Original Article

Evaluation and Analysis of Resilience of Rural Tourism and Identification of Key Drivers Affecting It in The Face of The Covid-19 Pandemic in Iran

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Abstract

Purpose- Owramanat County in Kermanshah province with 14 tourism regions, is one of the best tourist destinations of Kermanshah province, in which the tourism activists have faced challenges during the period of the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic. The purpose of the present study is to evaluate and analyze the resilience of rural tourism and identify the key drivers affecting it in the face of Covid-19 pandemic in Owramanat County.

Design/methodology/approach- the present applied, quantitative study has been conducted with a combined approach (combination of descriptive-analytical and exploratory methods). The questionnaire method was used for data collection and its validity and reliability have been confirmed by observing scientific principles. In order to achieve the purposes of the study, the opinions of 150 people from the local community active in the field of tourism were used to evaluate the resilience, and the opinions of 30 experts were used to identify the primary factors affecting the resilience and also the views of 25 experts were taken into consideration in order to identify the key drivers affecting the resilience of rural tourism. The SPSS and MICMAC software were used to analyze the collected data.

Findings- The research findings showed that, the average of four variables including local government budget, environmental knowledge, community welfare, and social support system as the main components of the resilience of rural tourism were 1.757, 2.358, 1.808, and 2.295 respectively and have been significantly lower than the base average. The overall assessment results showed that the calculated average with a value of 2.014 has been significantly lower than the medium level. The results also showed that, among 17 factors affecting the resilience of tourism, 5 factors of government financial support, financial capital, sanitary equipment, infrastructural facilities and disease control are the most effective key drivers on resilience .

Originality/ value- Evaluation and analysis of the resilience of rural tourism in the face of Covid-19 pandemic with an approach of presenting the key indicators and variables in this field and also identification of key drivers affecting the resilience of rural tourism have received less attention from researchers and this proves the originality of the present study.

Keywords- Covid-19 Pandemic, Rural Tourism, Resilience, Key Drivers.

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1. Introduction

Today, the role of tourism in national political communications, economic development and residents' welfare and also achieving the goals of sustainable development has received increasing momentum (Huang et al., 2021). Tourism provides opportunities for employment and income and also markets for local goods and services; however, if the tourism industry did not exist, these opportunities would not exist either (Munanura et al., 2021). In most countries, the tourism sector has been identified as a potential tool for increasing the economic growth and reducing poverty (Henseler et al., 2021). Among different types of tourism industry, rural tourism is one of the most important dimensions of this industry (Bayrak, 2022). The importance of rural tourism is to the extent that, it has been referred to as a rural revitalization strategy[1]. Rural tourism plays an essential role as a new model of poverty alleviation, especially in the poor areas including rural areas with abundant tourism resources (Dang et al., 2022). Nevertheless, the surveys show that, nowadays rural communities face numerous challenges (Bayrak, 2022) such as unemployment (Jamshidi et al., 2015), limited access to facilities (Amini & Jamini; 2014; Ghadermarzi et al., 2015), poverty, food insecurity, low welfare level (Jamini & Jamshidi, 2021), and migration from villages to cities (Jamini et al., 2022). Therefore, rural tourism can be used to achieve rural development (Latifi et al., 2013) and sustainable rural development (Shokati Amghani et al., 2016).

Surveys show that, during the past periods tourism industry has been affected by various crises. But the outbreak of Covid-19 whose origin goes back to Wuhan, China (Jagdale & Ganatra, 2021), as the greatest challenge after world war II (Panthhe & Kokate, 2021), has influenced all economic sectors (Jagdale & Ganatra, 2021; Komasi et al., 2022; Chen et al., 2022; Lin et al., 2022), all jobs and industries, public health, macroeconomics and social aspects of life (Kocak et al., 2022) and especially tourism industry with maximum pressure (Duro et al., 2022; Simarangkir et al., 2021; Al-Mughairi et al., 2021). Given that, tourists avoid visiting dangerous destinations (Rahman et al., 2021), the outbreak of Covid-19 led

to decrease in air traffic, the rapid decrease in the occupancy of residences in countries, suspension of personnel and in many cases bankruptcy of companies in the tourism sector (Zouni et al., 2021), in such a way that, World Travel and Tourism Council has announced that, 50 million jobs in the world's travel and tourism sector are in danger (Waleed et al., 2022: 2). It is necessary to mention that, limited knowledge and experience about how coronavirus works, made the tourism industry quite vulnerable (McCartney et al., 2022). Exactly like all types of tourism industry, rural tourism also with the beginning of the Covid-19 epidemic, with the forced closure of residences, restaurants and tourist attractions, quarantine regulations at the national and regional levels and with different degrees of strictness, with the goal of limiting the spread of the coronavirus, suffered a deep economic crisis (Panzer-krause, 2022) and was severely affected by the coronavirus (Curtis & Slocum, 2021). The chain-like and complex effect of this disease which has been compared to the effect of a snowball, has brought significant negative effects on the tourism industry by destroying the links in the chain of jobs and livelihoods of people (Ghann, 2021). In the meantime, Corona has had more effects on areas that have relied too much on ecotourism. On the contrary, the corona virus has had less effects on areas whose livelihood activities were more focused on agriculture and processing of agricultural products (Solicu et al., 2021) and also the consequences of the corona virus on areas with low income levels have been much more severe (Sah et al, 2020).

Nevertheless, local households and communities have different capacities to deal with or adapt to risks which can be referred to as resilience capacity[2] and efforts must be made and significant resources must be collected in order to achieve and improve it. In other words, households and communities must use different types of capitals to deal with risks and invest on it (Bayrak, 2022). Therefore, one of the most important categories to reduce the harmful effects of Covid-19 on tourism is to pay attention to the concept of resilience, as an essential concept in sustainable development, (Wang et al., 2022) whose main goal in all systems is to reach perfection even in facing pressures and

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1. Rural Revitalization Strategy

2. Resilience capacity

stress (Eghbali et al., 2021). Resilience has increased in recent years due to the experienced shocks in tourism and other industries all over the world (Gabriel-Campos et al., 2021). Based on scientific texts, resilience is dependent on drivers and determinants that are different according to the studied spaces, not adopting one approach for all urban areas or all rural areas (Solicu et al., 2021). Rural settlements located in Owramanat (including four towns of Javanrood, Paveh, Rawansar, and Salas and Babajani counties) are among the prone areas in the west of the country in terms of attracting tourists. The pristine nature of the area, dense forests of oak, border markets, stepped villages, spectacular caves, the attractive environment around Darian dam, 50 tourism areas and so on, are only a part of tourism attractions of this area. With the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic, tourism activists in this region faced many challenges following the national and international trends. Considering that the level of resilience of villagers against the effects of the Covid-19 disease plays a vital role in the continuation of their activities when facing the disease as well as the future status of their activities, the study of resilience among the villagers active in the tourism sector is very important. Since resilience is influenced by various factors which are different according to natural and human conditions and the atmosphere governing different areas, the main questions of the present study are: what is the state of resilience among activists of rural tourism in Owramanat region in the face of Covid-19 crisis? And what are the key drivers affecting the resilience of rural tourism activists in Owramanat region?

