

## Original Research Article

## The Impacts of Event Tourism in Iran

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Received: 12/03/2023

Accepted: 16/07/2023

Available online: 23/07/2023

**Abstract** | Tourism of event or “Event Tourism” is one of the modern and new established types of tourism in the world, which has not received much attention in the country of Iran despite its unique cultural and local capacities. Studying the impacts of event tourism in Iran has been the main goal of the research. To get the research objectives, a qualitative approach has been used, relying on library and field studies. Qualitative data has been collected based on the published sources on event tourism in Iran. Based on the research findings the following were determined, 1. the contributing factors and involving institutions in organizing event tourism in the country, 2. the existing approaches in the organization and 3. the impacts of event tourism in Iran. Finally, a number of corrections were suggested regarding these deficiencies. Considering the potential opportunities in the field of legislation, it is required to consider the possible capacities for event tourism as one of the essential parts of tourism. It has legal capacities to be considered under the responsibilities and mission of the Supreme Council (Ministry) of Cultural Heritage, to introduce the existing capacities following the approvals of the organization and preparing a relevant calendar. Moreover, the public culture council of the states can use their capacities to improve the cultural activities and utilization of local capacities.

**Keywords** | *Impacts, Tourism, Event Tourism.*

**Introduction** | Events are an essential part of tourism industry, which has a positive impact on attracting tourists in low season, improving the image of final destination, and attracting media support. Every country or region has the potential of holding special events according to its cultural, social, religious and traditional conditions. Considering the historical background and rich culture of Iran, relying on an innovative and creative approach in accordance with social, economic, ritual and religious conditions, the country can generate many capacities in the field of event tourism to attracts tourists from all age and social groups. Successful past experiences and capacities such as ecotourism habitations in recent years have shown that event tourism can be structured relying on cultural and social attractions, local customs and public traditions to have a cultural output. In this regard, relevant studies show that the number of events held in recent years in the country, instead of being a platform to attract tourists to lesser-known states to improve the conventional

tourism, merely have focused on the public Iranian audience which have not had an acceptable outcome. International tourism has the same conditions as the local events have not been able to attract and motivate them. So, it is obvious that event tourism has not been properly implemented and managed in the country to be attractive and represent the ability to develop. According to what has been mentioned, this research aims to study the impacts of event tourism in Iran. According to the main objective, the research seeks to answer the following questions:

- What are the main contributors and systems involved in organizing event tourism in the country?
- What is the impact of event tourism in the country?
- What are the existing approaches of the involved organizations?

To answer the research questions, by reviewing the reliable documents and experts' opinions, event tourism in Iran has been addressed from different aspects. Following this, a legislative proposal has been presented to provide an

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improved infrastructure for managing event tourism in the country.

### Research Background

In a research study, entitled “A qualitative Analysis of the Development of Event-Oriented Tourism Based on the International Street Theater Festival of Marivan City” Manouchehri et al. (2023) concluded that in order to benefit from event tourism and develop the relevant festival, the following steps must be taken: 1. An integrated and systematic management of tourism, 2. training the activists and beneficiaries, 3. reviewing the tourism marketing to attract tourism audience 4. highlighting and strengthening the art tourism; In another research entitled “Proposing an Event-based Tourism Development Model based on Recognizing the Motivational Components of Attracting Tourists in the Country”. Jahanian and Sheikhooni (2022) show that there are three dimensions of 1. requirements dimension which has the components of strategic management, policy making, and managerial factors, 2. context dimension which includes the components of organizational structure and culture-building activities, and 3. the facilitator dimension has the components of information technology; Jalilian, Kaaroubi & Ghaderi (2019) in a research titled. “Feasibility Study of Cultural Event Tourism Development and Its impact on Seasonal Demand Adjustment of tourist destinations Case study: Hamadan City” concluded that the following items for developing tourism of cultural events are at a favorable level in Hamadan city including: 1. tourism resources, funding resources, built-in items resources and situational factors except for supporting resources, to manage the seasonality in tourism; According to a study by Mirzaei (2016) titled “Event tourism is a solution for sustainable economic development in local communities”, factor analysis of 37 motivational cases on 287 visitors identified 6 factors of Gol-Ghaltan [rolling in Flowers] and family, cultural exploration, socialization, locality, novelty and escape were allocated for tourists to attend this festival; Islam and Chowdhury (2022) in a research titled “Prospects and Challenges of Event Tourism in Bangladesh: Post-Covid-19.” state that the Covid- 19 disease has created a great obstacle in the growth and development of event tourism, which has been considered as an emerging topic in the field of research sciences. It focuses on the impacts (social, cultural, economic and environmental impact) of the Covid- 19 pandemic on event tourism. The results have shown that, event tourism in Bangladesh is currently facing several challenges that require planning and organized actions considering the rather sustainable conditions after Covid- 19 pandemic. Tsai (2020) in a research titled “Factors affecting intention to revisit an environmental event: The moderating role of enduring involvement”. focuses on factor known as “tourist’s immersion” with high level of pleasure which

influences the improving level of tourist’s satisfaction, to motivate them for returning, and making positive feelings and image of the destination in the minds of tourists. Connell and Page (2019) in a research titled “Visitor attractions and events”. explain how attraction managers can create special events as a tool for adjusting seasonality in a country; it also argues that the local community is a target market for special events and the seasonal tourism events effectively encourages tourists to participate in such events in off-peak season; Rosyidi (2018) in a research entitled “The challenges of developing tourism events in Bromo Tengger Semeru National Park.” addressed three challenges of development of event tourism in TNBTS including institutional, event sustainability and competition with competitors.

