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Article

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Nomadic livelihood resilience through tourism

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ABSTRACT

In recent decades, global changes have resulted in tensions in socio-ecological systems. As a result, livelihood resilience has become a serious concern for managers and researchers. These changes had a negative impact on the livelihood resilience of Iran's nomadic communities. This study seeks to explore how tourism development affects the resilience of nomadic livelihoods. In this qualitative field research, we studied four nomadic communities living in the Fars province of Iran. The data was collected through semi-structured interviews with different informants, informal discussions, and field observations and then analyzed thematically. The findings demonstrate that tourism development strengthens nomadic livelihood resilience through improving the multifunctional quality of livelihood capitals and decreasing nomadic livelihood's reliance on animal husbandry by diversifying income sources.

1. Introduction

The impacts of the postmodern era on the tourism industry are exemplified by the demassification of mass tourism and the emergence of niche tourism (Zotic, Alexandru, & Dezi, 2014). Thus, there is a need for unique experiences, and some consumers seek to increase their awareness of and appreciation for heritage, past lifestyles, traditions, and social values (Apostolakis, 2003; Nuryanti, 1996; Zotic et al., 2014). Heritage tourism can be considered an opportunity for communities with rich and unique cultures that live far from modernity and have the ability to "portray the past in the present" (Nuryanti, 1996, p. 250).

As such, the nomadic pastoral lifestyle seems to be highly compatible with this new tourism market. Nomadic pastoralism is a mobile way of life developed due to the successful adaptation of human communities to ecological conditions and as a consequence of their attempts to optimally use economic assets (Scholz & Schlee, 2015). Nomadic settlements are "cultural landscapes" since they are areas where landscapes and cultures have emerged in an interacting and interdependent manner (Buckley, Ollenburg, & Zhong, 2008). Iran was one of the first and most significant settlements for nomadic communities (Moshiri, 1993). The country might then serve as a destination for postmodern tourists interested in understanding and experiencing cultures, religions,

traditions, ethnicities, and the environment, or "otherness," especially in non-western countries (Munt, 1994). These tourists are eager to learn about the various interpretations of culture and history (Dujmović & Vitasović, 2015).

However, various aspects of nomadic livelihood in Iran have changed dramatically since the twentieth century. The main reasons were: forced settlement of nomads; disarmament and disintegration of their political power structure; delegation of their power to the government agencies (Amanelahi Baharvand, 2004); outbreak of the Iranian Constitutional Revolution; the implementation of modernist policies in the Pahlavi era; the enforcement of the land reform policy and nationalization of rangelands; a tendency among local communities to migrate to rural and urban areas; drought, and a lack of mobile secondary schools and other facilities (Annamoradnejad & Lotfi, 2010; Beck, 1981).

These changes have resulted in a situation in which nomadic communities are gradually disappearing, so that their population has decreased from 25 to 30% (Abrahamian, 2008; Annamoradnejad & Lotfi, 2010) to 1.6% over a century (Annamoradnejad & Lotfi, 2010; Census of Pastoral Nomads, 2008). Opponents argue that nomadic settlement could only worsen the unemployment rate and associated challenges in urban and rural areas because these issues have not been

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successfully addressed in these areas (Annamoradnejad & Lotfi, 2010). Also, sedentism has not improved the living conditions of nomadic communities (Azadi, Garakani, & Azadi, 2017; Karami & Derikvandi, 2016; Seidzadeh & Rezaei, 2016). Mobile pastoralism was developed centuries ago in arid and semi-arid regions to exploit pastures suitable for seasonal use (Gilbert, 1983; Scholz & Schlee, 2015). However, this economic capital could be spoiled due to sedentism (Annamoradnejad & Lotfi, 2010). As nomadic livelihoods are disappearing, Iran's tourism industry may lose part of its postmodern tourist market share (Dujmović & Vitasović, 2015; Munt, 1994), which includes tourists interested in traveling to nomadic areas to learn about the culture and lifestyle and gain authentic experiences.

With the increasing effects of various disturbances threatening vulnerable communities, flexible strategies are required to cope with these negative effects. Thus, "livelihood resilience" has been a focal concept in related studies (Tanner et al., 2015). Resilience thinking can help us understand how communities maintain or improve their livelihoods in the face of unfavorable changes (Zhou, Guo, Deng, & Xu, 2021). Livelihood resilience is "the capacity of livelihoods to cushion stresses and disturbances while maintaining or improving essential properties and functions" (Speranza, Wiesmann, & Rist, 2014, p. 111). It maintains the existing livelihood while reaching for a new and resilient status. Although resilience theory has been employed extensively in risk management, its application in tourism development studies is still inadequate (Tsao & Ni, 2016).

According to the authors' examination of literature, previous studies mostly explored the resilience of rural, coastal, and forest communities and their associated livelihood activities (e.g., animal husbandry, fishing, and agriculture) (Birhanu, Ambelu, Berhanu, Tesfaye, & Wolde-michael, 2017; A. K. Quandt, 2017; Sok & Yu, 2015; Speranza et al., 2014; Stanford, Wiryawan, Bengen, Febriamansyah, & Haluan, 2017; Thulstrup, 2015). Among these, only a few studies investigated the resilience of pastoralism (Ambelu et al., 2017; Bersaglio & Enns, 2015; Birhanu et al., 2017). However, this livelihood has its own set of features, such as a tribal social structure, reliance on animal husbandry, and a lifestyle regulated by seasonal movements (Census of Pastoral Nomads, 2008). Such specifications make the nomadic livelihood system considerably different from those in rural areas (Safinejad, 2004). Due to the importance of context in studying livelihood resilience (Chen, Xu, & Lew, 2020) and the distinct features of nomadic livelihood, a deep understanding of the resilience of this livelihood is necessary.

Meanwhile, resilience is a new topic in Iranian research addressing urban and rural contexts, with agriculture being the only livelihood activity explored. Therefore, previous studies did not study nomadic livelihood. Regarding the cultural assets of the nomadic lifestyle, tourism development is one of the livelihood options for nomadic communities. Despite the Iranian government's emphasis on the potential of nomadic life for tourism development and the organization of tours to nomadic destinations (Noroozi, 2021), it remains unclear how tourism might contribute to their livelihood resilience. Furthermore, there are few studies on this topic in tourism worldwide (Chen et al., 2020; Forster, Lake, Watkinson, & Gill, 2014; Hanazaki, Berkes, Seixas, & Peroni, 2013; Prado, Seixas, & Berkes, 2015).