2. Research Theoretical Literature

The pandemic Covid-19 is often considered as a kind of crisis or disaster. In general, crisis refers to domestic events, while a disaster is related to foreign events. Anyway, crises and disasters (catastrophes) are unexpected events which threaten the function of tourism businesses, endanger the reputation of the destination, and affect the passengers' trust (Yang et al., 2021). The concept of resilience is among the most key concepts to counter all risks (crises and disasters)

(Bayrak, 2022). The term resilience was basically a concept in the field of physics, which meant "return to one's original shape" (Wang et al., 2022). In other words, resilience is the capacity of a system to absorb a disorder; in a way that the function, structure, feedback and identity of the system are maintained at the same time (Naylor et al., 2021). The indigenous resilience is one of the concepts related to resilience which consists of: the ways that cultural factors such as knowledge and learning, along with a broader political ecology determine how local and native people perceive the environmental changes, deal with it and adapt to it (Bayrak, 2022). Psychological resilience is another concept related to resilience and can be described as " the ability of an individual to adapt, go back, and even progress in the face of changes and adversity" (Weng et al., 2022). The notion of resilience was gradually applied to the study of ecosystems, social systems, and socio-ecological systems. However, the resilience of tourism destination is a combination of resilience and tourism geography. The resilience of the tourism destination is the ability of these places to resist, adapt and self-organize against disorders. This, is a new approach and view for the tourism destinations to counter the threats resulted from crises and different natural or human uncertainties (Wang et al., 2022). In another definition, tourism resilience is described as the ability of a destination to absorb shocks and remain active (Duro et al., 2022). Researchers have considered the use of more methods and models, such as structural equations, scenario planning, etc. to be very useful and effective for evaluating the resilience of tourism destinations (Wang et al., 2022).

Lew et al (2016) during a field study, have suggested the following components and indicators as the indicators of rural tourism resilience (Table 1).

Table 1. Indicators of rural tourism resilience

Source: (Lew et al., 2016)

Component	Resilience Indicators
Local Government Budgeting	Building capacity in the society for change: • The level of building infrastructure for education/ interpretation and explanation and access to resources • Plans for innovative development and marketing of tourism
Environmental Knowledge	Creating new environmental knowledge: • Participation of local people and tourists in the environmental education programs • Innovative use of traditional knowledge by local people
Community Well Being	Improving life and employment conditions: • The rate of unemployment and youth migration • The rate of employment in tourism
Social Support System	Supporting social cooperation: • The rate of participation in religious organizations and • other local organizations

However, resilience of tourism destinations is dependent on numerous stimulants and drivers. On this base, having factors such as financial capital (sufficient income and saving), natural capital (access to natural resources, modern irrigation equipment, improving soil quality), social capital (social networks and institutes), physical capital (ecosystem services and fixed assets), human capital (knowledge and skill) are effective in increasing resilience against the risks (Bayrak, 2022). Also according to a few more views the use of digital technology (Abbas et al., 2021), actions of local, regional or national governments in attracting investors through tax exemptions, facilitating legal conditions of land use, boosting tourism, flexibility of technology, sense of place, trust of customers and employees (Sharma et al., 2021) and social capital (Gabriel-Campos et al., 2021; Bayrak, 2022) are other factors influencing the resilience of tourism destinations.

Considering the importance of rural tourism in the process of rural development and the effects of Covid-19 on this industry and also the role of key determinants in increasing the rate of resilience, researchers have conducted studies in this field, whose results are discussed in the following.

Sadeghloo et al., (2016) conducted a study with the aim of analyzing the resilience of tourism businesses in rural areas of the tourism sphere of influence of Mashhad city and concluded that, the study villages do not have a suiTable condition in terms of resilience of tourism businesses. The results of the study by Nizamivand Chegini (2021) on the resilience of tourism industry against Covid-19 indicated that, government accountability,

technological innovation, local communities' sense of place and trust of customers and employees are among the most important factors affecting the increase of resilience level.

Asadi and Jabbari (2022) in their study investigated the factors influencing the resilience of rural tourism community in the tourism destination villages of Hamadan. The results showed that, social dimensions and components (the ability of society to adapt to changes, content creation and producing the knowledge of tourism and empowering the tourism local community), the environmental dimensions and components (management and local supervision of the environment, creating and using local knowledge and new environmental knowledge, health and safety of the tourism community) and economic dimensions and components (improvement of life and economic conditions, diversity and flexibility of tourism activities and financial support in line with sustainable development of tourism) are the factors influencing resilience and from all of them, financial support is the most effective component and it is the cornerstone of resilience of rural tourism community in line with sustainable development of tourism.

The results of the study conducted by Sharma et al., (2021) on the revival of the tourism industry after Covid-19 with a resilience-based approach globally showed that four prominent factors for developing resilience in tourism industry in their proposed approach are: governments, market actors, technology innovators and workforce active in the tourism industry. Meanwhile, the role of

local community participation has been referred to as a significantly vital factor.

Gabriel-Campos et al., (2021) in a study on the resilience of community eco-tourism against Covid-19 and climate change in a village located in Andes mountains in Peru, showed that, society's readiness for both threats is heterogeneous. On the one hand, the community eco-tourism system has created sufficient tools to cope with the temporary effects of Covid-19 through a coherent social structure and a strong cultural identity, and on the other hand, local community has performed poorly in communication with other local organizations to prevent and successfully respond to climate change. The results of a study by Lee et al., (2022) on the effect of social support on the perception of Covid-19 and the moderating effect of job resilience in tourism of Taiwan, indicated the effectiveness of social support (family and friends, national supportive policies (subsidies) and support at work) for tourism activists in the fight against corona virus and increase their resilience.