### Theoretical Foundation

#### • The concept of event tourism

The tourism industry, specifically the event tourism is a unique opportunity to expand the economy growth and creating job opportunities (Monshi & Scott, 2017). The tourism event targets an event that is usually established opposite to the daily life of the local community. It is an event with a beginning and an end to response a request, (for instance holding the spiritual ceremony of Hajj), to deal with charitable social activities (in local language known as Golrizan), filling up the spare time of local people (holding sports competitions) or attracting travelers to a tourist destination (attempt for hosting FIFA World Cup) and responding to one of the most important human needs, public gathering and social interactions (Seraphin, 2021; Manouchehri, Mohammadi & Eskandari, 2023). The event tourism as an important issue was raised initially in 1987 which has a big share of international tourism. A study in 1989 entitled “Special events: Defining the product” proposed a structure for event tourism (Getz, 1989). Until then, only special events such as Hall mark, Mega Event and Special Event were addressed (Getz & Page, 2016; Trauer, 2006). Events are known as one of the most prominent parts of the tourism industry, and human social life due to their multiple functions, with increased demand in this area during recent years. Therefore, the essence of event tourism has altered over time, which can create significant economic growth and positive effects on tourism industry of the target destination (Islam & Chowdhury, 2022); therefore, an entangled coherent approach is demanding for its development and marketing (Getz, 1989). Establishing a developed plan in various parts of tourism activities, especially in event tourism as a new founded area, requires the existence of several infrastructures. It is because tourism industry is a systemic, expanded, and a multi-dimensional activity consisting of many sub-divisions which are constantly interacting with each other (Manouchehri et al., 2023). Event tourism includes systematic

planning, development and marketing of festivals and special events with potentials of tourist attractions that is able to make a pleasant image of target location, accelerate the processes of creating infrastructure and economic growth, and improve attraction in other sectors (Getz, 1997). Festivals and events can be defined as seasonal or official entertainment or pleasant activities, or even an attractive events which are celebrating an occasion, occurrence or ... . The qualification of public and pleasurable celebration has a special place according to this definition as they have existed long time among people in multi-cultural forms such as public performances, collective festivities and civil activities (Jahanian & Sheikhooni, 2022). Holding such a festival makes a competitive advantage in case of creating positive experience for tourists and their permanent attachment to the destination (Culha, 2020).

• **Typology of event tourism**

Although it is not possible to introduce a major type of event tourism, but many significant efforts have been made in this field. Events can vary greatly in case of scale and complexity, with various number of stakeholders. The bigger the event, the more likely to get the mission. Events are classified according to some characteristics including social structure, and their contribution in making government policy and strategies implemented in industrial and corporate sectors. On the other hand, events can be categorized based on their historical, geographical, and valuable contents such as music, movies, theater, or to be present in a certain place or at a certain time. In any condition, the purpose of events should be clear and in line with the existing mission

of foundations (Karoubi et al., 2018). The major categories of some organized types of events are presented in Table 1 according to their differences in purpose and plan. Some of them are classified as public celebrations which also known as “social festivals”, with a rather high variety to empower the sense of social pride and unity), while others are set for the competition, entertainment, recreation, business or socialization goals (Getz, 2008). On the other hand, considering the scale and impact of events, they are classified into four general categories: 1. Local events, 2. Regional events, 3. Big events, and 4. Mega events. There are key factors in determining and perceiving the scale and impact of events including the level of participation, audience/viewers, media coverage and the scale of international demands. The typology of relevant events has been presented in Table 2 (OECD, 2017). Event tourism management is an applied and regional field of study for the relevant experts to plan, implement and manage scheduled events. Some of these events are held in the public area, which are known as social events, with diverse planning ideas, aims to empower national pride and social unity. Another category are events for the purpose of group competition, business and socialization, which request for special facilities and the management; for example, international conventions and sports gatherings. It should be noticed that these events require experts and special professions. The support of holding events has led to classification of events into government or non-government sponsorship. According to O’Sullivan and Jackson (2002) three types of events, have been recognized (Table 3).

Table 1. Typology of Planned Events. Source: Getz, 2008.

Typology of event	Examples
Cultural events	Festivals, carnivals, memorials, and religious events
Political or governmental events	Summits, Royal occasions, political events, VIP visits
Arts and entertainment	Music Concerts, Award Ceremonies
Commercial or trade events	Meetings, conventions/agreements, trade exhibitions, markets
Scientific and educational events	Conferences, seminars, training courses
Sports competitions	Amateur/Skilled, Spectator/Participant
Recreational Events	Entertaining games and sports
Private Events	Wedding ceremonies, gatherings

Table 2. Event typology based on scale. Source: OECD, 2017.

Types of Events	Scale of Holding events
Mega events	Mostly international participants and audiences; extensive international media coverage; Positive national impacts
Big events	Mostly international participants and audience; extensive international media coverage; Positive national impacts
Regional events	Mostly national and local participants and audience; Partial international media coverage; regional impacts
Local events	Mostly local participants and audiences; limited or no international media coverage; Mainly local impacts (at urban/sub-urban scale).

