



How Are the Coronavirus Impacts on Sport Businesses?

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: The tourism industry is one of the most important industries of the new century, which is very dynamic and profitable. Sports tourism is an essential part of this industry. The research aimed to identify and categorize the sports attractions in Iran and to design a development model for the sports tourism industry.

Methodology: The research method was Grounded-Theory, with a systematic approach. The sampling method was theoretical sampling. In addition to studying literature, semi-structured interviews were conducted with 35 experts, including 19 faculty members of Iranian universities and 16 travel and tourism agency professionals, to achieve theoretical saturation.

Findings: In the first part of the research, the results showed that there are 11 types of sports attractions in Iran. The second part of the research showed that identifying and analyzing sports attractions, marketing, planning, and organizing to welcome tourists are the essential measures necessary for developing sports tourism. The development of sports tourism in section tourist welcoming is related to the development of the entire tourism industry and requires investment, planning, and organization. Marketing, providing necessary services, and creating distinct and exciting experiences for tourists and satisfying them are the key variables to success in the development of the industry. All these works require the cooperation and coordination of people and organizations in the sovereign, government, public and private sectors.

Originality: We have identified and categorized the types of sports attractions in Iran and presented a comprehensive development model for the development of the sports tourism industry.

Keywords

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1. Introduction

Coronavirus disease COVID-19 caused by the novel human Coronavirus, severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2). It was first detected in Wuhan, China, in December 2019 and has since spread worldwide. On January 30, 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared COVID-19 a public health emergency of international concern, and 6-weeks later, the outbreak was characterized as a pandemic (Yezli & Khan, 2020). With the death toll from the Coronavirus exceeding 1,000, the World Health Organization (WHO) has chosen the official name COVID-19 for the resulting disease (Shirvani & Rostamkhani, 2020). As of May 4, 2020, according to the World Health Organization, more than 3.5 million people worldwide have been infected with the virus; however, the incidence is still increasing. Also, the lack of definitive specific treatment has caused the death of more than 240,000 people during this period (Ghasemi et al., 2020). This pandemic has no regard for geography, it has a global reach, and no continent is out of its clutches (Parnell et al., 2020).

Within a period of only a few months, the SARS-CoV-2 virus has managed to spread across the world. This virus can spread by close contact, including large droplet spray and inhalation of microscopic droplets, and indirect contact via contaminated objects (Blocken et al., 2020). Nazari (2021) Showed that increasing the share of sport tourism in the leisure time of the people according to their interest in sport tourism; technological: using the capabilities of cyberspace in the development of sport tourism; economical: trying to increase investment in sports tourism; boom Sport: Developing sports tourism to improve the environment; Political: Efforts to improve the status of international societies and values: Use of culture and identity of the city to increase athletic motivation in sport tourism. But, the spread of Coronavirus in the shadow of global communications and business and travel tourism and cultural, artistic, and sports communities and low estimates of its effects compared to the prevalence of SARS, Ebola, and Mers, caused that after China, Italy and Iran, countries Asian and then European and American countries quickly become infected with this deadly virus (Agheli & Imam Gholipour, 2020). In such circumstances, the most important, priority, and problem-oriented topic that requires the help of a wide range of researchers in various fields is the field of corona research and the study of the effect of these conditions on multiple topics (Noroozi Chakoli, 2019). Many challenges have arisen in various areas of politics, economics, health. Infectious disease and quarantine cause widespread destruction in people's lives due to limited employment (Ghasemi et al., 2020). To create a safe environment for tourists, the government and law enforcement forces must provide the necessary infrastructure for tourism development, especially security for tourists (Moradi Doliskani & Atghia, 2021; Nazari, 2021; Nazarian Madavani et al., 2021).

The CEPR Centre for Economic Policy Studies examines the economic effects of the Corona epidemic in a book called Economics in the Time of COVID-19. Triple blows to the manufacturing sector in times of corona crisis that hinders production; are presented as follows 1- Severe decrease in demand, 2- Disruption of supply chains, 3- Disruption of direct supply (Salimi Zaviyeh, 2020).