Panzer-Krause (2022) in a study on the resilience of rural tourism during Covid-19 in two tourism destinations of Germany and Ireland, concluded that political actions can be effective on increasing the resilience of rural tourism. The results of a research by Duro et al., (2022) on the resilience of tourism against Covid-19 in Spain showed that, Covid-19 has significantly influenced the tourism destinations of Spain which is one of the leading countries of the world in this field. Also the results of this research showed that, the expertise and previous experience in attracting domestic tourists (during Covid-19 few foreign tourists have visited tourism destinations), population density (despite the overall reduction of tourism activities, the areas with less density had a better relative performance), and disease control had considerable effects on tourism resilience. The results of a study by Bayrak (2022) with the aim of surveying the effects of local tourism on the native's resilience against the risks in high areas of Taiwan, indicated that, the participation in indigenous tourism has helped to improve and enhance the level of resilience.

Review of the theoretical foundations and the research literature shows that, several studies have been done on the subject of study in other countries, but the research conducted in our country regarding the resilience of rural tourism is very limited and no study has been done on the resilience of rural tourism in the face of Covid-19. Also identifying the key drivers of the discussed topic has been neglected by researchers. Therefore, the present study is innovative in terms of the subject, presenting the indicators of tourism resilience and identifying the key drivers affecting it and can be used as a basis for future studies.

3. Research Methodology

Owramanat region (including four counties of Javanrood, Paveh, Rawansar, and Salas and Babajani) is one of the prone border areas of Kermanshah province and the country, which according to the results of the last population and housing census had a population of 218476 people. Of these, 83558 people (about 38.3% of the population) live in rural settlements of this region. This high percentage of rural dwellers compared to the provincial and national average indicates the high potential of this region in maintaining the rural population (Statistical Center of Iran, 2016). One of the most important potentials of rural part of Owramanat region, is its tourism attractions. Currently, 14 out of 50 prone tourism areas of Kermanshah province have been located in Owramanat region. Among these areas the most important ones are Qooriqaleh, Hajij, Sefid barg, Bozin and Markheil, Dalani, Shamshir, Nowdeshah, and Nosoud (General department of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts of Kermanshah province, 2022).
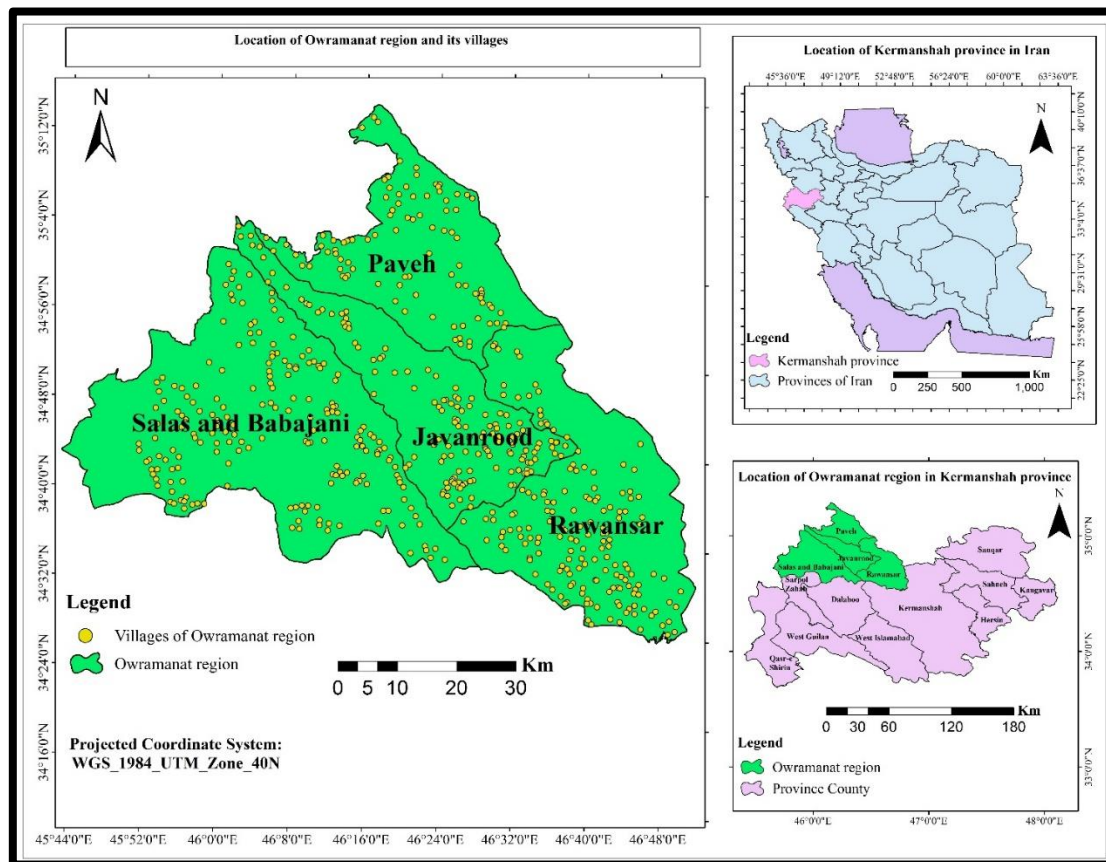
Figure 1. the location of the study area in Kermanshah province and Iran
Source: (Statistical Center of Iran, 2016)

The present quantitative and applied research has been conducted using a combined approach (a combination of descriptive-analytical and exploratory methods) in terms of methodology. Documentary (article contents, reports, and the data of Statistical Center of Iran) and field (questionnaires of citizens and experts) were used to collect data and it was done in two main parts. The first part of the study is related to evaluation and measurement of the indicators of the resilience of rural tourism in the face of Covid-19 and the second part is assigned to identifying the key drivers affecting the resilience of rural tourism in the face of Covid-19.

In the first part of the study, the statistical population includes all the rural tourism activists in Owramanat region, and there is no exact number of them. Nevertheless, 150 tourism activists were considered as a statistical sample. The questionnaires were distributed in such a way that field information can be collected from all touristic areas of the region (villages near the communication axes and natural and human

tourism attractions such as caves and shrines, etc.). Finally, the questionnaires were distributed among activists of tourism industry who were selected through convenience sampling and completed by them. In this part of the study, the main tools of collecting field information was researcher-made questionnaire. Its (face) validity was examined by the views of experts and specialists in rural planning and tourism. The pretest method and completing 30 questionnaire were done to examine its reliability and the obtained Cronbach's alpha coefficient was more than 0.7 which indicated the reliability of the applied tools. The mentioned questionnaire was designed in two main parts. The first part was assigned to demographic information of the respondents such as age, job, monthly income, experience in tourism, household size and their education and the second part was assigned to the status of indicators and variables of the resilience of rural tourism. It is worth mentioning that the study of Lew et al., (2016) was used as the basis of the rural tourism resilience questionnaire. Five level Likert scale (1=very low, 2=low,

3=average, 4-high, 5=very high) was used to measure the variables of rural tourism resilience. In this part of the study SPSS software was used to analyze the collected data.

