs to other one (pottery). They also could easily shift their capital among different affairs and finally to pottery production. But as businesses who are supplying tourism good and services in pleasure tourism need less skills and expertise, then the workers in Ganjnameh was unable to move to another job and they have experience unemployment. This mechanism is described through “labor and capital Mobility/rigidity” channel. “open to change” ability and innovation capability of tourism related businesses is another channel that affects resilience strategies and sustainability level in Ganjnameh and Lalejin. In according to the results businesses in Lalejin were more open to change and tried innovative solutions in order to cope with corona. For example, the restaurants offered takeaway services, or they offered offline services and supplied handicrafts through internal and external applications, in this way they did not lose customers. But, business man in Ganjnameh was not able to utilize innovative ways to survive, because of the nature of Ganjnameh’s tourism form (pleasure tourism) and its long distance from city center. Another channel affecting resilience strategies and sustainability level in mentioned regions is ability to supply unrivaled tourism goods and services. Since Lalejin is the capital city of pottery in the world, and provides unique handicrafts, then they could maintain their main customers, whereas the demand for touristic goods and services in Ganjnameh has fallen down drastically.

Therefore, it looks that the resilience strategies and sustainability level in considered regions are more complex and Lalejin which enjoys a commercial based tourism, acted more resilience and have more sustainable tourism economy.

- Change in tourist behavior

One of other complex aspects of COVID-19 in affecting tourism economy is changes that have been observed in tourist’s behaviors. These changes in tourism behaviors have been observed in 4 main areas of: Travel duration/distance, tourism forms, eating preferences, form of transportation. In according to the

results tourists are distancing from mass tourism and they have preferred taking solo travel and single trips, in a short time and short distance. They preferred eco-lodges and mountain villas rather than reserving hotels and stay in crowd. In addition, they have more trust on packaged goods rather than street foods and other services. In addition, they are more interested in discovering pristine and outland landscapes far away the crowds. Also they preferred to travel by their own cars and refuse public transportation. These results are consistent with the results of Zhang et al (2021), Macdonald (2020), Nepal (2020), Wen (2020), Wang & Ackerman (2019), Faulkner, Schaller, Park, & Duncan (2004) and they refer to some of aspects of tourism behavior changes during crisis.

- Change in the Tourism Industry

In according to the results, during corona virus pandemic, tourism industry has faced critical changes that raise the complexity of corona virus affects. For example, approximately lots of tourism businesses in Ganjnameh have experienced change in tourism service ecosystem (chain /connections) and they have lost their communications, connection chains, common arrangements and collusions among other downstream jobs. This issue has been observed in Lalejin as elimination of connections and removal of middle mans and intermediaries in pottery exporting process, and producers has improved their direct relations to their final consumers. Then we realize that Lalejin tourism industry has experienced a positive change where the Ganjnameh's tourism industry has experienced negative changes. In addition, COVID-19 pandemic raised missing quality and missing diversity problem in Ganjnameh. For example, the restaurants and hotels have fire up master chefs and now the unskilled and inexperienced cook assistants are cooking in brand new hotels, or the restaurants are using low quality and cheap raw materials in cooking, also they have removed western dishes from restaurant's menu, these issues may threaten hotels and restaurants credit. This problem has occurred in Lalejin, and in some cases the pottery producers have to reduce the quality of handmade and refuse to produce decorative and non-applicative pottery handicrafts. In addition, Ganjnameh businesses have experienced management change and nowadays they are managing by the owner unskilled family.