**Responsible Organizations**

The main supporter of cultural festivals is the government, while private organizations in the target place also contribute in holding festivals with a smaller share. In fact, the government aims to exploit the event as a promoter for development planning. Among the responsible organizations, the tourism organizations and travel agencies can be mentioned. The tourism organizations are classified into three different entities According to their functions and goals as follows: 1. government or public organizations, which are actual responsible of tourism sector as legislation, implementation, planning, and benefiting from public resources, and finally writing contracts. The private sector of beneficiaries is established based on specific goals such as investment in the tourism industry. 2. The regional organizations that appear in a specific geographic territory based on common goals, including public relations and advertisement/marketing (Nazari, Ghaderi & Fazlavi, 2015; Esu & Arrey, 2009).

• **Development of event tourism**

According to the research studies by Andersson et al. (2021), Culha (2020) and Tsai (2020), Jalilian et al. (2019), Nazari et al. (2015) Mirzaei and Rezaei (2016), Saghaei and Khooshebast (2018) event tourism, both at the national/

local and international levels, has had positive effects on the development of tourism industry; in different regions of the target place even in other countries, each destination can represent various type of tourism potentials from agricultural production to sports and music events both in the field of planning and financial support. However, there are several deficiencies especially in the supply sector, for sustainable development of this kind of tourism as a popular field, in different tourism destinations. A comprehensive and systemic approach for evaluating the main contributors are demanding to provide a proper context for the effective management in this field (Manouchehri et al., 2023), (Fig. 1).

**Research Methodology**

In exploratory research, the main goal is to clarify an unknown issue, with insufficient information, as the researcher seeks to answer the research questions about it. The qualitative research method has been chosen for this method, in which the researcher tries to clarify the vague nature of the issues and explain the complicated conditions of the occurrences. Therefore, using this kind of research method can provide the possibility of studying impacts of event tourism in Iran. Event tourism is a multidimensional concept that is influenced by environmental and contextual factors.

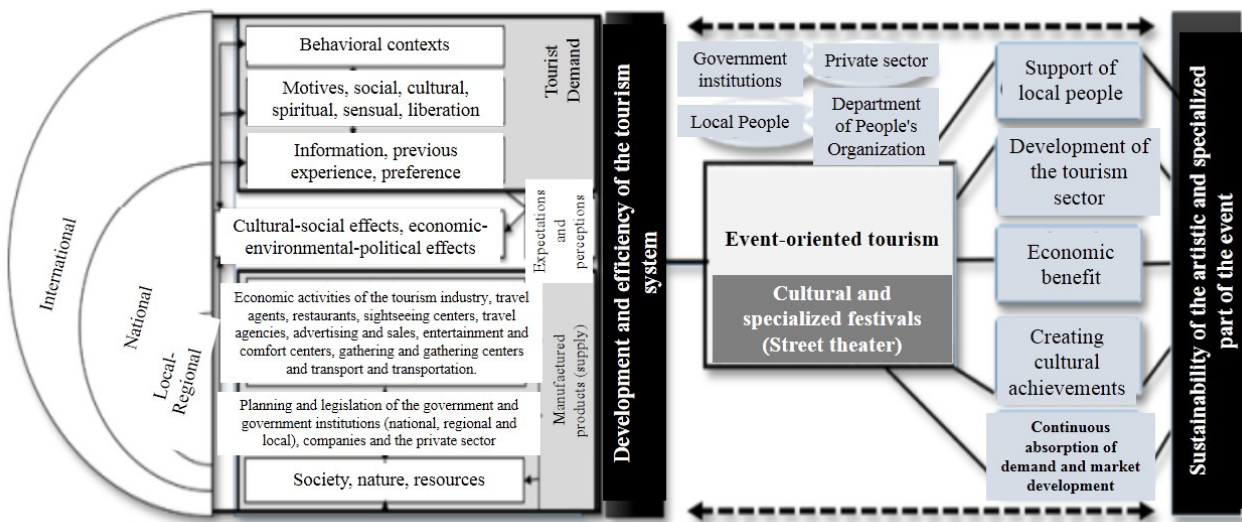


Table 3. Types of tourism events. Source: O'Sullivan & Jackson, 2002.

	Local events	Tourist Motivating Events	Big Bang Events
Population Scale	Small	Medium	Large
Geographical space	Urban-village or village	Urban or suburban	Urban
Main context	Art, culture, entertainment	Art, culture, entertainment	Art, culture, entertainment
Organizers	Local community supported by the public or private sector	Local authorities	Cooperative
Management responsibility	Volunteers	Local authorities	Cooperative
The initial goals of event	Cultural and/or recreational benefits for local people and visitors	Economic development by tourism industry	Economic development for shareholders cultural growth and recreational benefits for local people and visitors