COVID-19 pandemic has had devastating effects on communities globally, leading to significant restrictions on all sectors of society, including sport (Hughes et al., 2020). Most studies have explored subjects inferred from the findings, including socio-economics, tourism, heritage, image, media, hygiene, cultural and environmental effects (Elahi et al., 2021). The borderless spread of this new and deadly virus has caused the replacement of public centers, but sports, and important events, including different levels of sports competitions in other worlds and even the 2020 Olympics. World Health Organization and Ministry of Health; Protests many introductory rates (such as the United States, China, Germany, Iran, Spain, Italy) have forced people to quarantine at home (Shirvani & Rostamkhani, 2020). COVID-19 substantially impacts sporting schedules as some of the world's most significant sporting events come to view in 2020. Football's much anticipated Euro 2020 tournament has been postponed for 12 months, while play-offs have been delayed till June 2020 at the earliest. The international Olympic committee was committed to staging the Tokyo 2020 Olympics this summer without delay. However, they have now decided to postpone the games to 2021, which is a decision for the respective nations. These are but a few examples; golf, tennis, athletics, basketball, rugby, cycling, boxing, snooker, and ice-skating fixtures have all faced cancellations and delays to curb the spread of disease (Nicola et al., 2020). According to the available evidence, football is the most popular and popular sport in the international arena, to the extent that many countries consider it their national sport. The overcrowding of stadiums and hundreds of millions of students has made football the most popular sport in the world. Iran is also one of the countries where football is the concern of many people. Progress or lack of progress in football is closely related to the national pride, satisfaction, and hope of individuals (Tajik Esmaili & Vaezi, 2019).

Football, a global phenomenon, was immediately affected by this Coronavirus, but in the meantime, the behavior of different countries with this phenomenon was other. The Football Federation, the League Organization, and with the approval of the National Headquarters, requested to Combating Coronavirus in Sports. The football stadiums, where many fans attend to watch the games and the health of players, coaches, club organizers, and mass media representatives, postponed all football matches from Sunday, March to April 2020. Relying on the club's sources of income, including brand equity, ticket sales, goods with the name and logo of the team and the league, and paying attention to the value of teams shares in the stock market, can cause the development of other sources of incomes (Memari, Rafei Boldaji, et al., 2021). Football clubs have many significant income sources, such as sponsors, advertisers, merchandise, and media contracts. Despite this, a strong, loyal fan base serves as a supportive customer base and ensures that the business's customers also take a keen interest in the club's affairs (Memari, Rezaei Pandari, et al., 2021). The sports industry was severely affected during the outbreak of the virus (Krnjaic, 2020; Mohsenifar et al., 2020). The aggravating effect of COVID-19 epidemics demonstrated these vulnerabilities on a global scale, effectively reducing the international calendar of sporting events from March 2020 onwards (Miles & Shipway, 2020). It is essential to care about the division of the sports industry for businesses operating in related areas because knowing this division makes

the sports business aware of its position in the sports industry. Also, based on the division of the sports industry, companies can identify the related areas, and besides, they can manage, plan, organize, and decide for their businesses perfectly (Aghaei Shahri & Azimzadeh, 2021).