The tourism industry changes resulted from COVID-19 pandemic has positively affected Lalejin tourism industry. For example, pottery businessmen have improved their presence by holding virtual exhibitions, strengthening their connections with customers by applying social media, website, phone and email connections. Finally, the tourism businesses in Ganjnameh have offered additional

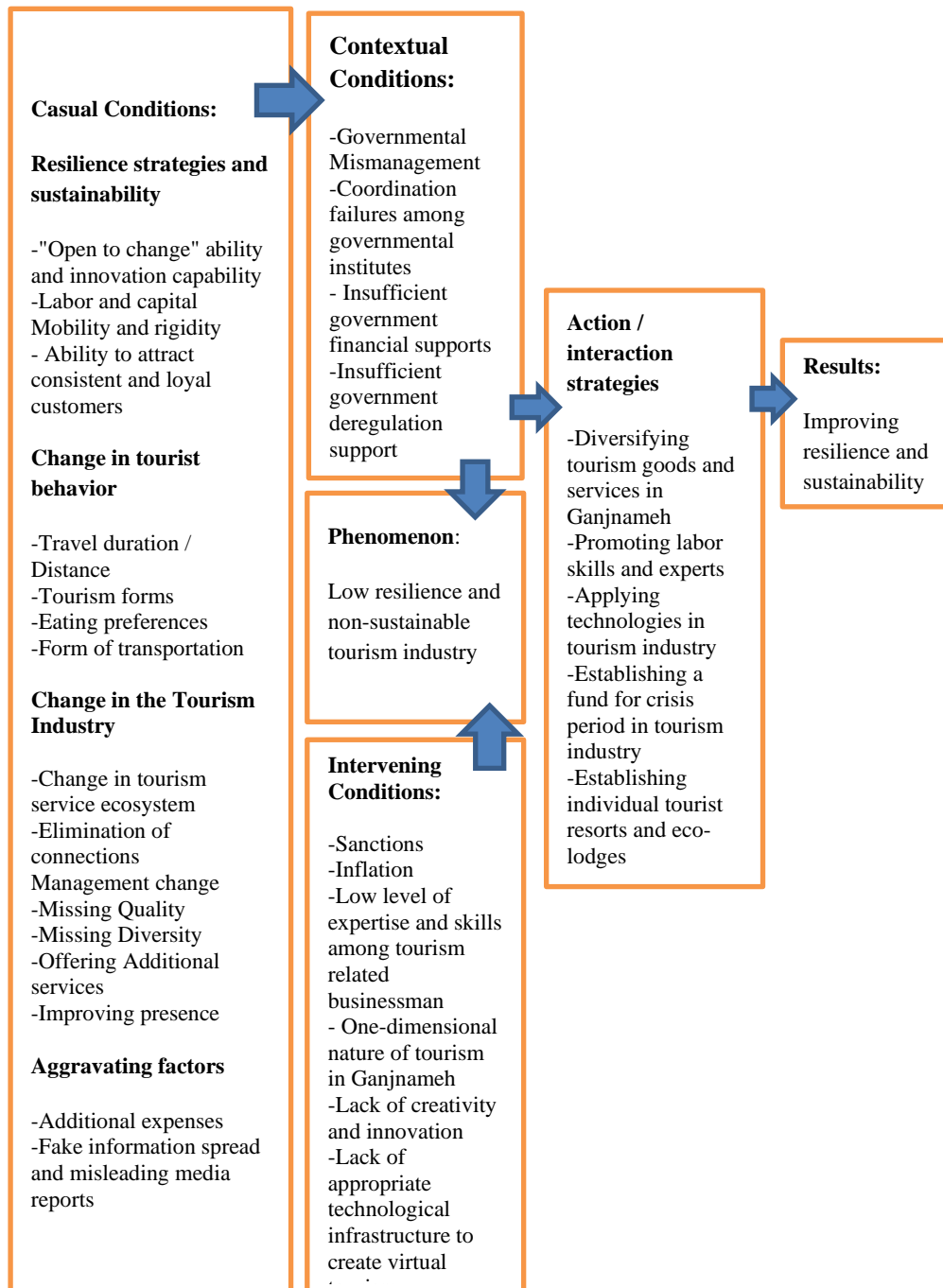
services as significant discount offers for tourism service supplies. All of these channels are according to the channels discovered by the studies of Rowen (2020), Koch (2020), Loannides and Gyimothy (2020), Calvao and Avillez (2020), Martínez, et al (2015), Kuhn (2012).