Therefore, for a better and deeper understanding of the issue, the “Grounded Theory” research method was applied which focuses on systematically collected data. In other words, the interdisciplinary, complicated, dynamic and contextual nature of the target issue encouraged the researcher to adopt this method. In grounded theory the researcher does not deal with a set theory, rather there is an attempt to discover the established relationship between the variables. According to this method, observation and interviewing (especially semi-structured) are grounded based on key experts for collecting data. During the interview, instead of using a structured set of questions according to a specific order, a number of relevant questions were asked with a qualitative approach, according to the nature of discussion progress and the position of the interviewee, as based on the receiving answers, the next questions were raised. During the interviewing with experts, the researcher could raise new questions to propose them to the next and other experts. To analyze the qualitative data gathered from the process of interview, the interpretive analysis method was used. Interpretive analysis is a process for analyzing data obtained from the case study, which specifically aims to find structures, categories, and patterns that are used to describe and explain the research categories and variables. The data obtained from the interviews usually were presented in forms of words, phrases or sentences. Therefore, to analyze the gathered data the process of preparation and coding was required in order to classify them based on common aspects and definition of the main categories. It followed by in-depth interviewing with 15 responsible people in this field to obtain the target codes with high frequency. Then, based on the overlapped codes and ‘Convergent Validity’ of data, broader categories of several codes were extracted. They included several categories that were apparently separated from each other but with a more comprehensive view connected in a wider circle called dimension, to define main contributors and authorities in organizing event tourism in the country, to address the relevant existing approaches of this area. This process corresponds to the qualitative methodology and contextual method that deals with Part-to-Whole relationships of data, which is not influenced by a specific theory and approach, but rather makes them relying on the nature of the research.

### Research Findings

#### • Contributors and organizations involved in organizing event tourism in Iran

In order to have a successful, and dynamic tourism industry with positive impact of tourism, it is required to evaluate multiple dimensions, factors, subcategories and contributors in this wide range, to recognize the relevant obstacles and problems and propose a practical planning to solve them, based on the adopted approach. Based on the results of

interviewing with 15 experts and using library resources, contributors involved in organizing tourism events, their responsibilities and relationships are presented in Fig. 2 and Table 4. The results showed that there are a number of contributing organization in event tourism including: Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance, Islamic Development Organization, Ministry of Sports and Youth, Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Iran), the “Vice President for Management and Human Capital Development”. The Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism, Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting, the Ministry of Industries, Mines and Trade, the Police office for Public Places, and the Ministry of Science, Research and Technology. Each of these organizations is partially responsible for event tourism and there is no mediator or coordinator for the whole activities. According to the target issue, the main authority for this kind of tourism is the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism, which can facilitate the development of event tourism from quantitative and qualitative aspects in cooperation with other contributors and beneficiaries. Given the position and the activities of their involvement in event tourism, it is required to clarify the responsibilities and mission of the relevant organizations for managing this process, in order to organize the activities of public culture under the regulation of one of the existing structures and specifically deal with activities in the field of tourism. The major authority and reference organization in holding cultural and artistic events is the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance, as planning for any kind of such events (campaigns, festivals, media events, and exhibitions) even in virtual environment, is an illegal act without the coordination of this organization. According to the ‘circular’ approved on 11/16/1389 by the organization of ‘Vice President for Management and Human Capital Development, “All executive bodies and non-governmental departments are required to obtain the necessary permission from the relevant working groups while applying the terms ‘international’, ‘national’ and ‘country’ while holding ‘meetings’ and permission from ‘Provincial Planning and Development Council while referring to ‘Provincial’ term”. This mentioned circular (200/54030) has been prepared in five articles and notified to the ‘Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance. In the article 2, “all events including seminar, conference, congress, gathering, symposium, assembly, festival and other similar occurrences are referred as ‘meeting’. However, in case of holding events related to tourism industry, the organizations such as the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism are involved for issuing the required permits to allow the events to be held. Another popular profitable event that attract tourists is known as sports events, which requires permission from the ‘Ministry of Sports and Youth’. But commercial events at both the national and international level require permission from ‘Ministry of Industry, Mines