Thus, by giving voice to under-researched and marginalized nomadic communities living in remote regions, this study aims to examine how tourism affects the livelihood resilience of nomadic communities, thereby expanding this notion in the field of tourism. This research can also aid in formulating strategies for improving the resilience of nomadic livelihoods by using tourism capacities to protect nomadic cultural and ethnic heritage and diversify their products.

We carried out this qualitative research in a specific socio-ecological setting. However, its findings may be useful for other nomadic or local communities to further evaluate how tourism can improve their livelihood resilience.

2. Literature review

2.1. Livelihood resilience

Livelihood is a set of "capabilities, assets, and activities required for a means of living" (Chambers & Conway, 1992, p. 6). Livelihood resilience highlights actors' capacity to use turmoil as an opportunity to shift to a more favorable situation and regards human agency, empowerment, freedom, and access to assets as essential requirements to cope with changes and maintain livelihood (Tanner et al., 2015). According to Speranza et al. (2014), indicators for measuring resilience are buffer capacity (asset ownership and access); self-organization (institutions, cooperation and networks, opportunities for self-organization, and reliance on one's resources); and learning capacity (knowledge of threats and opportunities, shared societal vision, commitment to learning).

Although early livelihood resilience studies date back to the beginning of the 2000s, this topic received growing attention in the previous decade (Awazi & Quandt, 2021; Bathaiy, Chizari, Sadighi, & Alambeigi, 2021; A. Quandt, 2018; Sok & Yu, 2015; Speranza et al., 2014; Stanford et al., 2017; Thulstrup, 2015). Most conceptual frameworks for livelihood resilience have emphasized the availability and access to various capitals as one of its components (i.e., Birhanu et al., 2017; A. Quandt, 2018; Sok & Yu, 2015; Speranza, et al., Zotić et al., 2014; Stanford et al., 2017; Thulstrup, 2015). Livelihood capitals may overlap. They can be stored, accumulated, traded, or allocated to activities to generate income, livelihood, or other benefits (A. Quandt, 2018). These include human capital (skills, abilities, and capabilities of the individuals that allow them to follow different strategies and activities for a living); social capital (networks, groups, associations, and relationships, trust, and interaction); natural capital (soil, water, mines, livestock, and other natural resources); physical capital (services, infrastructures, and facilities); and financial/economic capital (such as cash, bank accounts, savings, income, investments, credit, current assets, pension rights, allowances, grants, financial remittances, household property) (Chen et al., 2020; Nasrnia & Ashktorab, 2021).

Tourism development can strengthen community and livelihood capitals in various ways (Chen et al., 2020; Prado et al., 2015; A. Quandt, 2018; Ruiz-Ballesteros, 2011). However, capitals' amount, diversity, and functions are important (Buultjens, Ratnayake, & Gnana-pala, 2017; A. K. Quandt, 2017), and simply reinforcing one capital will not lead to livelihood resilience (A. K. Quandt, 2017; Thulstrup, 2015). Wilson (2010) believes that resilience results from finding a balance between community capitals, especially when a society possesses a high level of multifunctional quality, which occurs when all capitals are equally developed. Therefore, the mere existence of capitals is insufficient to build resilience; instead, how these capitals are allocated is more critical (A. Quandt, 2018; Speranza et al., 2014; Thulstrup, 2015; Zhou et al., 2021).

2.2. Resilience studies in tourism

With the increasing speed and complexity of today's social and environmental changes, research on resilience in tourism has become more significant (Lew, 2014). Tourism is also a driving factor for change, making societies more vulnerable. For example, instability and seasonal fluctuations in tourism demand, which characterize the tourism sector, can lead to community vulnerability (Bec, 2016). Also, the future of tourism will necessitate resilience thinking, which is a way to improve the ability of destinations to cope with the development of tourism and the crises and conflicts that might suddenly cause the industry to decline (Butler, 2017). However, compared to other disciplines, resilience concepts have been adopted later, both in the tourism industry and academia (Bec, 2016).

B. H. Farrell and Twining-Ward (2004) and B. Farrell and Twining-Ward (2005) were among the first to apply resilience theory to tourism. As a complex adaptive system, they argued that tourism should

prioritize resilience to turbulence rather than maintaining stability. Since then, other researchers have employed the concept of resilience in tourism development studies (e.g., [Bec, McLennan, & Moyle, 2016](#); [Cochrane, 2010](#); [Holladay & Powell, 2013](#); [Lacitignola, Petrosillo, Cataldi, & Zurlini, 2007](#); [Lew, 2014](#); [Ruiz-Ballesteros, 2011](#); [Valerie A. Sheppard & Williams, 2016](#); [Strickland-Munro, Allison, & Moore, 2010](#); [Tsao & Ni, 2016](#); [Tyrrell & Johnston, 2008](#)).

In the majority of the researches mentioned, the authors have studied the features of a resilient tourism system (destination or business). However, few studies have examined the role of tourism as a livelihood strategy in improving community resilience ([Chen et al., 2020](#); [Forster et al., 2014](#); [Hanazaki et al., 2013](#); [Prado et al., 2015](#)). [Hanazaki et al. \(2013\)](#) showed that tourism had helped Caiçara communities in Brazil, whose main livelihood activity was fishing. They maintained their livelihood resilience by diversifying livelihood options and increasing flexibility. According to [Prado et al. \(2015\)](#), tourism as a livelihood strategy improved financial and human capital in a Caiçara community, such as managerial capabilities, personal attributes (e.g., attitude to work), and entrepreneurship to perceive opportunities. As a result, people's wellbeing, information flow, and network with outsiders had improved. However, tourism revenues have intensified social inequalities and the individualistic process among households, weakening their local networks, collective action, and social cohesiveness. Engaging in tourism has also decreased local ecological knowledge among youth and increased vulnerability to future environmental changes.