Table 2. The main dimensions, indicators, and variables of rural tourism resilience in the face of Covid-19 crisis
Source: (Lew et al., 2016 & Research findings, 2022)

Components	Resilience indicators	Variables
Local Government Budgeting	Building capacity in the society for change: -level of building infrastructure for education/ interpretation and explanation and access to resources -plans for innovative development and marketing of tourism	-capacity building in the society for change through allocation of government credits to build educational infrastructure to strengthen tourism - capacity building in the society for change through allocation of government credits to develop access to banking infrastructure -capacity building in the society for change through allocation of government credits to develop access to other financial infrastructure (cooperative companies, private companies, etc.) - capacity building in the society for change through allocation of government credits to establish micro credit funds for tourism development -capacity building in the society for change through allocation of government credits to develop tourism entrepreneurship
Environmental Knowledge	Creating new Environmental Knowledge: -participation of inhabitants and tourists in environmental education program -innovative use of traditional knowledge of local people	-the level of participation and cooperation of villagers and tourists in face-to-face environmental protection classes and courses -the level of participation and cooperation of villagers and tourists in virtual classes and courses on environmental protection -the level of participation and membership of villagers in environmental protection associations -the extent to which villagers use local knowledge to protect the environment -the rate of innovation in local knowledge to protect the environment
Community Well Being	Improving Living and Employment conditions -rate of unemployment -rate of employment in Tourism	-the effect of tourism on improving youth employment -the effect of tourism on reduction of youth migration -the effect of tourism on job creation -the effect of tourism on improving job diversity
Social Support Systems	Supporting social Cooperation: -the amount of participation in religious organizations and other local organizations	-the amount of support for people's participation in religious ceremonies -the amount of support for people's participation in local ceremonies (Nowrouz eve, local festivals, celebrations and local contests, etc.) - the amount of support for people's participation in formation of local charities

In the second part of the research, Delphi method and the views of 30 experts and specialists in rural planning and tourism were used to identify the key drivers affecting the resilience of rural tourism in Owramanat region in the face of Covid-19 pandemic. Among all the primary factors affecting the resilience of rural tourism, 17 main variables have been identified and extracted (Table 3). Then, by distributing questionnaires and surveying 25 certified experts, the key drivers affecting the resilience of rural tourism in Owramanat region were identified through cross-impact analysis using MICMAC software. It should be noted that the selection of experts in both stages was done using the snowball method.

Table 3. The main factors affecting the resilience of rural tourism in the face of Covid-19 crisis from the experts and specialists' points of view
Source: (Research findings, 2022)

Variable	Code	Variable	Code	Variable	Code
Social capital	A1	Infrastructure Facilities	A7	Investment in Private sector	A13
Social support	A2	Skill and Expertise	A8	Local Management	A14
Access to digital Technology	A3	Tourists' Interactions	A9	Sense of place	A15
Knowledge and Awareness	A4	Transparency	A10	Disease control	A16
Financial capital	A5	Security	A11	Government's Financial Support	A17
Regional Management	A6	Sanitary Equipment	A12		

4. Research Findings

4.1. Examining the personal characteristics of respondents

The research findings in regard with age status of respondents showed that, the average age was about 43 and the youngest and the oldest respondents were 22 and 63 years old respectively. The household size was 4.3. In terms of employment status of the respondents, the results indicated that, the main jobs of about 53% of respondents were providing various services to tourists and the rest were working in the tourism sector on a seasonal and part-time basis in addition to other jobs. The monthly household income of 53% of the respondents was less than 3 million tomans and 31% of them had an income between 3 to 5 million tomans which showed a severe income decrease during Covid-19 pandemic in the study area. The calculated average activity history of the respondents in the tourism sector was about 11 years. The results also showed that, 6% of the respondents were illiterate, 24% had primary education, 27% had middle school education, 29% had a diploma, and about 14% had university education.

4.2. Examining the status of the main components of rural tourism resilience in the face of Covid-19 pandemic

In order to examine the status of the main components of rural tourism resilience in the face of Covid-19 pandemic, 19 variables of each indicator were combined to each other and the required data were obtained to examine four components of local government budgeting, environmental knowledge, community well-being, and social support system. Mean comparison test (one sample t test considering 3 as the test value) was used to evaluate the mentioned indicators. The results show that, (Table 4) the average of four components of rural tourism resilience in the face of Covid-19 pandemic was significantly lower than the average level. Negative t statistics, mean deviation, and the upper and lower limits confirm this. Among the mentioned components, two components of local government budgeting and community well-being were in a relatively weaker position with the average values of 1.757 and 1.808 respectively. Nevertheless, the main components of rural tourism resilience in Owramanat region were in an unsuitable status in the face of Covid-19.

Table 4. examining the status of main components of rural tourism resilience in the face of Covid-19 pandemic
Source: (Research findings, 2022)

-	Test Value = 3					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean	Mean Difference	Lower	Upper
Local government Budgeting	-35.464	149	0.000	1.757	-1.242	-1.311	-1.173
Environmental Knowledge	-17.785	149	0.000	2.358	-0.641	-0.712	-0.570
Community Well-being	-38.785	149	0.000	1.808	-1.192	-1.252	-1.131
Social Support System	-13.582	149	0.000	2.295	-0.704	-0.806	-0.602

After reviewing the status of main components of rural tourism resilience in the face of Covid-19 pandemic, the overall status of rural tourism resilience in the face of Covid-19 pandemic in the study area (using frequency distribution Table and mean comparison test) was examined. The findings of frequency distribution Table (Table 5) shows that, 43.3% of the villagers had low and very low resilience, 46.7% had average resilience, and only 10% had high and very high resilience in the face of Covid-19. The mean comparison test was used to present an overall and precise report of the status of rural tourism resilience in Owramanat region in the face of Covid-19. The results indicate that

(Table 6), the calculated mean with the value of 2.014, is significantly lower than the base limit. In general, it can be mentioned that, the resilience of rural tourism and their key components in the face of Covid-19 in Owramanat region is in a weak state and this situation can cause many harms and negative consequences for activists in the field of rural tourism. The low resilience of the villagers means more vulnerability and somehow leads to the instability of the tourism industry.