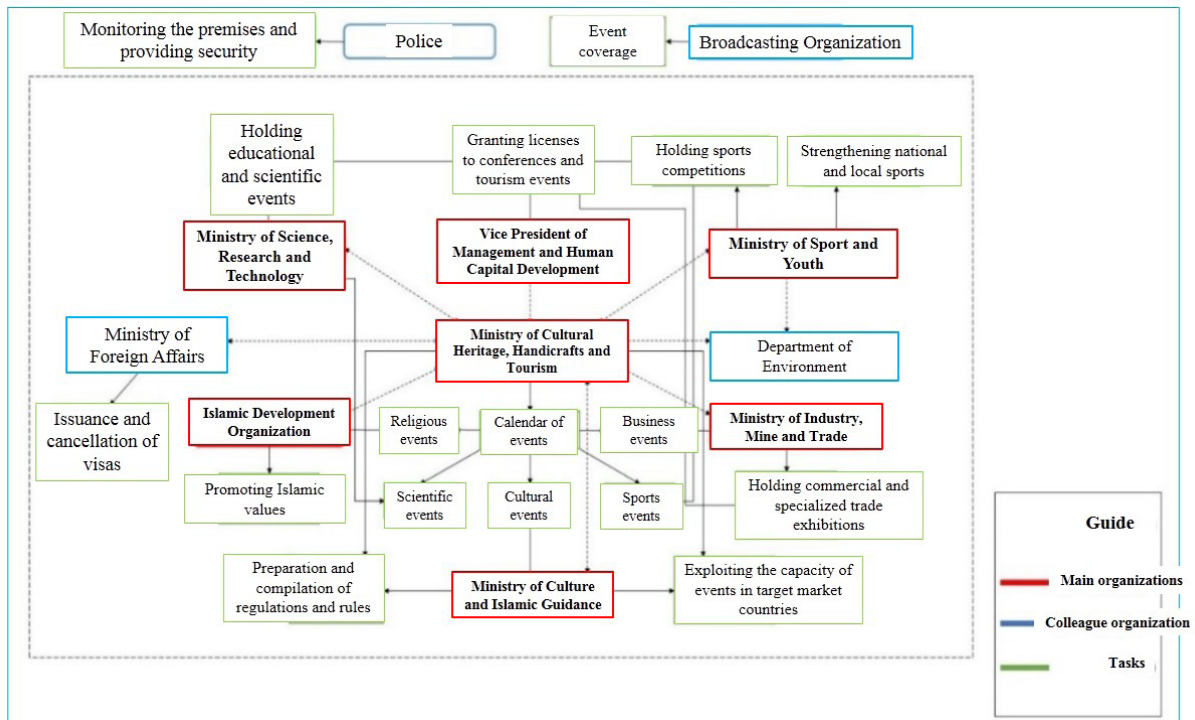


Fig. 2. The main contributors and collaborators in organizing tourism events, their responsibilities and Inter-organizational relations. Source: Authors.

and Trade’ as they attempt attract tourists for business goals. The pandemic of the Covid-<sup>19</sup> changed many substructures and pushed them toward virtual environments. Some platforms and suppliers of artistic and cultural works changed their activities into web-based environments. It should be mentioned that running such events also requires permission from the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance<sup>2</sup>; the business platforms with prior permission could continue their activity, while some activities needs to be retake permission to work. Any cultural or artistic event and exhibition must be done after obtaining permission from the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance. Therefore, all centers and institutions that intend to hold an event should correspond with the General Department of the mentioned organization in their province before doing any activity in the virtual space. And if needed, this central office will give permission for broadcasting cultural and artistic works on digital platforms, in coordination with the ‘Information Technology and Digital Media Center’ and some other relevant departments, including the ‘Deputy of Cultural Affairs’, the ‘Deputy of Artistic Affairs’, the Cinema and Audio-Visual Organization’ and the ‘Computer and Video Games Foundation’.

• **The existing approaches of the involved organizations**

By identifying the contributors in event tourism, the different approaches of the following shareholders including ‘Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance’, ‘Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting’, ‘Ministry of Industry, Mining and Trade’, ‘Islamic Development Organization’, ‘Ministry of Sports and Youth’, ‘Ministry of Foreign Affairs’, ‘Police of Public Places’,

‘Ministry of Science, Research and Technology’ towards event tourism were explained based on the results and data obtained from interviewing with 15 experts, relying on library resources (Table 5).

• **Impacts of event tourism**

According to the status of the beneficiaries and their action towards event tourism, identifying the impacts and proposing suggestions for required measures to specifically facilitate the management of this process is highly required. These should be actions under the supervision of one of the existing organizations that be able to coordinate the issues of public culture and also have the ability to deal with specialized affairs in the field of tourism. These measures, in line with the major responsibilities and mission of the Supreme Council of Cultural Heritage and Tourism, can provide an opportunity for solving the issues available in event tourism. Beyond this, the council has the authority to consider and analyze the cultural status and current occurrences of the country, and measure the established values of the society to determine the positive and negative aspects of cultural issues, in order to propose relevant actions while holding such events as a responsible organization. Based on the results acquired by interviewing, the impacts of event tourism have been recognized in four categories as follows: 1. Factors target vision and mission (lack of making policy and planning), 2. Inter-organizational factors (lack of inter-relations/cooperation between departments and organizations, 3. lack of a responsible authority, 4. lack of exploiting capacities, 5. financial issues (lack of sufficient investment and support of

Table 4. The authorities in organizing event tourism. Source: Authors.

Rules & Regulations	Legal Provisions	Involved Organizations	Recommended events	Comments
<p>The rules of the mission and responsibilities of the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance (Article 2)</p> <p>Approved 12/12/1365</p>	<p>Preparation and compilation of rules &amp; regulations on holding the cultural, and artistic events, festivals and exhibitions, and organizing film and literary competitions at national and international level (paragraph 21)</p> <p>- Preparing and issuing the calendar of occasions and weekly cultural events (paragraph 15)</p> <p>Using the potential of event tourism in abroad target markets for introducing the tourism capabilities of Iran (paragraph 2)</p>	<p>Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance</p>	<p>Music and film festivals</p> <p>Poetry readings</p> <p>Literary gathering</p> <p>Book Fair</p> <p>Handicraft exhibition</p> <p>Visual art galleries</p> <p>Critics of cultural products</p>	<p>The first and major legal authority for giving permission of holding tourism events in the field of culture and art, which is responsible for planning on cultural and artistic events.</p>
<p>The Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran</p>	<p>Organizing tourism events based on religious values and traditions is the responsibility of Islamic Development Organization</p> <p>The Ministry of Sports and Youth is responsible for organizing tourism and sports events</p> <p>According to this law, the Ministry of Sports is obliged to make efforts to introduce and organize the local games and preserve the related traditions. Establishing coordination between the tourism and environment sectors to benefit from the sport capacities is one of the other duties of this Ministry.</p> <p>Holding tourism events is dependent on coordination and notifications of the ministry in order to evaluate all aspects of the relevant foreign policy.</p> <p>The entry of foreign tourists to visit the country event is subject to the issuance of visas by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.</p>	<p>Islamic Development Organization</p> <p>Ministry of Sport and Youth</p> <p>Ministry of Foreign Affairs</p>	<p>Support in organizing public and specialized gatherings, festivals, memorials and exhibitions in order to encourage and spread authentic Islamic values and traditions (paragraph 11)</p> <p>Facilitating public access to watch major international and national sports competitions in sport places of public places, villages and urban environments over the country (paragraph 9)</p> <p>- Renovating and supporting of national and traditional sports and games/ the development of its infrastructure and efforts to improve and encourage them globally with the coordination of relevant institutions (paragraph 18)</p> <p>- Cooperation and coordination with the tourism and environment department in profiting the sports capacities of the country (paragraph 24)</p> <p>- Cooperating with the executive bodies of the country and providing the necessary recommendations, respecting foreign political considerations, in order to review and prepare strategies related to the establishment and expansion of economic, cultural, scientific and technical relations (paragraph 7)</p> <p>Facilitating, improving and regulating agreements for issuing and canceling visas (paragraph 1)</p>	<p>The law on objectives, responsibilities and authorities of the Ministry of Sports and Youth</p> <p>Law/ regulations on responsibility of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Article 2)</p> <p>Approved on 20/1/1364</p>