[Forster et al. \(2014\)](#) studied Anguilla's marine-dependent livelihoods (fisheries and tourism businesses). Their findings revealed that those working in tourism businesses were more resilient than fishers; due to more diverse livelihood strategies, higher education and skills transferable to other sectors, and fewer family responsibilities. [Chen et al. \(2020\)](#) developed an Agency-based Livelihood Resilience Framework and tested it in two Chinese rural communities. They concluded that both individual and collective agency are essential determinants of community resilience.

Livelihood resilience research aims to identify the resilience of what and resilience for whom by focusing on livelihood strategies. So, livelihood resilience studies focus on the livelihood strategies used by communities with different characteristics to cope with adverse influences and outcomes of these strategies (A. [Quandt, 2018](#)). As mentioned before, nomadic livelihood, with its unique features, has been neglected in livelihood research studies, especially in communities that have selected tourism as one of their livelihood strategies. Therefore, the present study attempts to identify tourism development's role in improving nomadic livelihood resilience.

3. Study methods

3.1. Methodology

The study's philosophical paradigm was interpretivism. It used an inductive approach to highlight "lived experience" and communities' perceptions to gain a clear understanding of the field under study. The study used a case study strategy ([Bryman, 2012](#)) due to the complexity of socio-ecological systems, the role of human agency in deciding a system's fate, the context-specific nature of resilience ([Birhanu et al., 2017](#); [Jones & Tanner, 2015](#); [Ruiz-Ballesteros, 2011](#)), and the specifications of nomadic communities. A qualitative research method was employed, considering the importance of subjective resilience dimensions ([Jones & Tanner, 2015](#)). The study was cross-sectional as it was conducted "at a single point in time" ([Bryman, 2012, p. 76](#)).

The study was conducted in Fars province, Iran. Fars Province is home to the largest proportion of the Iranian nomadic population (approximately 12%) ("[Census of Pastoral Nomads, 2008](#)"). The tribal structure in the nomads is as follows: household (a tent), *bonkou* (*tash* or *oulad*; a camp of tents), clans (*tira*; constitutes several *bonkous*), tribes

(*tayefeh*; constitutes several clans), and tribal confederations (*il*; comprises several tribes). In our study, the fields were *bonkous*, which we refer to as communities here. A *bonkou* consists of a camp of around 12 households (tents) in a common pasture. Its members are relatives who make decisions collectively ([Afshar-e-Sistani, 1987](#); [Garthwaite, 1978](#)). *Bonkous* introduce themselves by their clan's name ([Fig. 1](#)).

Purposive sampling was used to select the study contexts, a suitable sampling technique in vulnerability, poverty, and resilience research ([Barua, Katyaini, Mili, & Gooch, 2014](#)). Permanent seasonal movements and participation in tourism-related activities were the criteria used for selecting a nomadic community. Four communities were chosen by asking formal institutions and key informants and searching the Internet. Because only a few households in each community were engaged in tourism activities, selecting more communities allowed more credible results.

We also used a purposive sampling method to select the participants (different informants), which is a "common technique in community-based research" ([Bec, 2016, p. 106](#)). Key informants were community members who had experienced nomadic and urban life (one from the Heibatlou, one from the Hashmi, and two from the Labou-Musa clan communities). They were pioneers in their communities' tourism activities, introduced tourism to the community, and marketed to attract tourists to the nomadic community. Other informants were community members engaged in tourism and selected with the assistance of the key informants.

The data were collected through semi-structured interviews, informal dialogues (during meals, dish-washing, pasturing, night-time gatherings, and on the road to nomads), and field observations from March 2018 to April 2018. The number of interviews was not planned ahead of time. Data collection continued until data saturation ([Saunders et al., 2018](#)) was achieved. The duration of participants' involvement in tourism activities, the activities and services offered for tourists, the changes introduced to the lives of the community members as a result of tourism, the role of tourism in compensating for animal husbandry problems, and in contributing to a continuation of pastoral lifestyle were all addressed in the interview questions.

We recorded around 20 h of interviews with 21 individuals. Seven interviewees were from the Heibatlou, seven from the Hashemi, four from the Hassony, and three from the Labou-Musa clan communities. Interviewees were 40% female and 60% male. Of the female interviewees, 12.5% were aged 14–24 years, 37.5% were aged 25–44 years, and 59% were aged 45–64 years; none were aged 65 years or older. For the male interviewees, none were aged 14–24 years, and the proportions were 54%, 31%, and 15%, respectively ([Table 1](#)). Hassony and Labou-Musa communities spoke in Farsi and Hashemi and Heibatlou communities spoke in Turkish. Bilingual key informants who spoke both Farsi and Turkish assisted in conducting interviews in Turkish.

Inductive thematic analysis was used to analyze the data ([Braun & Clarke, 2006](#)). The interviews were transcribed. The bilingual key informants helped in the transcription and translation of the interviews conducted in Turkish. The textual data from the interviews and field notes were then analyzed through open and axial coding. An analysis was performed after each interview. Concepts and themes were identified and compared to those identified in previous interviews until no new concepts and themes emerged, indicating data saturation ([Saunders et al., 2018](#)).

The trustworthiness of the findings increased by enhancing credibility, dependability, and confirmability ([Bryman, 2012](#)). Key informants reviewed the results and suggested the necessary corrections to improve the findings' credibility. Direct quotations were also cited. In addition, triangulation ([Bryman, 2012, p. 392](#)) was applied in collecting different kinds of qualitative data (semi-structured interviews, informal dialogues, and field observations). To increase confirmability, the researchers reviewed the findings with the assistant after leaving each community. The research stages were clarified and substantially

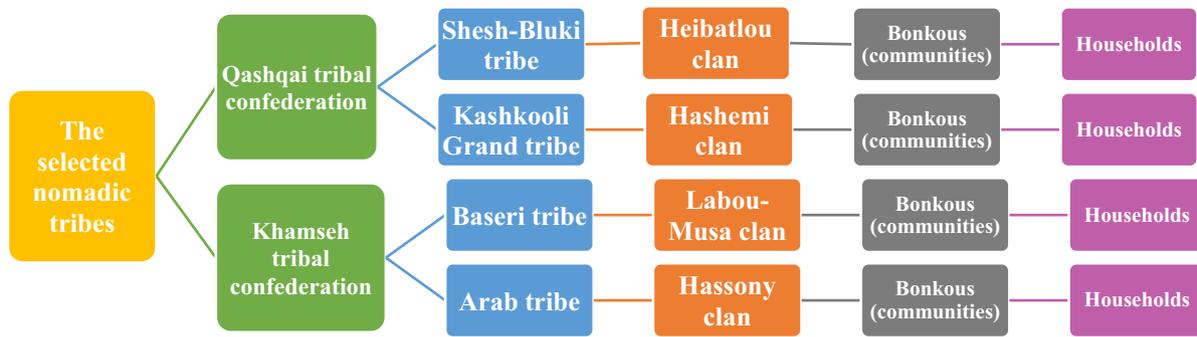


Fig. 1. The tribal structure of the selected nomadic communities.