Considering the high potential of the area in attracting tourists and the low income of rural tourism activists during the outbreak of the disease and also given that the resilience of rural tourism is

dependent on different stimulants and drivers according to the geographical conditions of different areas, it is necessary to identify the key

drivers affecting the resilience of rural tourism in the face of Covid-19 in the study area. This topic is discussed in the next section.

Table 5. evaluating the overall status of the resilience of rural tourism in the Face of Covid-19 pandemic
Source: (Research findings, 2022)

-	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative percent
Very low	17	11.3	11.3
Low	48	32	43.3
Average	70	46.7	90
High	13	8.7	98.7
Very high	2	1.3	100
Sum	150	100	-

Table 6. evaluation of the overall status of the resilience of rural tourist in the face of Covid-19 pandemic using t-test
Source: (Research findings, 2022)

-	Test Value=3						
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean	Mean Difference	95% confidence Interval of the difference	
						Lower	Upper
Resilience of Rural tourism	-37.842	149	.000	2.014	-.985	-1.037	-.934

4.3. Identification of the key drivers affecting the resilience of rural tourism in the face of Covid-19

The results of the analysis of the key drivers affecting the resilience of rural tourism in Owramanat region using the MICMAC software and the cross-impact analysis method show that the degree of filling is 84%, which indicates the influence of the factors on each other. Out of a total of 243 evaluable matrix relations, 53 relations have cross impact of 3, that is, the indicators have been influenced by each other and have influenced each other. 61 relationships had cross impact of 2, that is, they had a reinforcing role. 129 relationships also had cross impact of 1, that is, they have more influence on other indicators. Also, 46 relationships from the total cross-impact have neither been influenced by each other nor have they influenced each other (Table 7).

Table 7. MDI matrix of key drivers affecting the resilience of rural tourism in the face of Covid-19 pandemic
Source: (Research findings, 2022)

Matrix size	Number of Iterations	Number of Zeros	Number of ones	Number of twos	Number of threes	Fillrat	Total
17*17	2	46	129	61	53	84%	243

4.4. Analysis of the extent of influence of main variables of the resilience of rural tourism

As it can be observed in figure 2, out of 17 main factors affecting the resilience of rural tourism, 5 key variables affect the resilience of rural tourism. These variables are located in Northwest half of the figure 2. In such a way that, these variables have the most influence on other variables and receive the least influence from other variables and include the factors of government financial support (A17); financial capital (A5); sanitary equipment (A12); infrastructure facilities (A7); and disease control (A16). The risk variables are around the diagonal

line of the northeast area of the diagram. These variables have a significantly high potential to become the key actors of the resilience of rural tourism in the future, since due to their instable nature, they have the potential to turn into the "breaking point" of the resilience of rural tourism and include factors of knowledge and awareness (A4); investment in private sector (A13); social support (A2); access to digital technology (A3); and social capital (A1). The variables located in the Southeast of the diagram are called variables under influence. These variables have high effect and countereffect on each other, therefore they are

quite sensitive to influential and bimodal variables which include: skill and expertise (A8); tourists' interactions (A9); transparency (A10); regional management (A6); and finally, the independent variables of the resilience of rural tourism are located in the Southwest of the diagram. These variables which have low effects and countereffects, include sense of place (A15); local management (A14); and security (A11).
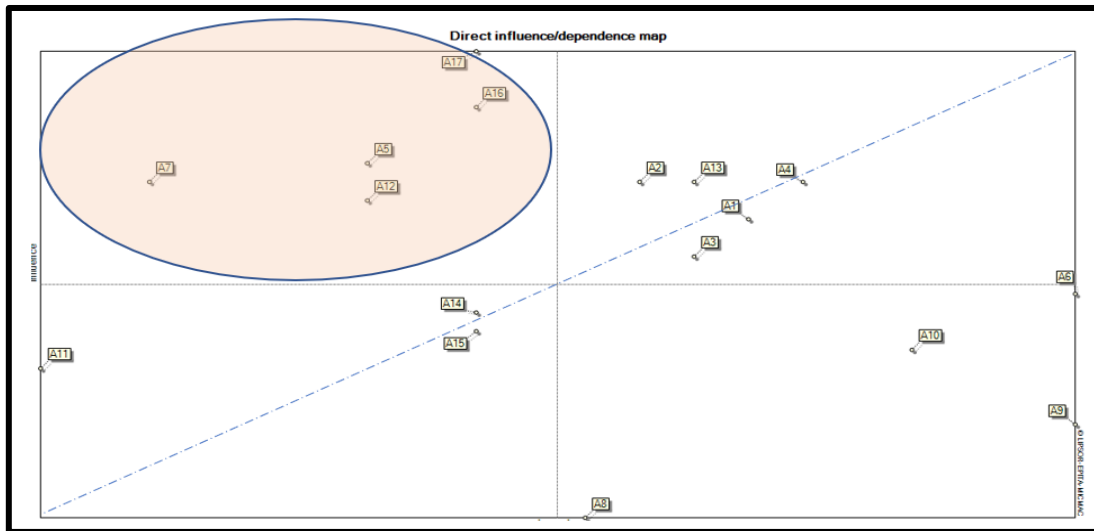

Figure 2. the status of key drivers of the resilience of rural tourism
Source: (Research findings, 2022)