Rest of Table 4.

Rules & Regulations	Legal Provisions	Involved Organizations	Recommended events	Comments
	<p>This department is responsible for issuing permissions for holding conferences and tourism events at different provincial, national and international levels.</p> <p>Also, this deputy has considered using the title of “Conference” [in Persian language, Hamayesh] as an obligation for all kinds of tourist gatherings and events.</p>	Vice President of Development of Management and Human Capital	<p>All executive bodies and the non-governmental sector are required to obtain the necessary permission from the Working Group allocated for Organizing Conferences while using the following terms national, international, or country.</p> <p>And for using “Provincial” term, permission should be taken from “Planning and Development Council of the province</p> <p>According to this circular, all the following titles such as seminar, conference, congress, and other similar titles are called meeting.</p>	<p>Circular prepared and notified by of the Vice President for Management and Human Capital Development</p> <p>Circular No. 54030/200</p> <p>Approved on 16/11/2019</p>
	<p>Monitoring the accommodation allocated to tourist events is one of the duties of ...police of public places</p> <p>Moreover, this department is responsible for establishing safety and security in large gatherings and various festivals with a large number of local people together with domestic and foreign tourists.</p>	Police Department of Public Places	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Supervising the accommodation and tourist facilities</li> <li>- Ensuring the security of cultural, traditional, art and music festivals in licensed tourist accommodations under the supervision of the relevant organizations and reflecting cases related to violations</li> </ul>	
	<p>The Ministry of Science is responsible for organizing tourism events in various fields of sciences.</p>	Ministry of Science, Research and Technology	Organizing educational events and think-tanks gatherings (seminars)	
	<p>Providing notification for organized tourism events</p>	Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting	<p>Coverage of tourism events at the provincial, national and international level (paragraph 16)</p>	<p>Strategic Planning Document for Tourism development</p> <p>Approved on 6/16/2019</p>
	<p>Ministry of Industry, Mine and Trade (MIMT) is responsible for following activities:</p> <p>Issuing license for commercial tourism events.</p> <p>Supervision on trade fairs and events at different levels.</p> <p>Organizing the whole commercial tourism events</p> <p>Prioritizing tourism products based on target markets and preparing guidelines for commercial tourism events.</p>	Ministry of Industry, Mine and Trade	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Taking action to obtain permission to hold Iranian trade fairs in the export target countries</li> <li>- Supervising the implementation of specialized product exhibitions in the provinces of the country</li> <li>- Policymaking and allocation of export promotions, and participation in aboard exhibition</li> </ul> <p>Preparation of guidelines for allocating export awards and participating in exhibitions with the cooperation of the ministry and based on the priority of markets and tourism products</p>	



Table 5. The existing approaches of the involved organizations. Source: Authors.