Several countries are in lockdown mode for an indefinite time. People are working from home or simply not working. And there is evidence that discretionary spending by consumers has collapsed. We face travel bans, sporting event cancellations, and prohibitions on gatherings. People in Europe are not using public transport and are avoiding public spaces, such as restaurants, shopping centers, and museums. All sectors will be affected. However, according to the data shown in previous sections, the consequences of COVID-19 will not be equally distributed throughout the economy. Some sectors may even benefit financially (everyone knows the toilet paper stories, while others suffer disproportionately (Fernandes, 2020)). Hammami et al. (2020) state that one of the positive effects of Coronavirus is the development of exercise at home. They cite the Coronavirus as an excellent opportunity for sports and humanity to become active. They believe that coaches and individuals have free time to use cyberspace and creative ways to exercise at home easily. They do not need extensive equipment. In addition to the benefits such as people's health and improving the body's immunity, the development of exercise at home also helps people's health and self-education (Safania & Barahmand, 2020). Askarian et al. (2021) presented a system that can justify such a design of the sports development processes. Every process has three sections the input, processing, and output. The researchers defined a set of subsystems, including participation development, talent development, and elite development. Also, the collection of these three processes is a part of a macrosystem, which is the sports development system. However, the sports industry and businesses in each of the societies involved in the coronation situation experience specific strategies and situations according to specific political, social, economic, cultural, and geographical components (Rizvandi et al., 2020). Organizations must now create blue oceans to seize new growth and profitability opportunities. The idea of a blue ocean strategy by challenging competition, which has been the most crucial premise in strategic management for many years, and presenting new solutions, introduces a new field for success in work and services (Tavalaee, 2010).

The main questions and objectives of the research are:

The primary purpose of this research is to study the Coronavirus and Sports businesses, which will provide insights for researchers and managers in crisis response strategies. The main research questions are as follows:

- 1- What is the impact of the Corona crisis on the economy of the sports industry?
- 2- What are the strategies for responding to the economic crisis of the sports industry during the Corona crisis?
- 3- What were the opportunities for sports businesses during the Coronavirus?
- 4- What have been the threats of the Coronavirus to sports businesses?

2. Theoretical background

Author	Title	Sample research	Discussion	Result
(Nicola et al., 2020)	The socio-economic implications of the coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19): A review	A review	Fear of impending economic crisis and recession.	Effects of the socio-economic COVID-19 on individual aspects of the world economy.
(Buldú et al., 2020)	The resumption of sports competitions after COVID-19 Lockdown: The case of the Spanish football league	The Spanish football league	They were worried about closing the league after players got COVID-19.	Reducing the days between matches minimizes the risk of spreading COVID-19 throughout the season. PCR tests should be performed on all football players participating in the competition. The tests should be carried out continuously along with the competition, with the optimum scenario being one test per day. The player's environment is essential to avoid introducing the disease into the system. The process is highly unpredictable. While qualitative results are clear, obtaining precise predictions for a single realization (the objective case). This is in agreement with recent work that warns about the solid sensitivity for parameter values in epidemics modeling.
(Webb, 2021)	Analysis of the impact of COVID-19 on referees in world football	Football referees	In the professional game concerns exist around the ability of elite referees to operate and perform as they usually would in empty stadiums, the associated implications of quarantine environments, and elongated time away from family.	These opportunities can be working towards changing attitudes and behavior towards referees from the professional game down to the grassroots level, there can be revisions of support systems and consideration of the management and provision of facilities for referees, and there can be a movement towards additional care of training and development opportunities which will be required in a post-COVID-19 landscape.
(Hughes et al., 2020)	The Australian Institute of Sport framework for rebooting sport in a COVID-19 environment	A review	Anxiety after the reopening of sports venues after Corona	Education of community sports members about COVID-19 risk mitigation strategies is crucial. Education will help promote and set expectations for the required behaviors before recommencing activities—improved health literacy, including self-monitoring of respiratory symptoms (even if mild).
(Sato et al., 2020)	The COVID-19 outbreak and public perceptions of sport events in Japan	Japanese citizens (n = 529)	Approximately 75% supported postponement decisions made by professional sports leagues	Data indicated that Japanese citizens did agree with sports organizations that decided to postpone or cancel their sports events in the cases of popular professional leagues. However, only less than half supported the cancelation of Spring Koshien and holding the Olympics and Paralympics in four months. (Note: The Tokyo Olympics and Paralympics 2020 was postponed after completing this study).