Figure 3 indicates significantly strong direct impact of the variables of the resilience of rural tourism on each other. As it is observed, the factors of government social support (A17) and control disease (A16) had the strongest impact on other variables. These factors should be considered in short-term, medium-term, and long-term programs.
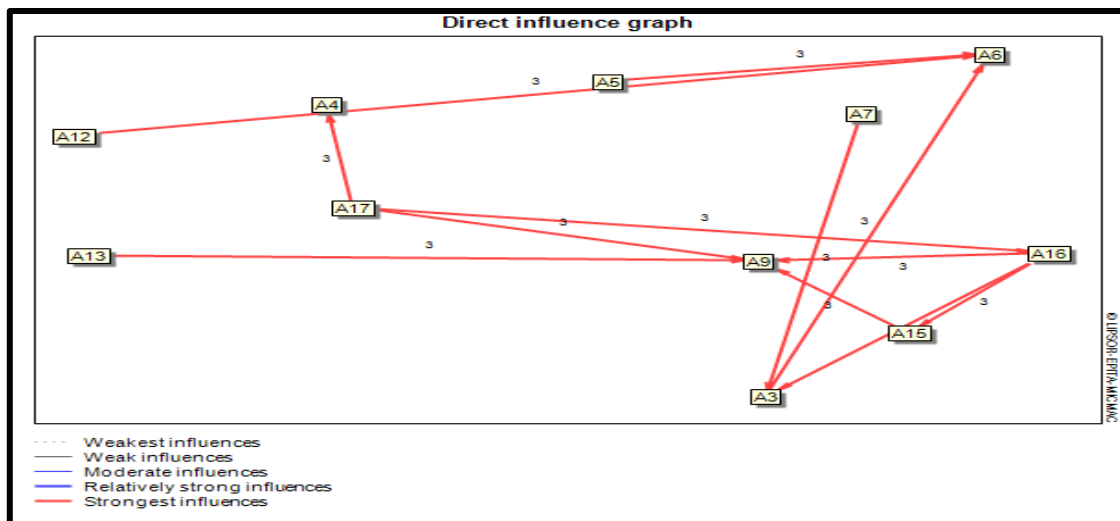

Figure 3. the direct effects of the variables of rural tourism resilience on each Other
Source: (Research findings, 2022)

Figure 4 shows the significantly high indirect effects of the influencing factors on the resilience of rural tourism. Government social support (A17) has had the greatest effects on other variables. It is noteworthy that this factor, in addition to being one of the key drivers of the resilience of rural tourism

in Owramanat region, has the most direct effects on other variables as well. Therefore, it should be

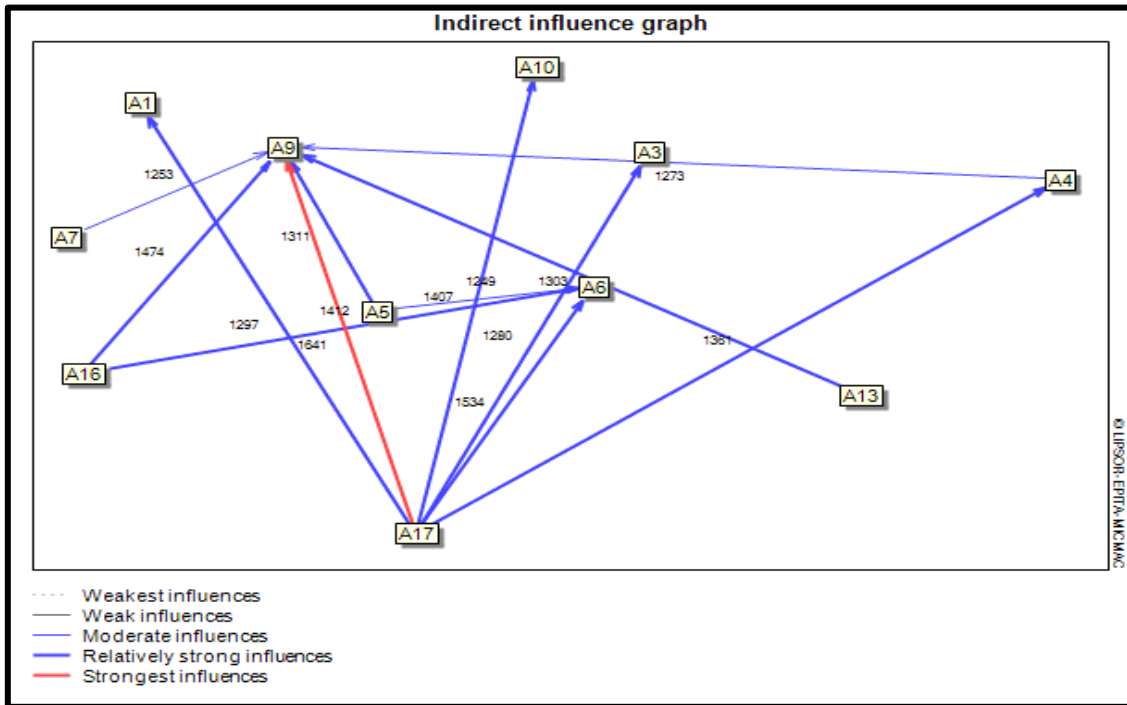given special attention in planning and policies related to the resilience of rural tourism.

Figure 4. the indirect effects of the variables of rural tourism resilience on Each other (very strong effects)
Source: (Research findings, 2022)

5. Discussion and Conclusion

The outbreak of Covid-19 pandemic severely affected all the activities of human community. To the extent that many activities, including the tourism industry, faced severe stagnation and were pushed to the edge of destruction. In the meantime, rural tourism also was not kept away from the effects of this disease and was extremely affected by it. Due to the drastic impact of the outbreak of Corona on tourism industry, the communities with more dependence on this industry, were more affected. Reviews show that, the more a community is resilient against the crises, the less the negative effects of the crises on them will be. However, this has been neglected by the researchers in our country. Therefore, the resilience of rural tourism and its determinants in the face of various crises including Covid-19 is of great importance. In this regard, the present study was conducted with the aim of examining and analysis of the resilience of rural tourism and identifying the key drivers affecting it in the face of Covid-19 pandemic in Owramanat region. The findings of the study showed that, the resilience of rural tourism and its main components in the study

area are in an unfavorable situation in the face of Covid-19. This condition intensifies the vulnerability of the tourism activists. Since, Sadeghloo et al., (2016) in their study pointed out the poor state of resilience of tourism in rural areas located in the sphere of influence of tourism in Mashhad city, the result of the present study is in line with it. Some reasons for poor the poor resilience of rural tourism in the study area are as follows: a sharp decrease in the number of tourists, loss of a major part of the main source of income, disruption of other alternative occupations, poor support of government sector, insufficient allocation of sanitary equipment, poor information about how to deal with the disease, villagers' weak financial base and low savings, rapid increase in the price of food and other consumables, weak knowledge and awareness of villagers about the proper way to prevent and deal with the disease, mismanagement in quarantine, low trust in vaccination and late public vaccination, decrease in the level of participation and cooperation among villagers due to the fear of getting the disease. Nevertheless, the best strategy to enhance the level of the resilience of tourism activists is to identify

its drivers and stimulants in the study area. The results of the study showed that, government financial support, financial capital, sanitary equipment, infrastructure facilities and disease control are the most effective key drivers on the resilience.