Table 1
Descriptive information about informants.

Participant no.	Age	Gender	Role	Clan name
P1	65 years and older	M	Retired	Heibatlou
P2	45–64 years	M	Sheppard	
P3	45–64 years	F	Housekeeper	
P4	25–44 years	M	Sheppard	
P5	25–44 years	M	Sheppard	
P6	14–24 years	F	Housekeeper	
P7	25–44 years	F	Tour guide	
P8	65 years and older	M	Sheppard	Hashemi
P9	45–64 years	M	Sheppard	
P10	45–64 years	M	Sheppard	
P11	45–64 years	F	Housekeeper	
P12	25–44 years	M	Sheppard	
P13	25–44 years	M	Sheppard	
P14	25–44 years	M	Tour guide	
P15	45–64 years	M	Sheppard	Hassony
P16	45–64 years	F	Housekeeper	
P17	25–44 years	M	Sheppard	
P18	25–44 years	F	Housekeeper	
P19	45–64 years	F	Housekeeper/ Tour guide	
P20	25–44 years	M	Sheppard/ Tour guide	
P21	45–64 years	F	Housekeeper	

discussed as far as possible to strengthen the dependability of the results.

Before starting interviews, to improve the research field performance (Newman, 2015, p. 332), authors gained more knowledge about the nomadic lifestyle by reading some resources about Fars nomads' history, socio-cultural, political, and economic features (Afshar-e-Sistani, 1987, 1989; Amanollahi Baharvand, 1995; Ivanov, 2006; Moshiri, 1993). They visited and stayed with the nomadic communities. Meanwhile, they discussed designing questions, conducting interviews, and dealing with cultural sensitivities with key informants. Key informants served as “gatekeepers,” helping break the ice and gain the participants' trust. Although the living conditions of nomads in Fars province and neighboring provinces might be similar, we should not ignore the role of factors such as culture and tourism development stage. Therefore, we do not claim the transferability of the findings of this qualitative study.

Considering the significant role of researchers in a qualitative study, the positionality of the research team bears mention (Cai, Gebbels, & Wan-Zainal-Shukri, 2021; Phillips, Taylor, Narain, & Chandler, 2021). All the authors are Iranians who live in urban areas and speak Farsi as their native language. They are not nomads and do not speak Turkish. The first author, who collected the and analyzed the field data, born and raised in Fars province (as one of the main nomadic regions in Iran), has been visiting nomadic communities since childhood and has been interested in their lifestyle. The second and fourth authors are experts in rural tourism sustainable development and local communities' studies.

All authors contributed to interpreting the findings, ensuring that their collective knowledge and expertise guided the manuscript.

3.2. Tourism context

Tourism is a relatively new activity in Fars nomadic communities, dating back to about ten years ago, with communities from the Heibatlou and Hashemi clans as pioneers. Inbound tourists mostly visit nomads in small groups to experience and learn about nomadic lifestyle, ethnicity, and culture. However, communities from the Heibatlou and Labou-Musa clans occasionally host groups of thirty individuals, often domestic tourists visiting nomadic destinations during the Iranian New Year holidays. Most community members have not invested much in tourism facilities and amenities. They have primarily used their existing facilities to cater to tourists. However, public restrooms are under construction, and sometimes communities have to install and equip more tents to accommodate tourists. Local elites, guides, and travel agencies act as mediators between tourists and communities.

In terms of community participation, the Heibatlou clan community has adopted community-based ecotourism based on the Global Support Initiative for Indigenous Peoples and Community-Conserved Territories and Areas (ICCA-GSI), supported by the Global Environment Facility Small Grants Programme. So, the voluntary participation of community members is necessary. Community members engage in tourism either directly or indirectly; however, each family should not host tourists independently. Direct participation mainly includes cooking, serving food and beverages, performing traditional music and dance, and guiding. In contrast, indirect participation includes handicraft or dairy production. The number of human resources engaged depends on the number of tourists and the activities and experiences offered.

Tourists are brought to the Hashemi clan community by tour guides who are community members. Some other members cooperate with tour guides to host tourists and show them the landscapes. Meanwhile, some members have independently applied for eco-lodge licenses. Only two households engage in tourism in each Hassony and Labou-Musa community, and tour guides and travel agencies bring tourists. Tourism development in these communities does not follow a particular pattern. The main local tour guide who works with the Hashemi and Hassony clan communities seeks to mitigate the negative consequences of tourism development by raising community members' awareness and explaining to tourists about nomads' cultural sensitivities and acceptable behaviors.

4. Research findings

The results of the inductive thematic analysis are presented below. The analysis provided the following themes: migration drivers, strengthening social, natural, cultural, human, physical, and economic capitals, and factors limiting tourism's contribution to nomadic livelihood resilience (Table 2). According to the findings, migration drivers

Table 2
Thematic analysis of semi-structured interviews.