- Aggravating factors

One of factors that made corona effects more complex in our sample region is aggravating factors and the resilience of tourism is more vulnerable to aggravating factors. Fake information release and misleading media reports was one of those aggravating factors that caused serious early native demand reduction for tourism goods and services, in Ganjnameh. In addition, COVID-19 pandemic upraised new additional expenses (as free hygienic care supply to consumers) for hotels, restaurants and other tourism service suppliers, and this problem caused reduction in resilience threshold for tourism businesses in Ganjnameh. Also, inflation, sanctions, and governmental mismanagement are another threatening factors in tourism economy that has intensified adverse effects of COVID-19 on tourism sector both in Ganjnameh and Lalejin.

In addition, according to the results, it is obvious that COVID-19 play dissimilar and uneven role in our two different tourism destinations of Ganjnameh (pleasure tourism) and Lalejin (commercial based tourism). This result is consistent with the results of Zenker and Koch (2020), Amcillo et al (2020), and Bratianu (2021). Also our results indicate that the adverse channels through which COVID-19 confined resilience and threatened sustainability of tourism businesses in Ganjnameh is more plentiful, where these adverse channels were limited in Lalejin. Figure 1 shows the paradigm model of this research and explains how COVID-19 pandemic concerns the tourism businesses.

Figure 1: Paradigm Model of the Research (Source: Authors' Research)



This paradigm model explains how casual conditions, contextual factors, and intervening factors threatened the resilience and sustainability of Ganjnameh and Lalejin tourism industry. In according to the figure 1, in order to improve resilience and sustainability of tourism industry in our sample we need to diversify tourism goods and services in Ganjnameh, promote labor skills and experts, apply technologies in tourism industry, establish a fund for crisis period in tourism industry, and finally establishing individual tourist resorts and eco-lodges. Finally, according to Brown et al (2002), Morrow (2005), and Sikolia et al (2013), the dependability of this research checked by an outside researchers and conduct an inquiry audit and examine, explore, and challenge how data analysis and interpretation occurred. The outside researcher confirmed the accuracy of the findings and to ensure the findings are supported by the data collected.

5. Conclusion

In order to discover complex aspects of COVID-19 – tourism economics relationship in Ganjnameh and Lalejin and compare the intensity of COVID-19 adverse effects in these two different regions, this study applied grounded theory approach and conduct an interview survey among 40 businessmen in the regions. The main elucidated complexity channels are as follows: resilience strategy and sustainability, shifting in tourists' behavior and tourists' trends, changes in tourism industry, changes in tourist service ecosystem, and improvements of customer-producer relationship among other long-term and indirect effects. In according to the results, The COVID-19 effects are uneven in two different touristic sites and Lalejin tourist related businesses did not experience a significant downturn in comparison to the burdensome adverse effects experienced in Ganjnameh. Tourism related affaires in Lalejin showed a great level of resilience in comparison with Ganjnameh. Therefore, it seems that tourism which stimulated by local handicrafts, and subjects to a commercial and conventional tourism looks more sustainable and resilient than other forms of tourism.

Some of related lessons could be learned from this paper are as follows:

- In fact, as tourism sector need low level of knowledge, literacy, expertise, and skills, then tourism boom encourages local people to provide touristic goods and services and prevent residents not think about acquiring skills, expertise and literacy. This factor causes in situations like COVID-19 crisis, these people cannot easily find another job and mobile to other jobs.

This mechanism have worked well in Lalejin region, as all of Lalejin people are equipped with pottery art, then they could easily change their affairs and started to do pottery and export them all over the world, even in lockdown situations. Then promoting labor and capital mobility would be a suitable resilience strategies especially for pleasure tourism related jobs.