Since the results have determined government financial support as an effective key driver on the resilience of rural tourism activists in Owramanat region, this key component should be prioritized in tourism development policies. Since the activists in the field of rural tourism of this area are weak in terms of financial base and livelihood and the Covid-19 crisis has decreased their affordability. Thus, the effective financial support of the government through the allocation of financial subsidies and livelihood assistance, as well as the allocation of interest-free or low-interest loans and credits, is necessary within the scope of studies. it is worth mentioning that Nizamivand Chegini (2021), Asadi & Jabbari (2022), Sharma et al., (2021), Lee et al., (2022), and Panzer-Krause (2022) in their studies have emphasized on increasing the resilience of tourism activists due to the support of the government sector.

Financial capital is another key driver affecting the resilience of activists of rural tourism in Owramanat region. Asadi & Jabbari (2022) and Bayrak (2022) have also emphasized on the importance and effectiveness of financial capital on increasing resilience. Enhancing the level of financial capital of tourism activists which is dependent on the financial support and investment of government and private sectors, increase of tourists visiting the region and increase in the income of activists in the field of tourism, has been significantly disrupted during Corona crisis. Weak financial capital greatly reduces the ability to purchase life necessities and medical equipment, and as a result, the villagers' resilience will also be weakened. Given that, this area is a border region and considering the poor financial base of the villagers as well as the high level of unemployment in this region, temporary financial support policies (allocation of monthly subsidies for tourism activists), development of alternative jobs (development of border bazaars and local markets, etc.) should be considered by policy makers and planners.

Sanitary equipment is another key driver affecting the resilience of rural tourism activists in the study

area. Asadi and Jabbari (2022) and Duro et al., (2022) have acknowledged the importance of sanitary equipment in increasing resilience. The severe weakness of health and treatment services in Owramanat region, including health centers and clinics, as well as the lack of administrative personnel and geographical isolation of the region, have led to the poor provision of health services and equipment in the study area. Equipping 12 prone tourism areas including Shamshir, Quriqaleh, hajij, sefidbarg, Ezgeleh, Dalani, etc. with health centers and clinics with expert administrative staff and also clinics with all medical services near the tourist areas are among practical suggestions to enhance this component in the study area.

The results showed that creating and development of the infrastructural facilities is another factor affecting the resilience of rural tourism which has been emphasized in a study by Byrak (2022). Due to the fact that, Owramanat region is a border and mountainous area and also due to its geographical isolation, this region is one of the most deprived areas in the west of the country in terms of having infrastructural indicators (communication, health, therapeutic, etc.). The weakness of tourism related infrastructures in this region is particularly evident in the field of communication axes. Two-way roads of low width and low quality, the mountainous nature of the region, and as a result, the high slope and roughness of the roads, have created many problems for tourists; in such a way that several car accidents occur in this region annually. Expansion of the communication axes, and creating healthcare infrastructure and also service and welfare infrastructures are the most important and practical suggestions to improve infrastructural facilities in the study area.

The results showed that, during the critical conditions of the outbreak of Covid-19, disease control is another key driver affecting the resilience of activists of rural tourism in Owramanat region. Asadi & Jabbari (2022) and Duro et al., (2022) have emphasized the importance of disease control in increasing the resilience of tourists. Disease control leads to a reduction in casualties and the number of infected people, as well as increasing the peace of mind of tourists. In the study area, due to the weakness of the health and treatment infrastructure as well as the weakness of the information system, the low trust of the local

community in the quality of vaccines, as well as the dominance of the traditional view towards vaccination, and the combating the disease, the control of the Covid-19 disease has faced several challenges. Despite this, the participation of local community in fighting with the disease and imposing mandatory quarantines have been effective in controlling the disease. In this regard, transparency about the quality of vaccines, gaining the trust of the general public, financial and livelihood support for tourism activists during quarantine are some of practical solutions for disease control and consequently increase the resilience of activists in rural tourism of Owramanat region.

In general, the surveys show that the identified key drivers are under the influence of the basic key component of "coherent and integrated tourism management". Coherent, integrated management of tourism based on respect for local social capital, is the missing link to increase the resilience in the study area. Because coherent, integrated management, while attracting financial support from the government and raising the level of financial capital of tourism activists, will allocate health equipment and infrastructural facilities to the local community, and as a result, disease control will be more pocible. It will also effectively involve the local community in all policies, processes and planning.

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Authors' contributions

The authors equally contributed to the preparation of this article.

Conflict of interest

The author declare no conflict of interest.

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Original Article

ارزیابی و تحلیل تاب‌آوری گردشگری روستایی و شناسایی پیشران‌های کلیدی موثر بر آن در مواجهه با پاندمی کووید-۱۹ در ایران

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چکیده مبسوط

۱. مقدمه

با شیوع بیماری همه‌گیر کووید-۱۹، فعالان عرصه گردشگری روستایی در منطقه اورامانات به تبعیت از روند ملی و بین‌المللی با چالش‌های متعددی مواجه شدند. با توجه به اینکه میزان تاب‌آوری روستاییان در برابر اثرات بیماری کووید-۱۹ نقش مهمی را در بقای فعالیت آن‌ها در زمان مواجهه با بیماری و وضعیت آینده فعالیت آن‌ها دارد، بررسی مقوله تاب‌آوری در میان روستاییان فعال در بخش گردشگری، از اهمیت زیادی برخوردار است. همچنین با توجه به اینکه تاب‌آوری، متأثر از عوامل مختلفی است و این عوامل متناسب با شرایط طبیعی، انسانی و حتی فضایی حاکم بر مناطق مختلف، متفاوت می‌باشند، سوال‌های اصلی پژوهش حاضر عبارت‌اند از: وضعیت تاب‌آوری در میان فعالان عرصه گردشگری روستایی منطقه اورامانات در مواجهه با بحران کووید- ۱۹ به چه صورتی است؟ و پیشران‌های کلیدی موثر بر تاب‌آوری فعالان عرصه گردشگری روستایی در منطقه اورامانات کدامند؟

