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Strategic Orientation of Tourism Sustainable Development: Case Study of Darband

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Abstract

Change in environment situation, attitudes, and structure are factors influential on goals of planning that finally change the program. The planning with traditional approach has not the ability to cope with these changes and would lead to failure. This condition led to the thought that planning should change direction of strategic planning and apply a new direction and behavior; this attitude underlined the innovation of strategic planning. The role of strategic direction in each strategic planning is to determine orientation and also prioritization of strategies. Since development strategy is one of the common ones, so the goal of current research is strategic detraction for development of Darband river-valley recognized by two techniques of IE and SPACE techniques. The research is of survey type performed by questionnaires among experts in the field of planning during 2013-2014. This research is an applied research performed in two levels. The first questionnaire contains internal factors (strength- weakness) and external factors (opportunity-thread) influential on Darband river-valley development. The internal factor evaluation (IFE) and external factor evaluation (EFE) tables were also completed by second questionnaire. The results showed that Darband valley is developed more than its capacity; and it not only needs to further development, but also requires management tools to improve current situation.

Keywords: Tourism, Darband river-valley, Sustainable development, Strategic planning.

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1. Introduction

According to increasing development of tourism, the destination management requires tourism sustainable development. As a tourist seeks for more benefit from his trip preparing himself with information of his destination, the destination should also be planned in order to develop tourism targets. The tourism strategic planning should be in line with economic, environmental, and sociocultural considerations and their relation with overall goals of sustainable tourism. Also tourism strategic planning is a framework designed to provide route of each tourism organization or tourism destination emphasizing on quality, efficiency and effectiveness (Edgell, 2008).

With a glance at recreation regions, it is observed that most regions are developing and attracting visitors regardless of their capacity and limited acceptable changes (LAC) and/or no facilities are considered to control number of tourists visiting these centers. In case of poor management and planning for these regions, we would observe increasing destruction of natural ecosystems.

Daily, lots of tourists visit Darband river-valley due to its good climate; this process gradually causes erosion of environment. Though some studies had performed about Darband zone, but there are not comprehensive and applicable studies performed about strategic orientation of this area.

According to McDonald (1996), most definitions are generally related to strategic planning, concepts of long-term organizational orientation, and matching organizational activities with environment to minimize threats and maximize opportunities, and also matching organizational activities with available resources as the environment changes continually. Continual change is necessary for strategic planning to maintain balance and harmony of external environment (PourHoseini, 2008). The main goal of this article is sustainable tourism development of a region using strategic direction.

1.1. Theoretical Principles

1.1.1. Strategic planning and strategic orientation

Strategic planning is a systematic method that supports and confirms strategic management; it guarantees all actions defining goals, then lead to proper strategies to obtain those goals for whole organization. Strategic planning is a regular and organized attempt to make fundamental decisions and doing human actions that forms orientation of activities of an organization with other entities in a legal framework (Moradi Msihi, 2002).

Strategic planning is process of obtaining long-term and critical goals of organization in a competitive environment; thus, definitions of long-term strategic planning would be just formed in competitive environment. The strategic planning is defined as 'decision-making

about goals, resources required for goal achievement and how to assign organizational resources' (Rameshk, 2002).

Strategic orientation is one of the factors influential on performance of strategic planning; the strategic orientation presented by Miles and Snow is a strong expression for analysis of competitive environment and organizational strategies extensively used in industries.

One of the strengths of strategic orientation is the relationship between strategies, structure, and process so that it identifies organizations as an integrated whole interaction with their environment (Hassan, 2010).

The strategic planning of tourism industry is of importance since it maximizes effects of tourism on socioeconomic development and prevents potential problems (Kerr, 2003).

1.1.2. Tourism sustainable development

The term sustainable development was first proposed as integration of concepts 'protection' and 'development' (IUCN, 1980). Tourism sustainable development is a process satisfying needs of current tourisms and host regions while supporting and strengthening future opportunities. According to Inscape (1991), the term sustainable development can be accepted in any scale ranging from huge resorts to particular tourism. Sustainability depends on the relation of amount of designed planning with specific features of environment, economy, and society. Also, effects of plan execution and tourism continuous management are among sustainability-depended factors (Wahib and Pigram, 2005).

The integrated approach emphasizes that goals, policies, and strategies of tourism development must be adopted due to a complete perception of performance of tourism system. Though tourism performs regarding general goals of sustainable development, but the difference between sustainable development and tourism causes imbalance between these two concepts. One of the tools of more sustainable tourism is integration of sustainable principles in planning and implementation. Dawton and Hall (1994) express 5 tools to realize this goal: integrated and joint control systems, compatible development, integrated activity, improving knowledge of manufacturers, and strategic planning. Thus, it can be said that sustainable tourism is the most suitable approach for tourism development having potential capacity to decrease negative impacts of tourism (Rezvani, 2008).

In comparison with other planning approaches, tourism strategic planning emphasizes more on the environmental and sociocultural factors and concepts of sustainable development based on exact analysis of resources and development under control. According to obligations, this type of planning applies development standards; it focuses on effective methods to implement programs. Nevertheless, this approach of tourism planning does not ignore status of current development but it integrates these forms in format of evolved program and new events (Zargham, 1996).

1.1.3. River-valley and linear open space

We can study this zone (Darband) in terms of a linear public open space. Public open space means external spaces creating opportunities related to recreation in natural land and an opportunity for leisure in the city. On the other hand, there are extensive public open spaces such as parks. According to studies performed by commission of architecture and artificial environment, public open space creates 7 general fields: increase of economic value and investment attraction, strengthening the social function of urban spaces, influence on people's physical and psychological health, promotion of walking through spaces, helping children and youth, decrease of crime, and protecting variety of biologic species (Daneshpur and Elahi, 2007).