- Personal, slow and lonely tourism may drive future tourism activities.
- Tourism good and service diversification could be a good survival strategies especially for pleasure tourism. Then they should make efforts in developing a diverse portfolio of tourism markets.
- Providing more personal and family scale tourism accommodations, eco-tourism and agro rural tourism, needed more after pandemic crisis.
- Tourism good and services quality reduction is one threatening results of COVID-19 observed both in Ganjnameh and Lalejin.
- Tourism related businesses especially in Ganjnameh are recommended to improve their capability to be more open to change and innovation.
- We lost the coordination among different tourism agents and it could threat tourism market in Ganjnameh.

These results could provide valuable information for tourist related jobs and downstream jobs to prepare suitable resilience strategies in order to be more sustainable in occurrence of any crisis in tourist sector.

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بررسی اثرات پاندمی کووید-۱۹ بر کسب و کارهای صنعت گردشگری در مقاصد تفریحی و تجاری گردشگری: مطالعه مقایسه‌ای و موردی منطقه تفریحی گنج‌نامه و شهر لالچین

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چکیده

پاندمی کووید-۱۹ از اواخر سال ۲۰۱۹ م. آغاز شده و به سرعت، تقریباً به سرتاسر دنیا سرایت کرده و به یک بحران جهانی تبدیل شده است. این بیماری، دنیا را با مشکلات اقتصادی و اجتماعی متعددی روبه‌رو کرده و منجر به ورشکستگی و تعطیلی بسیاری از فعالیت‌های اقتصادی، از جمله فعالیت‌های حوزه گردشگری شده است. براساس گزارش سازمان جهانی گردشگری (WTO)، اثرات ناشی از همه‌گیری کووید-۱۹ بر صنعت گردشگری، بیش از ۴ تریلیون دلار بر اقتصاد جهان زیان وارد کرده است. هم‌چنین، براساس این گزارش، کشورهای در حال توسعه تأثیر این همه‌گیری را به شدت احساس کرده و ورود گردشگران به این کشورها بین ۶۰ تا ۸۰ درصد کاهش یافته است. در این میان، کشور ایران نیز با دارا بودن ظرفیت‌های گردشگری جهانی، از این معضل به دور نبوده و متحمل زیان ناشی از رکود صنعت توریسم شده است؛ به طوری که براساس گزارش وزارت میراث فرهنگی، صنایع دستی و گردشگری کشور، میزان خسارات وارده بر صنعت گردشگری ایران طی ۱۵ ماهه اخیر حدود ۲۲۰ هزار میلیارد ریال برآورد شده است. در این میان، برخی از نظریه پردازان معتقدند که هر چند شیوع کووید-۱۹ و تحمیل قرنطینه‌های دوره‌ای و ایجاد محدودیت‌های سفر در سرتاسر دنیا به مقاصد گردشگری ضرر رسانده است، اما به نظر می‌رسد اثرگذاری کووید-۱۹ بر کسب و کارهای حوزه توریسم بسیار پیچیده بوده و شدت این اثرات نامطلوب و نیز کانال‌های اثرگذاری آن بر کسب و کارهای حوزه توریسم در کشورهای مقصد گردشگری مختلف، یکسان نیست و برحسب نوع گردشگری رایج در کشورهای مقصد گردشگری، میزان این اثرگذاری متفاوت بوده است؛ لذا هدف از این مطالعه، بررسی مقایسه‌ای اثرات همه‌گیری کووید-۱۹ بر کسب و کارهای صنعت توریسم در شهر همدان و شهر لالچین می‌باشد. با توجه به این که نوع گردشگری رایج در شهر همدان، گردشگری تفریحی و تاریخی بوده و نوع گردشگری شهر لالچین، گردشگری