Author	Title	Sample research	Discussion	Result
(Majumdar & Naha, 2020)	Live sport during the COVID-19 crisis: fans as creative broadcasters	-	The hiatus in-stadium spectatorship due to the COVID-19 pandemic presents us with a unique opportunity to rethink how sports fans participate in making live events.	The creative harnessing of user-generated content and online and offline fandom integration can help broadcasters present sport in a much more attractive manner during and after the pandemic.
(Mohsenifar et al., 2020)	Postponing football matches in Iran to reduce human-to-human transmission of SARS-CoV-2	-		Postponement of football matches in Iran to reduce the human-to-human transmission of the new Coronavirus.
(Nasirzadh et al., 2019)	Obstacles and challenges of university students' sports marketing (Case study: Payam Noor University)	The static populations were Director Generals of Physical Education department, deputies, Physical Education faculty members active in the field of strategy and Heads of departments physical education Payam Noor were provinces.		The results showed that some of the obstacles and challenges such as, Shortage of sites and specialized publications, lack of media coverage, lack of marketing strategy, Weakness in attracting sponsors, lack of meetings with organizations active marketing of the most critical challenges that managers must consider.

3. Methodology

The present study is a library-type method, a Narrative review study. According to the descriptive orientation of this research, the necessary data have been collected and analyzed from library sources and documents available in full online, based on the "Narrative review" method. The statistical population of this study is all articles related to the impact of Corona on sports and the economy from June to July 2020, which were published in domestic and foreign journals in the field of management, marketing, and health, became available. These articles are from the databases of Science Direct, Scopus, Google Scholar, Sid, Noormags journals database and with the keywords COVID-19, Sports Participation, Economic Effects, Olympic Game, Coronavirus Pandemic, Corona and Economy, Sports and Corona, Corona Crisis was searched.

Given that the texts and complete documented reports and reports on the consequences, goals, and plans of countries against Corona have not been officially presented, I will describe their projects and outputs according to the best information. For this purpose, the reports of international organizations, including the World Health Organization and within the country, the initial reports of various organizations and ministries have been studied. Criteria for inclusion of studies include publishing articles in reputable scientific databases, English or full Persian text of the pieces, relevance to the research topic and operations to its full text and exclusion criteria, publication of the article in invalid journals, lack of relevance to the issue and inactivity. The full article text was considered rose. [Figure 1](#) shows the applied process to articles and research. Achieving

the properties search based on the criteria for entering the article identified more than 50 articles and books in the field under review. After initial review, some removal operations and 25 papers were selected for final review.

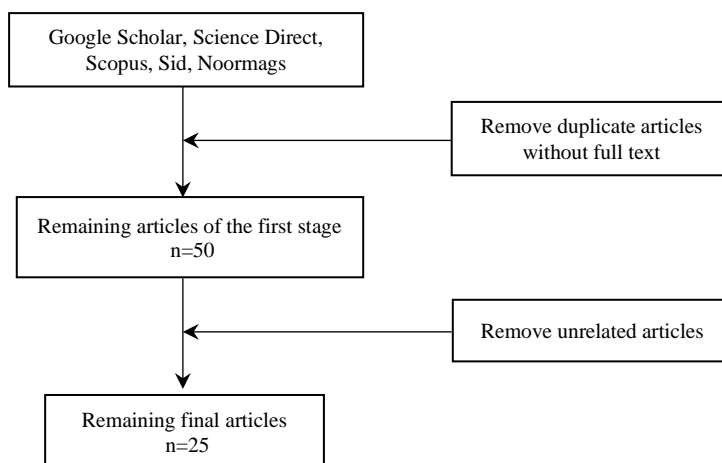


Figure 1. Prism flowchart for search and research.

4. Results

According to research, a higher percentage of them believe that the COVID-19 virus has hit the sports economy, and it is unclear how long the adverse effects of Corona on socio-economic status will continue. The cancellation of some events has left unemployment, financial poverty, and much damage to countries. As research has shown, Corona has a significant effect on sports programs; because some of the biggest sporting events in the world in 2020, such as the Olympics, Euro 2020, Formula One, have been canceled or delayed. But in the meantime, some articles have written that this threat can be used as an opportunity.

