

Analysis of the Economic Impact of the Spread of Coronavirus in Tourist Villages of Langroud County

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Abstract

Introduction: With the spread of the coronavirus, the tourism industry in Iran has not been spared from its adverse effects. Gilan province, along with several other provinces, was one of the first centers of the spread of the coronavirus. In this regard, the Covid-19 disease spread to rural areas of Langrud County. This study examines the economic consequences of the spread of the coronavirus on employment, income, and expenses in the villages of the county. Therefore, the main question was raised under the title "What effects has the spread of Covid-19 had on employment, income, and expenses of households in the tourist-friendly villages of Langrud County?"

Materials and Methods: This research is applied in terms of purpose and descriptive-analytical in terms of method. The required data was obtained through a questionnaire from the sectoral, local managers and rural households of Langrud County. The statistical population of the research is the households living in the 9 villages under study. In addition to the general study of each of the 9 villages, a questionnaire was completed from the households living in the villages, which, considering the number of 2622 households, using the Cochran formula, a sample size equivalent to 364 households was obtained.

Results and Discussion: The spread of Covid-19 caused tourism, as the second economic activity of rural households, to lose its role in generating and generating more income for active households. At the beginning and peak of the COVID-19 restrictions, tourism activities in all villages almost stopped, as before the spread of Covid-19, the main or second activity of 52.3 percent of households was tourism. In the villages under study, the proportion of those who have suffered economic damage from the tourism recession is higher than the proportion of tourism activists. The ratio of employment to the total population in the households under study was 62.4 percent. After the spread of Covid-19, in total, 40.2 percent of household members faced employment challenges and all or part of their activities were stopped. The highest unemployment rate due to COVID-19 was about 22.2 percent in the village of Blordkan and the lowest was 5 percent in the village of Golab Mahalla. After the COVID-19 pandemic, the second source of income, tourism activities, was closed for 52.1 percent of households. In addition to the increase in costs along with the decrease in income, the level of well-being of households decreased and faced problems. The most obvious of these were health and medical costs, which included preventive costs and treatment costs. The widespread use of masks and disinfectants, as well as the increase in the use of detergents, created new costs for households. In addition, the costs of treating Covid-19 were also a new issue for some households. In this regard, educational activities were activated virtually. What made this type of education a challenge for most families was the lack of facilities required

for this type of education. Perhaps households that did not have the internet and hardware facilities such as computers, laptops, and smartphones to provide to their student children.

Conclusion: The results of the study showed that Covid-19 has caused a slowdown in tourism sector activities and a sharp decrease in income. Although working in multiple fields, through increased financial and time costs, ultimately reduces the productivity of human resources and capital. However, given the existing limitations in terms of providing environmental capital, especially land, for full employment in the agricultural sector, simultaneous employment in multiple economic activities means that households are less likely to suffer if the economic returns of one activity decrease.

Keywords: Village, Tourism, Employment and income, Coronavirus, Langrud county.

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