Raw data codes	Concepts	Themes
Increasing the cost of livestock inputs; Lack of diversity of income sources	Economic (18)	Migration drivers (21)
Education; a low tendency among youth to continue nomadism	Socio-demographic (10)	
Happy that tourists want to know our lives; becoming interested in continuing this way of life; learning more about nomads than before; children's interest in the presence of tourists; increasing family gatherings	Strengthen lifestyle attachment (9)	Strengthening social capital (12)
Increasing tourism stakeholders and increasing mutual support; the importance of the engagement and cooperation of more members in raising the community voice [to gain more power]; the importance of satisfying neighbors before starting a tourism business; preserving nomadic life to gain more power; cooperating to increase the financial benefits of tourism; inviting community members to cooperate; voluntary participation of community members	Strengthen the capacity for collective action (10)	
Observing tourists collecting their trash; observing how tourists try to consume less water; gaining awareness of the importance of environmental preservation	Learning about environmental protection (7)	Strengthening natural capital (8)
Allocation of part of the tourism profits to local environmental protection projects; cooperation for protecting local pastures	Protecting the natural resources (7)	
Increasing self-confidence by recognizing the value of our cultural assets; acknowledging the opportunities that culture creates for employment; learning, and being encouraged to produce and revive handicrafts; increasing self-confidence by comparing our cultural assets with others	Realizing the value of culture and seeking to revive it (13)	Strengthening cultural capital (15)
Paying attention to and expressing interest in the social values that govern other societies; learning about the etiquettes of different cultures; gaining a better understanding of other cultures and nationalities; observing and paying attention to the positive aspects of tourists' lifestyle	Acculturation (10)	
Possibility of earning income from cultural and physical	Direct economic benefits (15)	Strengthening economic capital (20)

Table 2 (continued)

Raw data codes	Concepts	Themes
assets; earning income from tourism; positive attitude towards tourism revenues generation potential; using tourism revenues to offset some of the animal husbandry costs; employment potential; increasing access to markets		
Backward linkages; providing loans to families from tourism revenues; receiving loans from national and international funds; gifts given by tourists; providing incentives and rewards to active members of the community	Indirect economic benefits (14) Willingness to continue nomadism as long as we have income; reverse migration	Reducing migration (12)
Strengthening human capital (14)	Learning English; improving attitudes towards tourism; learning how to serve tourists	Capacity building (11)
	Increasing the family's financial capacity to pay for their children's education; funding tour guide training courses	Payment of education and training costs (5)
Improving access roads; constructing ponds and dams; supplying water containers with extended capacities; acquiring ownership of a variety of winter pastures by obtaining an eco-lodge permit; purchasing educational facilities such as laptops and sports equipment for nomadic schools from tourism revenues or by tourists	Improvement of public infrastructure and facilities (11)	Strengthening physical capital (12)
Building public toilets; installing more black tents	Improvement of tourism infrastructure (11)	
The tourism industry's vulnerability to political and economic tensions; tourism's seasonality; Iran's small number of inbound tourists	General tourism factors (5)	Factors limiting tourism's contribution to the nomadic livelihood resilience
Drought; resistance to the development of nomadic tourism; the limited access of nomads to the tourism market and the dominance of local elites and middlemen; possibility of unsustainable tourism development in nomadic communities	Nomadic tourism-related factors (9)	

have a negative impact on livelihood resilience. Meanwhile, tourism development contributes to nomadic livelihood resilience by strengthening livelihood capitals. However, some factors limit its contribution (see Fig. 2). We discussed each theme and its related concepts and cited quotes that best described the participants' answers.

4.1. Migration drivers

Nomads mentioned some *economic* and *socio-demographic* factors as

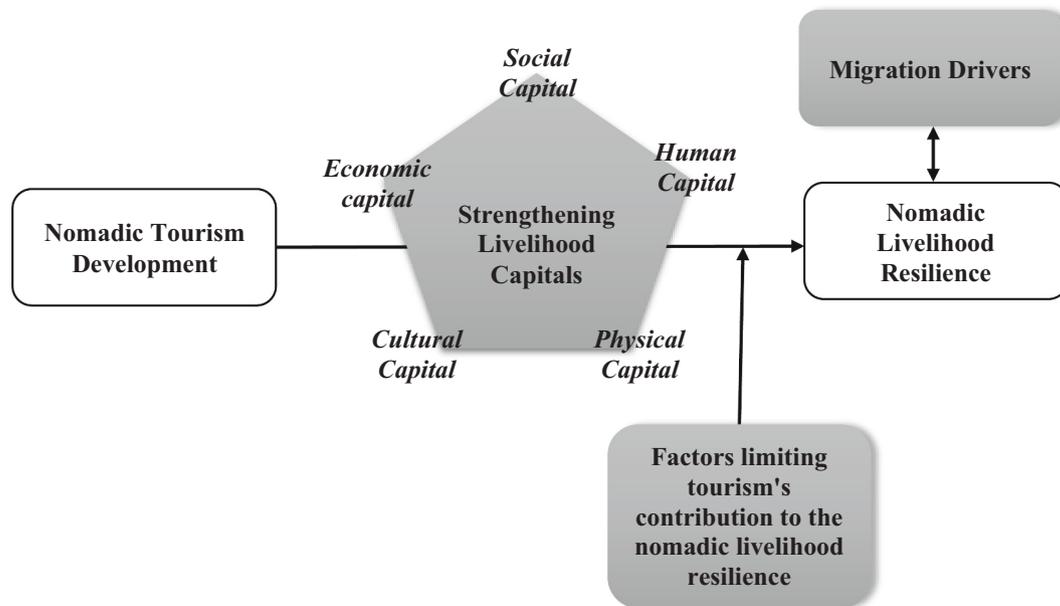


Fig. 2. The results of the inductive thematic analysis.

the reasons for migrating to rural or urban areas. According to a participant,

“Due to consecutive droughts, we have to buy fodder to feed our livestock, and this has increased production costs.” [P8].

Besides, the lack of rainfed agriculture due to drought and the workforce shortage to produce handicrafts has resulted in a dependency on animal husbandry. Furthermore,

“Children who move to the city for education will not return because they are not interested in nomadic life and believe that urban life is easier.” [P16].

4.2. Strengthening social capital

Tourists' presence and their desire to learn about nomadic people's culture and lifestyle *strengthens nomads' lifestyle attachment.*

“We are happy that people know nomads better than before.” [P13].

Also, according to one participant,

“The divisions among the clan members have worsened. However, when the tourists arrived, we invited those living in villages and cities to come together. We paid for the folklore music groups and played the local games. That is why now, when tourists are not here and for events like New Year's Eve, we get together more than before. So, some of those who left the pastoral lifestyle have been encouraged to attend the gatherings.” [P7].