Source (Interview)	Approaches	Involved organizations
P6, P15, P9, P11	<p>In the current situation, still there is no prominent international event in the country that be able to bring together tourists from different countries which are known as target market for tourism, in spite of the attempt of the ministry in providing the relevant rules and regulations to organize the festivals and exhibitions inside and outside the country.</p> <p>Moreover, there is a lack of an accurate and complete calendar to introduce cultural and artistic events, as the only existing event calendar is the calendar prepared by the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism which confusingly includes all small and large events in the provinces of the country.</p>	Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance
P3, P4, P13, P15	<p>The current activity of Iran Broadcasting regarding the events and occurrences has been merely limited to the news of the event, from cultural to artistic and scientific, as most of them a summary of the event or exhibition and a number of relevant figures in few programs.</p> <p>However, tourism industry, especially event tourism has no specific place in the production programs of this organization, as there are no details of holding such events and their outputs.</p> <p>The existence of a place for holding various international exhibitions in the centers of provinces and major cities has improved the infrastructural issues of organizing exhibitions to some extent.</p> <p>Moreover, holding various exhibitions in different fields has been able to introduce large and small specialized companies. In fact, setting up these exhibitions is an effort to introduce domestic and foreign products to native visitors by adopting a purely commercial approach.</p>	Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting
P8, P10	<p>On the other hand, the prominent presence of Iranian companies in booths at the level of foreign exhibitions could be another achievement of this organization, which can undoubtedly lead to promising economic benefits for the producers and suppliers.</p> <p>Policy making for holding exhibitions, participating in relevant events, and allocating export promotions are of significant and acceptable activities established by this ministry. The variety of exhibitions held in the provinces of the country and addressing the various dimensions of them is one of those areas that MIMT has emphasized and has always tried to facilitate the ground for it.</p>	Ministry of Industry, Mining and Trade'
P5, P6, P11	<p>The activities of this ministry can be a platform for organizing commercial events such as trade exhibitions in order to attract tourists to the country for those who are interested in various industries. This can lead to sign of international contract and agreements, in addition to improving the tourism industry,</p> <p>By attaching to a specific ideological approach and expanding it to various ritual ceremonies, this organization has been able to continuously improve the relevant cultural activities through provincial offices and affiliated organizations. An organized approach in policy making, planning and monitoring religious ceremonies is an approval for this activities.</p> <p>Moreover, this organization, relying on public gathering, benefits from the presence of people.</p> <p>This indicates that this organization has enough potential to introduce vital ceremonies such Tasua and Ashura (the 9th and the 10th day of Muharram), as a prominent historical event among Shiite Muslims, and can be a successful and profitable event as a religious and cultural tourism in Iran, which can bring tourist exchange with other Muslim countries such as Iraq and Syria.</p>	Islamic Development Organization
P2, P12	<p>The Ministry of Sports and Youth, beside holding various sports competitions at the provincial, national and international levels, also makes an attempt to respect the presence of spectators and visitors of such competitions, to simplify the presence of visitors by providing a minimum of facilities and infrastructure.</p> <p>In spite of establishing some rules and regulations, that limits the presence of spectators and visitors in sport matches, this ministry has been able to respond to such a requests to some extent. On the other hand, the ministry has caused the revival of such sports and attracting the young generation to these kind of sports by introducing and representing a number of ancient-traditional sports such as lacrosse and 'Pahlevani/ Zoorkhaneh' sports and allocating funds for the construction of well-equipped places for them (Zoor-Khaneh)</p> <p>By the way, it should be noted that tourism and sports activities such as local and regional games have some commonality in many places, which can empower each other's effects. Although this issue has been overlooked to some extent, the signing of agreements between the two ministries of Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism', and 'Sports and Youth' show a clear future.</p>	Ministry of Sports and Youth

Rest of Table 5.

Source (Interview)	Approaches	Involved organizations
P7, P13	The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in cooperation with other involved organizations is trying to take various actions regarding the cancellation and issuance of visas, which will improve the tourism industry and attract more tourists into the country. Also, despite the foreign threats, this ministry has been able to improve the relations of Iran with other countries and has implemented a foreign policy to maintain and improve these relations, and take an action toward the development of event tourism in the country by facilitating the visa process for foreign tourists.	Ministry of Foreign Affairs'
P4, P6, P9, P14, P12	Given the reasons for the formation of the police force to provide security and comfort for people, this organization has responded to this need of the citizens to establish order and security in the society. In this regard, one of the most important places and gatherings that need security to deal with potential unrests are authorized gatherings that require more security due to their communal identity to let everyone participate easily. This organization, in cooperation with the 'Ministry of Intelligence', can bring higher level of security for local citizens and foreign tourists in holding gatherings. Undoubtedly, the security of tourism events is one of the most important factors for visitors before choosing a place.	Police of Public Places
P1, P5, P12, P10	Beyond the major responsibilities, this ministry organizes scientific conferences and seminars on various topics every year to expand knowledge at state, national and international levels, with the presence of interested scientists and specialists in various fields. These conferences can improve tourism industry and attract the various specialists to travel to Iran, as in addition to introducing the capabilities and scientific achievements of Iranian researchers to international scientists, be able to develop the event tourism.	Ministry of Science, Research and Technology

event tourism) and 6. lack of analysis and evaluation process. The relevant corrective measures have been proposed and introduced in Table 6.

**Conclusion**

The purpose of this research was to review the impacts of event tourism in Iran. In this regard, some relevant questions were addressed relying on reliable documents and the expert's ideas. One of the research questions was targeting the identification of the contributors and authorities in organizing event tourism in the country of Iran to explain the current state of event tourism in the relevant organizations as follows: 'Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance', Islamic Development Organization, Ministry of Sports and Youth, 'Ministry of Foreign Affairs', 'Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting', Vice President for Management and Human Capital Development, Organization of Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism, Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting, Ministry of Industry, Mine and Trade, The Police of Public Places, Ministry of Science, Research and Technology. Each of these organization has a specific responsibility toward the event tourism and partly organize process, as there is no mediator or coordinator for the whole process; Another question raised in this research was to identify the main responsible authorities and cooperators in organizing tourism events, specify their duties and the relationship between them, which all are presented here (Fig. 2). And finally, the impacts of event tourism in the country of Iran was discussed. It has been found that, there are some gaps in this regard including lack of an efficient policy, an efficient cooperation with other organizations, using the existing capacities, proper investment, analysis and