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تجاری (مبتنی بر صنایع دستی) می‌باشد؛ لذا به راحتی می‌توان با مقایسه کانال‌های مختلف اثرگذاری کووید-۱۹ بر کسب و کارهای حوزه توریسم در این دو منطقه، به جنبه‌های پیچیده اثرگذاری این همه‌گیری پی‌برد و متناسب با این کانال‌ها و میزان اثرگذاری در این دو منطقه، استراتژی‌های مناسب تاب‌آوری و سیاست‌های مناسب برای هر چه پایدارتر کردن صنعت توریسم در این مناطق ارائه داد. این مطالعه به منظور بررسی جنبه‌های پیچیده شیوع کووید-۱۹ بر کسب و کارهای صنعت توریسم در این دو منطقه از روش نظریه پردازی داده بنیاد (GT)^۱ استفاده کرده است. «برنیز» و «گرو» معتقدند که روش بستر زاد یا گراند تئوری، به طور معمول در زمینه‌هایی به کار گرفته می‌شوند که دانش کاملی در مورد پدیده مورد بررسی در دست نباشد و هدف از آن کسب بینش و دیدگاه جدید نسبت به پدیده مورد بررسی باشد. این روش کمک می‌کند تا محقق براساس روایت‌های فردی و تجربه‌های شخصی افراد مطلع که همواره تجربه زیسته‌ای از موضوع داشته و حضور فعال در کم‌وکیف پدیده دارند، با دیدگاه درونی آنان آشنا شده و چستی و چگونگی پدیده را شناسایی نماید (حیدری، رزاقی: ۱۳۹۹)؛ لذا در این مطالعه به منظور گردآوری اطلاعات اولیه، با ۴۰ نفر از افراد فعال در حوزه کسب و کارهای صنعت گردشگری منطقه گنج‌نامه و لالچین مصاحبه‌های عمیق صورت گرفت و پس از رسیدن به مرحله اشباع نظری این مصاحبه‌ها به پایان رسید. نتایج نشان‌دهنده آن است که شدت اثرگذاری همه‌گیری کووید-۱۹ بر گردشگری در این دو منطقه کاملاً متفاوت بوده و کانال‌های اثرگذاری آن پیچیده است؛ به این ترتیب که کسب و کارهای موجود در منطقه گردشگری گنج‌نامه، زیان و خسارات سنگین‌تری نسبت به کسب و کارهای گردشگری فعال در لالچین متحمل شده و این صنعت در منطقه گنج‌نامه شکننده‌تر و آسیب‌پذیرتر است. علاوه بر این، نتایج حاصل بیانگر این است که صنعت توریسم در مناطق گردشگری که بر پایه صنایع دستی بوده و یا مقاصد گردشگری تجاری محسوب می‌شوند در مقایسه با گردشگری تفریحی، پایدارتر و در مقابل بحران‌ها، انعطاف‌پذیرتر و مقاوم‌تر هستند؛ برای مثال، با توجه به این که اغلب افراد فعال در حوزه گردشگری در لالچین دارای مهارت‌های تخصصی (سفال‌گری) بودند به هنگام رکود ناشی از کووید-۱۹ به راحتی توانستند تغییر شغل درون صنعتی داده و از یک خرده‌فروش سفال تبدیل به تولیدکننده و یا عمده‌فروش شوند؛ لذا شاغلین کسب و کارهای حوزه گردشگری در این منطقه بیکاری خیلی گسترده را تجربه نکردند، اما با توجه به این که افراد شاغل در حوزه گردشگری در منطقه گنج‌نامه، دارای مهارت‌های تخصصی نبودند با بیکاری گسترده‌تری روبه‌رو گردیده و نتوانستند به راحتی شغلی دیگر پیدا کنند. هم‌چنین، نتایج مطالعه حاضر نشان می‌دهد که همه‌گیری کووید-۱۹ منجر به ایجاد تغییر در علایق و سلیقه‌های گردشگران و نیز تغییر در درون صنعت گردشگری شده است؛ لذا به منظور ایجاد رونق دوباره صنعت گردشگری در دوران پسا کرونا، توجه به تغییرات ایجاد شده در علایق و سلیقه مشتریان و گردشگران امری ضروری به نظر می‌رسد.

کلید واژه‌ها: پاندمی کووید-۱۹، صنعت گردشگری، گنج‌نامه، لالچین، گراند تئوری.

طبقه‌بندی JEL: I19, H12, P41, Z32 .

¹ Grounded Theory