۲. مبانی نظری تحقیق

بیماری همه‌گیر کووید-۱۹ اغلب به عنوان یک نوع بحران یا فاجعه در نظر گرفته می‌شود. به‌طور کلی بحران به رویدادهای داخلی اشاره دارد، در حالی که یک فاجعه به رویدادهای خارجی مربوط می‌شود. در هر صورت تاب‌آوری مقاصد گردشگری تابع محرک‌های و پیشران-های متعددی است. بر این اساس برخورداری از عواملی مانند سرمایه مالی (درآمد کافی و پس انداز)، سرمایه طبیعی (دسترسی به منابع طبیعی، تجهیزات آبیاری مدرن، بهبود کیفیت خاک)، سرمایه اجتماعی (شبکه‌ها و موسسات اجتماعی)، سرمایه فیزیکی (خدمات

اکوسیستمی و دارایی های ثابت)، و سرمایه انسانی (دانش و مهارت) در افزایش تاب‌آوری در مقابل مخاطرات موثر هستند. همچنین بر اساس چند دیدگاه دیگر استفاده از فناوری‌های دیجیتال، اقدامات دولت‌های محلی، منطقه‌ای یا ملی با جذب سرمایه‌گذاری از طریق معافیت‌های مالیاتی، تسهیل شرایط قانونی کاربری اراضی، رونق دادن به گردشگری داخلی، انعطاف‌پذیری فناوری، تعلق محلی، اعتماد مشتریان و کارکنان و سرمایه اجتماعی، از عوامل موثر بر تاب‌آوری مقاصد گردشگری هستند.

۳. روش‌شناسی تحقیق

پژوهش کمی و کاربردی حاضر، به لحاظ روش‌شناختی با رویکرد ترکیبی (ترکیب روش‌های توصیفی ــــ تحلیلی و اکتشافی) انجام گرفته است که در آن برای جمع‌آوری داده‌ها از شیوه اسنادی (مطالب مقالات، گزارش ها، داده های مرکز آمار ایران) و میدانی (پرسشنامه روستاییان و کارشناسان) استفاده شده است و در مجموع در دو بخش اصلی انجام شده است. بخش اول پژوهش به ارزیابی و سنجش شاخص‌های تاب‌آوری گردشگری روستایی در مواجهه با بیماری کووید-۱۹ مربوط می‌شود و بخش دوم به شناسایی پیشران‌های کلیدی موثر بر تاب‌آوری گردشگری روستایی در مواجهه با بیماری کووید-۱۹ تخصیص یافته است.

۴. یافته‌های تحقیق

یافته‌های پژوهش نشان داد تاب‌آوری گردشگری روستایی و مولفه‌های کلیدی آن در مواجهه با پاندمی کووید-۱۹ در منطقه اورامانات در وضعیت ضعیفی قرار دارد و این وضعیت می‌تواند آسیب‌ها و پیامدهای منفی متعددی را برای فعالان عرصه گردشگری

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روستایی به همراه داشته باشد. تاب‌آوری پایین روستاییان به معنای آسیب‌پذیری بیشتر و به نوعی ناپایداری صنعت گردشگری را به دنبال دارد.

با توجه به پتانسیل بالای منطقه در خصوص جذب گردشگر و شرایط درآمدی پایین فعالان عرصه گردشگری در مان شیوع بیماری همه‌گیری و همچنین با توجه به اینکه تاب‌آوری گردشگری روستایی متناسب با شرایط جغرافیایی مناطق مختلف (انسانی، طبیعی، فضایی و زمانی)، تابع محرک‌ها و پیشران‌های متفاوتی است، از این‌رو ضروری است که پیشران‌های کلیدی موثر بر تاب‌آوری گردشگری روستایی در مواجهه با کووید-۱۹ در محدوده مورد مطالعه شناسایی شوند که در بخش بعدی به آن پرداخته شده است. نتایج تجزیه و تحلیل پیشران‌های کلیدی مؤثر بر تاب‌آوری گردشگری روستایی در منطقه اورامانات با استفاده از نرم‌افزار میک‌مک و روش تحلیل اثرات متقاطع، بیانگر درجه پرشدگی ۸۴ در صد ا ست که نشانگر تأثیرگذاری عوامل بر یکدیگر بوده ا ست. از مجموع ۲۴۳ رابطه ماتریسی قابل ارزیابی، ۵۳ رابطه، دارای اثرات متقاطع ۳ بوده است یعنی شاخص‌ها از هم تأثیرپذیرفته‌اند و بر همدیگر تأثیر گذار بوده‌اند. ۶۱ رابطه دارای اثرات متقاطع ۲ بوده، یعنی نقش تقویت کننده داشته‌اند. ۱۲۹ رابطه نیز دارای اثرات متقاطع ۱ بوده، یعنی بر روی دیگر شاخص‌ها تأثیر بیشتری گذاشته‌اند. ۴۶ رابطه نیز از مجموع اثرات متقاطع، نه از هم تأثیر پذیرفته‌اند و نه بر روی هم تأثیر گذاشته‌اند.

۵. بحث و نتیجه‌گیری

از دلایل وضعیت نامناسب تاب‌آوری گردشگری روستایی در محدوده مورد مطالعه می‌توان به کاهش شدید تعداد گردشگران، از بین رفتن بخش عمده‌ای از منبع اصلی درآمد، مختل شدن سایر مشاغل جایگزین، حمایت مالی ضعیف بخش دولتی، تخصیص ناچیز تجهیزات بهداشتی، اطلاع‌رسانی ضعیف در خصوص نحوه مقابله با بیماری، بنیه مالی ضعیف روستاییان و پس‌انداز کم، افزایش شتابان قمیت مواد غذایی و سایر اقلام مصرفی، دانش و آگاهی ضعیف روستاییان برای نحوه مناسب پیشگیری و مقابله با بیماری، سوء مدیریت در اعمال قرنطینه، سطح اعتماد پایین به واکسیناسیون و واکسیناسیون عمومی دیرهنگام، کاهش سطح مشارکت و همکاری میان روستاییان به دلیل ترس از ابتلا به بیماری، اشاره کرد. با این وجود، بهترین راهکار برای ارتقای سطح تاب‌آوری فعالان عرصه گردشگری، شناسایی پیشران‌ها و محرک‌های آن در محدوده مطالعاتی است. در این خصوص نتایج پژوهش نشان داد حمایت مالی دولت، سرمایه مالی، تجهیزات بهداشتی، امکانات زیر ساختی و کنترل بیماری، کلیدی‌ترین پیشران‌های موثر بر تاب‌آوری هستند.

کلیدواژه‌ها: پاندمی کووید-۱۹، گردشگری روستایی، تاب‌آوری، پیشران‌های کلیدی.

تشکر و قدردانی