In addition, the economic benefits of tourism *strengthen the capacity for collective action* in nomadic communities. On the one hand, community members encourage others to cooperate in tourism activities to increase the financial benefits. On the other hand,

“If everyone benefits, outsiders cannot come here and start a tourism business; since members can unite and support each other. In addition, sustaining nomadic life (not just a community) will increase our power.” [P14].

4.3. Strengthening natural capital

Nomads *learn about environmental protection* through acculturation by observing foreign tourists' respect for the environment and how they behave to minimize their impact and become aware of the necessity of maintaining the environment. Nomads are also aware of the natural asset's potential as tourism attractions to generate revenue.

In addition, members attempt to *protect their natural resources* more than before. For example, in the Heibatlou clan,

“More cooperation between members has recently led to the voluntary gathering to make the contract to protect the local pastures.” [P2].

“We allocate part of the profits from tourism to the community's local environmental preservation projects.” [P7].

4.4. Strengthening cultural capital

Tourists make the nomads *realize the value of their culture and encourage them to revive it:*

“Tourists come to see our way of coexistence with nature, so we must maintain our lifestyle to earn money.” [P18].

Notably, nomads (especially young ones) are encouraged to revive their forgotten traditions, rituals, and handicrafts to generate revenue,

“We did not realize how valuable the Gabbeh [a type of rug] was until tourists came and took pictures.” [P6].

“We realized that if our girls are unable to continue their education, they can earn a living by weaving carpets.” [P15].

Recognizing cultural values also increases nomads' cultural self-confidence. Interaction with foreign tourists makes the nomadic community pay attention to the social values of other nations, such as discipline, simplicity, contentment, and social equality.

“As we have been in contact with urban communities, some people consider the wasteful and gorgeous lifestyle of cities attractive, but we see how simple our tourists are.” [P21].

They also learn some social etiquette tips. Thus, cultural capital

strengthens through *acculturation*.

4.5. Strengthening human capital

Tourism revenues can help in *reducing migration* to villages and cities. According to two young men,

“If I have income, I am willing to continue my nomadic life after marriage and not migrate to the city.” [P12].

“Some young men who have migrated to the city told me that if tourism flourishes and its income equals or exceeds what we earn in the city, we will return.” [P2].

Four family members with a bachelor's degree, who lived in the city, have returned to the community to work in the tourism industry. A local tour guide told one of the nomads that,

“If your wife returns from the city and continues the nomadic life, I will bring tourists because tourists expect families to host them.” [P14].

Tourism also contributes to the improvement of local community capacity to host tourists (*capacity building*). Some children, especially girls, are learning English in preparation for a future career as a tour guide. Also, local tour guides try to improve community attitudes towards tourism,

“It is still hard to photograph some nomads, but we are preparing them.” [P14].

Nomads are also learning the necessary skills to host tourists,

“We need to introduce tourism to more members to earn a living from it. We are preparing the community so as the number of tourists increases, they can understand their needs and serve them.” [P7].

Furthermore, tourism contributes to the *payment of education and training costs*. Some nomadic families cannot afford to enroll their children in boarding schools in cities for secondary education due to drought. They may, however, be able to cover these costs with the help of tourism revenues. Also, in one community,

“A proportion of the tourism revenues are spent on tour guide training courses for some community members.” [P7].

4.6. Strengthening physical capital

Gaining popularity through tourism development increases the negotiation power of some nomadic communities, resulting in *improved public infrastructures and facilities* such as access roads, water supply, and ponds and dams,

“We have managed to obtain some benefits from the local authorities because our tourism has become a brand in their region, so they should help us improve its development. For example, they used to fill the tanks twice a month, but now they do so every week.” [P7].

Also, if a community gets an ecotourism license, it will acquire ownership of winter pastures that are currently classified as natural resources. In addition, tourism revenues provide some educational facilities for students, such as laptops or sports equipment.

On the other hand, the necessary infrastructure is required to provide services to more tourists. Therefore, nomadic communities *improve tourism infrastructure* by building toilets for tourists' convenience and increasing the number of black tents, one of the features of nomadic life woven with goat hair. However, weaving black tents is time-consuming and labour intensive. Since nomadic communities lack human resources, black tents have been replaced by canvas tents, and their traditional know-how is disappearing. If they make more money, they will also install more black tents.

4.7. Strengthening economic capital

Tourism creates *direct economic benefits* for the nomadic community. Many nomads now recognize that tourism is a source of income for them,

“Ten years ago, I saw my friend, a tour guide, leading tourists in the mountains near our home. He told me that tourists pay him to show them these mountains. He encouraged me to work in tourism. I did not know anything about tourism, so I did not believe him and asked, ‘How could a tourist pay us to see a mountain? They are looking for something else here, maybe a treasure’. The community, too, did not believe me. However, now that they know it is possible to make money from tourism, they will get upset if I do not bring tourists. Now I realize that tourism is a treasure!” [P14].

Many nomads are aware that they can make money from their cultural and physical assets,

“Many people think we should sell our sheep and work in tourism, but a tourist comes and expects to see these sheep.” [P9].

Although nomadic communities do not accurately estimate the share of tourism revenues, according to the interviewees, many families do not rely on tourism as a great source of income. One reason may be the emerging nature of tourism activities and the limited number of tourists, especially foreigners. They are, however, optimistic about tourism. This is evidenced by the considerable number of applicants referred to related organizations to receive tourism activity licenses.

Although income from tourism is still low, it contributes to the lives of some participants,

“Tourism has a positive effect on my life. When a tour arrives, it benefits several people. Some sell doogh [a yogurt-based beverage], curd, and rugs. We are delighted, and we hope it will continue.” [P16].

Tourism revenues can compensate for increased animal husbandry costs due to drought and create jobs. People can, directly or indirectly, earn income from doing all that is needed to produce goods and providing services for tourists, such as yarn spinning, baking bread, carpet weaving. Younger people will also be encouraged to stay,

“If we develop tourism to the point where three to four groups visit the area every month, all community members may return because the income is here. Why should they work for other people in villages or cities? No one will ever leave this place if we attract more tourists; our children may return from the cities and help us here. Just imagine, four groups visiting here monthly; why would they [community members] work somewhere else?” [P4].

The presence of tourists decreases the role of brokers. It increases community access to the markets, especially for handicrafts,

“Middlemen come here and buy things at the least price and resell them five times as much.” [P19].