5. Managerial implications

The COVID-19 has damaged the sports economy, and it is not clear how long the adverse effects of Coronavirus on socio-economic status will continue. In addition to the difficulties that Coronavirus has brought, but it can also get opportunities for sports and community health; Use strategies such as market segmentation, emphasis on virtual activity, and blue ocean strategy, which can turn into a chance for sports managers.

6. Discussion and conclusion

The purpose of the present study was to review the scientific research in "A Review of the Impact of Coronavirus on Sports businesses" and summarize the results of the previous

study. In this regard, articles were searched in specialized databases, and then 25 related articles were selected and analyzed based on entry and exit criteria. The effects of the Coronavirus on sports businesses have been studied. The results and review of previous research show that the impact of this virus can be both positive and negative. Most studies have pointed out its harmful effects. With the epidemic of the Coronavirus, to reduce human-to-human transmission, people are denying entering sports places and stadiums, which has hurt sports business owners and, to some extent, sports coaches and delaying sporting events. For example, in [Mohsenifar et al. \(2020\)](#)'s research, with the title of postponing football matches in Iran to reduce the transmission of humans to new human Coronavirus, this postponement has been mentioned. This result is also in line with [\(Nicola et al., 2020\)](#). It shows that it has also raised fears of an impending economic crisis and recession. Social distancing, personal isolation, and travel restrictions have reduced the workforce in all sectors of the economy and led to the loss of many jobs. This threat suggests that marketing managers rely on market segmentation and industries less affected by Corona's investment.

Also, [Taku and Arai \(2020\)](#) showed that the Consequences of Postponing the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games, COVID-19, impact coaches and athletes. Due to the limitations and challenges of training environments worldwide. Also, the trainers were another group of people affected by the COVID-19 epidemic. The prevalence of COVID-19 disease worldwide has had its problems and challenges, and it will undoubtedly bring about changes that will have short-term, medium-term, and long-term effects. Therefore, the resumption of sports businesses depends on the return of trust and health to the communities. If a careful assessment is not made in this regard, it may not be far from expected that severe damage will be done to the material and human resources in this sector ([Parnell et al., 2020](#)). In addition to creating health guidelines by the medical department, psychologists should also invite the community to engage in sports with correct information about the benefits of exercise so that homelessness and the quarantine situation can worsen the feeling of boredom among community members. Because on the one hand, exhaustion and boredom are caused by quarantine, and on the other hand, stress and psychological pressures can cause inactivity and overweight. Exacerbation of such a situation can spread many mental and physical problems in society.

But on the other hand, it has also had positive effects on some creative and innovative producers. In addition to the hardships it has brought, Coronavirus can also get sports and community health opportunities. For example, due to quarantine, the importance of home exercise has increased, so managers should take steps to develop this sector. As in [Safania and Barahmand \(2020\)](#)'s research, many sectors in the sports industry were damaged. So, it is the duty of sports organizations, government, and voluntary institutions to identify these sectors and create opportunities for the threat to the sports industry by proper management. Home exercise is one of the sports industry's positive development strategies and options ([Aghaei Shahri & Azimzadeh, 2021](#)). According to this research, attention has shifted from championship and professional sports to mass sports in this era, and even professional champions have supported mass sports. And on the other hand, the current situation is an opportunity to help the leap in domestic production.

Also, in the research of [Rizvandi et al. \(2020\)](#) entitled Identifying the Challenges of Sports Businesses in the COVID-19 Crisis and Providing a Solution, he points out that the private use of sports facilities under health guidelines can be a significant help in returning sports businesses to have a revenue stream. Therefore, accurate information by health care staff can help restore trust and active participation of people in sports activities and sports tourism and events ([Elahi et al., 2021](#); [Nazari, 2021](#)). By holding educational webinars, we can help educate and develop health literacy in this period. Also, sports media can be effective in this field by educating and informing the people. In these days of corona outbreak, the sale of some sports goods has increased more than before. Virtual stores, online sports consulting, various sports software have flourished, and the Corona crisis has accelerated this new form of business. Structuring a suitable foundation and enhancing infrastructure can also strengthen it.