evaluation process, systematic planning, adequate support for event tourism, and the existence of a responsible authority, as one of the important weaknesses in this area. Event tourism with all its local, regional and national capacities and opportunities, requires a responsible authority, as it has been established on the intrinsic cultural development and is also protect the intangible cultural heritage. One of the central issues in this field is the presence of several organizations that are partly responsible for the process of event tourism. Due to the specific rules and regulations, these institutions merely take an action toward specific type of event as a responsible, while, the event tourism as an integrated whole has not been organized planned or managed by any authority. These conditions have prevented the formation of a coherent process for event tourism, as the measures taken are mostly unprompted and have caused actions to remain at the local level. while, event tourism which has the potential of making attraction, giving diversity to the tourism services and increasing the stay of tourists, can positively affect the tourism economy and the development of target places. Due to the lack of an integrated mechanism for driving tourist toward events, this kind of tourism has not surpassed the local scales and has limited to interpersonal advertisements, as still has not presented a glory that deserve it at national, international, or regional level. However, benefiting from events in the world is a positive mechanism for diversifying tourism outcomes, which also let tourists stay more in destination. In this regard, it seems that responsibilities related to event tourism, which are classified under the 'Supreme Council of Cultural Heritage and Tourism', in line with other approvals, be able to coordinate relevant activities and solve the existing

problems. The capacities of this council at provincial scale and the clarification of its cultural duties can make it possible to prepare an event tourism calendar considering the cultural attentions in this area, which could be a fundamental action in organizing the country's holidays. In order to realize such goals, the following suggestions are necessary:

- Considering the incompleteness of the mission and responsibilities by the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism and due to the position of Supreme Council of Cultural Heritage as the main responsible for the event tourism in the country, the following responsibilities and plans can be defined for this kind of tourism, that in addition to covering the relevant events, take an action regarding the legal Act, on the Establishment of the Cultural Heritage and Tourism Organization which was approved by the 'Islamic Consultative Assembly, on December 23, 2013,

that considers the approval of policies, guidelines and plans for cultural heritage and tourism as the responsibilities of this council.

- Moreover, based on the note of this Article, a council similar to the Supreme Council can be established under the chairmanship of the governors and the membership of the general managers of the mentioned ministries and organizations in the administrative management structure of Supreme Council to ensure the implementation of the approved rules and regulations at the provincial level.

- Moreover, the legal capacities are required to be considered in favor of event tourism through establishing the responsibilities and mission assigned to this organization by the approval of Supreme Council of Cultural Heritage, according to the tasks and mission of this council in order to provide the condition for establishing the integrated management of event tourism.

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Table 6. The Impacts of Event Tourism. Source: Authors.

Impacts	Data Resource (Interviewing)	Recommendations
Vision & Mission (Gals)	Lack of Making Policy	Approval of policies and strategic plans in the field of event tourism (P15); Approval of strategies, policies and major plans in the field of event tourism (P10);
	Lack of Efficient Planning	Short-term & medium-term planning and development of necessary procedures for holding the event in line with the policies of the Supreme Council of Cultural Heritage (P2); Preparing and proposing operational and practical plans to improve the design indicators and holding events at the province level (P6);
	Lack of organizational relations between various departments	Providing conditions for inter-departmental and inter-institutional coordination and cooperation to improve event tourism (P3); Attracting the support of all governmental, non-governmental, co-operative and private sectors to reach the goals of event tourism (P10); Efforts towards cooperation, coordination and alignment between governmental and non-governmental organizations and cultural responsible of the province in the field of event holding (P7);
Inter-Organizational Factors	Lak of Responsible Authority	Event tourism at the levels of local, regional and national capacities and opportunities, requires a responsible authority, as it is established on intrinsic cultural development factors and is able to protect the intangible and valuable cultural heritage (P14);
	Unable to exploit capacities	Taking advantage of the capacities of the governmental, and non-governmental, the co-operative and private sectors in the field of event tourism and its various sectors (P11); Identifying and measuring the cultural capacities and capabilities to organize events and other occurrences like conferences (P9);
Financial Issues	Lack of Financial Support/ Investment	Providing the basis for doing investment by the support of the non-governmental sector and increasing its share in the field of event tourism (P4);
	Lack of efficient support for event tourism	Applying promotions methods at the provincial level to improve public culture through holding tourism events in different dimensions (P9);
Implementing Factors	Lack of efficient investigating and analysis	Preparing annual evaluation report of general culture for all the provinces of the country based on defined indicators and the relevant event planning (P10); Standard identification and evaluation, predicting and monitoring of social and cultural issues for all provinces to make a plan for holding events accordingly (P13);
		Reviewing the issues, plans and reports with the potential to implement tourism events and taking proper actions (P4); Doing research on public culture of the provinces and root cause analysis on the outcomes of the scientific researches to get appropriate solutions for holding ritual and cultural events (P5); Evaluation of the implementation process of policies and cultural events at the provincial level (P13);

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**HOW TO CITE THIS ARTICLE**

Bod, M. & Darman, F. (2023). The Impacts of Event Tourism in Iran. *Tourism of Culture*, 4(13), 60-71.

DOI: 10.22034/TOC.2023.389524.1113

URL: [https://www.toc-sj.com/article\\_176374\\_en.html](https://www.toc-sj.com/article_176374_en.html)