Some nomadic families gain *indirect economic benefits* from tourism. This is especially true for families who do not provide accommodation. As an example, in the Hashemi clan, the tour guide said,

“During their visit, tourists may stay in one or more houses, come over to others for sightseeing, having food, and socializing with locals. I do not pay some families directly for providing these services because it is still unacceptable for some nomads to be paid for the tea they serve or for a short rest of the guests in their house. However, I can give loans to families using revenue from tourism. Tourists may also bring gifts to families, such as clothing, flashlights, or even medicine. They help nomadic people save money and time by lowering the costs of buying these items and facilitating some activities for them.” [P14].

Each family in the Heibatlou clan would be required to contribute 10% of their tourism revenue to the Sustainable Livelihood Fund. Part of the Fund's income is distributed to members indirectly in loans, new year bonuses, rewards, and other items. Also, implementing community-based tourism projects in the Heibatlou clan can make it easier to obtain low-interest loans and small financial aids from national or international funds such as the Omid Entrepreneurship Fund or the GEF Small Grants Program. So, the community may invest in projects associated with local communities' livelihood or strengthen their physical capital.

In Hassony and Labou-Musa clans' communities, financial benefits are more directly observable because households provide accommodation, food, sightseeing, and other activities, and tour guides work only as mediators.

Other indirect economic benefits include establishing backward linkages in the tourism supply chain and creating added value. For example, nomadic communities are largely self-sufficient in tourism inputs, such as meat, dairy, and raw materials for producing handicrafts. They can use mountain plants, produce honey, buy rice from other nomads, or provide other tourism inputs from their relatives in the countryside and city. Younger people can also become tour guides. According to a participant,

"We no longer need to sell sheep wool or goat hair in the raw form. We can weave carpets or knit black tents from it." [P6].

4.8. Factors limiting tourism's contribution to nomadic livelihood resilience

Two concepts are related to the factors that limit tourism's contribution to improving nomadic livelihood resilience. One is *general tourism factors*. First, political and economic tensions have an impact on the industry's vulnerability,

"Our tour could be canceled due to a politician's remarks." [P20].

Second, seasonality of tourism,

"Tourists come here only when the weather is good." [P17].

Thirdly, the nomadic community does not have a large share of the global tourism market due to the small number of international tourists traveling to Iran,

"The number of tourists is currently insufficient, so we cannot count on tourism revenues." [P14].

The other concept is *nomadic tourism-related factors*. Drought is a serious concern because, without pastures and water resources, nomadic people will not have any motivation to continue their pastoral life, as their tourism attractions are primarily associated with natural areas,

"At the moment, what bothers us most is the drought. We started tourism as a means of supplementing income so that people would not migrate. However, drought is more robust than us. A tour has been scheduled for June, but I am worried that due to a water shortage, not even one family will go to the summer pastures." [P2].

Another concern is community opposition to the development of nomadic tourism due to cultural, religious, and political reasons and lack of familiarity with tourism. In addition, some families prevent tourists from visiting their homes or taking pictures. This reluctance stems mainly from the concept of *gheirat* in Iranian culture. *Gheirat* is a male moral virtue and a monitoring mechanism in the minds of traditional Iranian men that serve to protect their values (e.g., their female relatives) from threat, insult, and injury (Bakhtiar, 2017). Men are expected to defend their women's chastity against "other" men, who can range from relatives to strangers. According to an interviewee,

"Nomadic men do not like strangers to take pictures of their wives, daughter, sister or other relatives or to post these photos on social media." [P14].

"Some local authorities are pessimistic about the presence of foreign tourists and sometimes do not allow tourists to visit the community." [P14].

Also, nomadic communities lack enough access to the tourism market, dominated by local elites and intermediaries because of remoteness from villages and cities and unawareness of marketing and branding techniques. One of the adverse consequences of tourism development is the nomadic communities' mere focus on financial benefits and unrealistic expectations of tourism revenues. In other words, as they are unfamiliar with tourism and the negative socio-cultural, economic, or environmental impacts of its rapid and unplanned growth, some of them try to maximize profits while neglecting these consequences. Furthermore,

"Some tourists ignore the negative effects of tipping or paying unusually high fees for services, which can lead to unrealistic expectations or begging, especially among children." [P7].

Key informants ([P7] and [P14]) expressed their concerns about the possibility of unsustainable nomadic tourism development due to the use of non-local materials to build facilities such as toilets for tourists, disregard for the importance of maintaining the authenticity of traditions and rituals, and irresponsible behavior of some domestic tourists.

5. Discussion and conclusions

This study explores how tourism contributes to nomadic communities' livelihood resilience in Fars province, Iran. According to the findings, nomads migrate to rural or urban regions due to economic (increasing the cost of livestock inputs; and a lack of diversity of income sources) and socio-demographic factors (education; and a low tendency among youth to continue nomadism). Tourism development enhances the resilience capacity of these communities by strengthening social, natural, cultural, economic, human, and physical capitals and creating a set of positive feedback processes between them. Livelihood capitals are regarded as resilience indicators (Thulstrup, 2015) because they can express the community's quality of life (A. Quandt, 2018).

The findings indicate that tourism development strengthens nomads' social capital by improving lifestyle attachment and capacity for collective action. The latter contributes to enhancing economic and natural capital via community members' cooperation in tourism development and natural resources protection, respectively. Collective action also increases community power and access to physical capital such as water supply or access to roads.

Acculturation and recognition of the value of nomadic culture, as well as efforts to revive it, strengthen cultural capital. The latter, as a tourism attraction, in turn, contributes to improving economic capital. As a result of the income and employment generated by utilizing cultural capital, nomads are motivated to preserve and revitalize this capital. By observing foreign tourists' respect for the environment and their behavior to minimize their impact, nomads learn about environmental protection and recognize the value of their natural environment through acculturation. Natural attractions generate revenue, which helps to strengthen the economic capital. Meanwhile, this capital can be used to protect natural capital.