There are solutions given the breadth and diversity of sports businesses globally and the different effects on each sector, especially in specialized sports clubs ([Memari, Rafei Boldaji, et al., 2021](#); [Memari, Rezaei Pandari, et al., 2021](#)). One of the sciences that helps in these critical situations is the science of marketing in sports—work from the past to study marketing aids from this science and create solutions for your business ([Moradi Doliskani & Atghia, 2021](#)). According to the review of articles on the effects of disease on sports economics after going through a particular condition, this can be a severe problem, and there is a need to adopt extreme and principled planning in this area, which requires the empathy and coordination of professors with officials and sports. To create new opportunities, organizations must now create blue oceans to seize new growth and profitability opportunities. The idea of a blue ocean strategy by challenging competition, which has been the most critical premise in strategic management for many years, and presenting new solutions, introduces a new field for success in work and services ([Tavalaee, 2010](#)). Value innovation is the cornerstone of the Blue Ocean Strategy, which emphasizes innovation and value alike and emphasizes creating innovation for both buyers and sellers at the same time. Instead of competitors with traditional indicators, the blue ocean intends a new activity. It creates competition through what Kim and Mabon call value innovation. This view seeks to increase value for customers by creating new services and reducing costs by eliminating low-value services ([Shabandarzadeh & Kabgani, 2016](#)).

Market segmentation strategy

- Focus activities on market segments that are less affected by Corona.
- Emphasis on virtual activities: use of an online coach, online spectator.
- Blue ocean strategy.

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مطالعه نقش کرونا در کسبوکارهای ورزشی

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کلیدواژه

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کووید-۱۹

نوع مقاله

مروری

چکیده

هدف: هدف این مطالعه ارائه تصویری جامع از این روند و فراهم آوردن بینشی ارزشمند از وضعیت و وجوه مروری بر تأثیر کرونا در کسبوکارهای ورزشی و کمک به هدایت پژوهش‌های آتی در راستای پوشش شکاف‌های تحقیقاتی موجود در این حوزه است.

روش: پژوهش حاضر به لحاظ روش از نوع کتابخانه‌ای که به‌صورت مطالعه مروری - توصیفی انجام شده است. جامعه آماری آن، کلیه مقالات مرتبط با تأثیر کرونا بر ورزش و اقتصاد هستند که از خرداد تا تیرماه ۱۳۹۹ در نشریه‌های حوزه مدیریت، بازاریابی و سلامت انتشار یافته و در دسترس قرار گرفتند.

یافته‌ها: با بررسی و مطالعه پیرامون پژوهش‌ها، درصد بیشتری از آن‌ها معتقدند ویروس کووید-۱۹ به اقتصاد ورزش ضربه وارد کرده است و مشخص نیست اثرات نامطلوب کرونا بر وضعیت اقتصادی اجتماعی تا چه زمانی ادامه داشته باشد. اما برخی پژوهش‌ها به اثرات مثبت آن بر روی ورزش اشاره داشتند. کرونا علاوه بر سختی‌هایی که به همراه داشته، می‌تواند برای ورزش و تندرستی جامعه فرصت‌هایی را نیز به ارمغان آورد؛ از راهبردهایی همچون بخش‌بندی بازار، تأکید بر فعالیت مجازی و استراتژی اقیانوس آبی بهره برد که یکی از راهکارهای مدیران ورزشی تبدیل این تهدید به فرصت است.

اصالت و ابتکار مقاله: این مطالعه کارکردهای استراتژی اقیانوس آبی در صنعت ورزش را در زمینه کرونا معرفی کرد.

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