Strengthening economic capital through utilizing cultural, natural, and physical capital improves human capital (as a production factor). This could be accomplished by reducing migration, capacity building, and covering education and training costs. According to Buckley, Shekari, Mohammadi, Azizi, and Ziaee, M. J. J. o. T. R. (2020), migration occurs due to a series of feedback processes, but tourism development generates a set of positive feedbacks that can revive the local economy. They considered employment, income, and education as common components of urban-rural migration (Buckley et al., 2020). Also, strengthening economic capital through tourism development improves physical capital (e.g., more tourism infrastructure and better

educational facilities).

Nomadic communities can rely on their diverse capitals to develop tourism products. However, without tourism, some of these capitals may be neglected (e.g., handicraft production, music, rites, and customs) or weakened (e.g., social capital). Besides, some capitals may have exclusive functions. For example, nomads may only use pastures for grazing livestock, tents for accommodation, and handicrafts or dairy products for local consumption. Some nomadic people may even buy their necessities rather than produce.

Tourism, however, gives new or substitute functions to various nomadic activities. For instance, physical or natural capital used for animal production or cultural capital resulting from the nomads' adaptation to their environment can be used as tourism attractions. Pastures can act as natural tourism attractions (even if they are in poor condition and unable to provide hay for livestock), and clothes, black-tens, or foods can become cultural attractions. Meanwhile, tourism development creates value-added for some capitals; for example, nomadic people may be encouraged to knit, dye, and make handicrafts out of sheep wool or goat hair instead of selling them raw at a low price. Developing tourism products is not costly for nomads because the community can produce them with its existing assets.

Therefore, tourism as a livelihood strategy helps allocate nomadic livelihood capitals to gain multifunctional quality (Wilson, 2010). As the findings revealed, the creation of new functions for livelihood capitals strengthens economic capital. Economic capital can save such communities from poverty and vulnerability, helping them to reinforce other assets. Wilson (2010) confirms that economic wellbeing leads to the rise of multi-functionality in communities. Communities in poverty can hardly develop solid multifunctional qualities because their daily activities merely focus on generating income to survive.

By creating jobs and diversifying income sources, tourism reduces nomadic communities' dependence on animal husbandry. Although animal husbandry is the main element of livelihood, sole reliance could make a community more vulnerable to stresses such as drought. Numerous studies have emphasized diversification as an important factor in increasing community and livelihood resilience capacity while reducing vulnerability (Hanazaki et al., 2013; Speranza et al., 2014). Diverse livelihoods are necessary for a stable and robust economy. However, an unhealthy reliance on one sector may increase vulnerability (Buultjens et al., 2017) because the system loses its ability to change or re-organize in the face of unpredictable changes (V. A. Sheppard, 2017).

Tourism development improves the multifunctional quality of nomadic livelihood capitals by reviving or strengthening various capitals or creating new functions. In addition, by employing these capitals, tourism as a complementary livelihood strategy can diversify nomadic income sources. Multifunctional livelihood capitals and diverse income sources (e.g., animal husbandry and tourism) all have the same function of generating income and improving quality of life. So, if the system is negatively impacted, its multifunctional quality and complementary income sources will help it survive until it adapts. This feature is called "functional redundancy." Functional redundancy denotes the existence of components in a system that has similar or overlapping functions. As such, even if some parts of the system show negative changes, the system in question may be able to survive (Berbés-Blázquez & Scott, 2017).

Despite the positive impacts of tourism on livelihood capitals, tourism cannot be expected to replace animal husbandry due to its vulnerability and the limitations mentioned. Tourism can serve as a complementary livelihood. It can partially compensate for the loss and give the livelihood a chance to recover if unexpected changes impact a livelihood activity. Nomadic people's positive tendency to participate in and benefit from tourism shows that they are aware of the tourism potential for their livelihood. However, tourism currently accounts for a small share of household income.

By considering tourism's role as a livelihood option in enhancing nomadic livelihood resilience, policymakers and planners should

attempt to reduce the barriers to nomadic tourism's sustainable development. It is recommended that tourism policymakers and planners support the implementation of an appropriate community-based tourism (CBT) development model for nomadic communities so that tourism can reinforce livelihood capitals and result in a balanced distribution of long-term benefits in communities. Also, nomadic communities' capacity to implement the CBT approach needs to be promoted.

Therefore, there is a need for training and employing facilitators (ideally members of the local communities) to pave the way for spontaneous community participation in tourism development. Community members need to understand the benefits and adverse effects of tourism development clearly and realistically. Facilitators should identify the reasons for likely community disinclination to participation. Ultimately, it is the community members who should decide about tourism development. Facilitators should help community members participate in tourism development to enjoy its economic benefits and become empowered for decision-making and implementation. In other words, communities should acquire the necessary knowledge and skills to control their resources. Facilitators should help them identify the benefits they seek from tourism, including enhancing livelihood resilience and quality of life. Some community members should be trained as local guides. Some should learn about designing nomadic tour packages, pricing, and marketing. Fairly distribution of benefits can prevent unhealthy competition. Establishing a fund to save the tourism profits and allocating them to meet the community's needs can be a solution. Furthermore, tourists who respect the nomadic lifestyle should be targeted.

This study expands the concept of context-specific livelihood resilience by looking at nomadic communities with unique characteristics that have been marginalized by modernization. This adds to our understanding of livelihood resilience in a specific and understudied context. The present study contributes to the growing body of livelihood resilience literature by uncovering how vulnerable communities improve their resilience by using the existing potential to diversify livelihood strategies.

Future research may include other nomadic communities to expand the concept of livelihood resilience. It is also possible to investigate the role of different tourism development models in promoting nomadic livelihood resilience. As livelihood systems are complex, techniques such as system dynamics modeling or fuzzy cognitive mapping can be used to operationalize and measure nomadic livelihood resilience and develop scenarios. Since tourism is an emerging activity in nomadic communities of Iran, longitudinal studies can be carried out to determine the role of tourism in the livelihood of these communities over time. Participatory approaches such as Rapid Rural Appraisal (RRA) or action research can also create the necessary capacity for communities to accept change.

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Statement of contribution

The paper has been extracted from the Ph.D. thesis. The first author (Fateme Shekari) conducted the research as a Ph.D. candidate and all co-authors (Dr. Mahmood Ziaee; Dr. Abolhassan Faghihi; and Dr. Mahmoud Jomehpour) were members of the thesis committee, who supervised the thesis and provide advice on conducting the research and preparing the article.

Declaration of Competing Interest

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

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