River-valley is a stream in which the river flows, and urban river-valley is a river passing through a city. River-valleys create sustainable relationship between green space and available open space of cities (Damesghi, 2010). River-alley as a free open space is the location of views and air flow in which activities of human populations are emphasized. River-valleys are one of the most important elements forming base of district 1, Tehran. Darband is one of the seven river-valleys of Tehran beside Farahzad, Darakeh, Golabdareh, Kan, Velenjak, and Darabad.

River-valleys are one of the most important natural spaces that always enliven urban regions throughout the world. The river-alleys of Tehran not only have no role to increase spatial quality and improve life style of citizens, but also cause some problems and chaos; while optimum use of these natural gifts and restoration of damaged natural spaces would improve environmental, social, and economic features on one hand, and guarantee survival of natural environment and its sustainability on the other (Daneshpour et al, 2011).

1.2. Introduction of Darband Zone

Darband zone belongs to quarter 3, district 1 of Tehran municipality. It is limited to Alborz heights from the north, Tajrish from the south, Za'feraniyeh from the west, and Golabdareh-Imamzadeh Ghasem from the east. Darband is located at the height 1700m above sea level; it is also beginning of one of the major routes for mountaineers climbing central Alborz. This region is considered as one of the old neighborhoods of Shemiran and one of the tourism zones of Tehran (Panahi, 2010).

2. Research Method

In terms of goal, this is an applied research. The data were gathered through library and survey Delphi methods, so the current research is a descriptive-survey one. Also the questionnaires were used as a source of data gathering. The population of this research was university professors and planning experts selected with snow ball method. Two questionnaires were distributed among respondents in two levels. The former was proposed as

a semi-open questionnaire aiming at necessary factors of internal factor evaluation (IFE) and external factor evaluation (EFE) matrices, while the latter was distributed to obtain weights and necessary coefficients in the above matrices. IFE matrix is a matrix of assessment of internal factors. This matrix evaluates the main weaknesses and strengths of the tourism region (table 1). External factors including economic, political, legal, environmental, regulatory, technological and competitive information are assessed by EFE matrix (table 2). Accordingly, the final score of external factors is 2.95 that indicate the average status of the region. This number is equal to 3 for internal factors that show the region's available potentials. Analysis of current management method in Darband region leads the final numbers of external and internal factors to the IE matrix. In this matrix, IFE is related to the horizontal axis and EFE is related to the vertical axis. The intersection of these two axes is in the defensive position (maintaining the current status and give up some activities). It means that, threats of the region will more dominate the weaknesses. Therefore, a strategy should be adopted to remove weaknesses and increase the strengths. Then, the overall strategies are determined using SPACE matrix that analyzes four key elements including industry attraction and environmental stability as internal factors and competitive advantage and financial strengths as internal and balancing factors (Shojaee, et al, 2011). According to the results, this region with the coordinates of -1.5, -0.11 shows the defective status. Moreover, results approve the obtained results using IE matrix that indicates maintaining the current status considering the stop of unnecessary actions.

Table 1- IFE matrix related to the sustainable development in Darband region

Strengths	Internal factors	weight	rank	score
	1- Possibility of activities such as slope climbing, mountain climbing ...	0.03	4	0.12
	2- Availability of various restaurants and cafes	0.02	3	0.06
	3- Existence of natural landscapes in the region	0.04	3	0.12
	4- Ability to provide facilities in accordance with the natural features of river valley	0.03	3	0.09
	5- Availability of different access routes such as subways	0.03	3	0.09
	6- Integration of different land uses in one area and so being cost effective for investment	0.02	2	0.04
	7- Being welcomed by professional climbers and using services by them	0.03	3	0.09
	8- Availability of high voltage power lines for installations	0.03	3	0.09

	in the region			
	9 – being close to the Tehran target market	0.04	4	0.16
	11- being recognized as a target area and low costs and market development	0.04	2	0.08
	10- suitable and various access physically and in terms of time	0.04	2	0.08
	13- strong nostalgia for individuals who are living in Tehran	0.09	3	0.03
total				
weaknesses	1- Lack of public transportation with standard prices in the region (from Tajrish Bridge to Sarband Square) and parking	0.03	2	0.06
	2-Disregarding the river privacy in constructing	0.04	2	0.08
	3-Changing the natural bed of the river valley to Concrete channel for sewage disposal	0.04	2	0.08
	4-excessive constructions in the river bank and destruction of visual beauty of the region	0.04	1	0.04
	5-Lack of suitable waste disposal system	0.04	2	0.08
	6-Constructions in the 1800 m counter line to the top in the mountain areas	0.04	2	0.08
	7-Lack of suitable restrooms along the way	0.03	2	0.06
	8-Lack of adequate flood controllers and alarms	0.02	3	0.06
	9-Lack of standard prices for similar goods in the region	0.03	2	0.06
	10-Lack of adequate guidance facilities such as track notification boards	0.02	3	0.06
	11-Lack of suitable distribution of demand in different seasons of the year and The population density in a certain time period such as summer or weekends	0.03	2	0.06
	12-Lack of suitable spaces for tourists through the river valley way including unsuitable width	0.03	3	0.09
	13-Development of residential and military buildings incompatible with tourism in the region	0.03	1	0.03
	14-Lack of control over restaurants by ministry of health	0.03	2	0.06
	15-Lack of appropriate planning to create more balance between tourism subsystems	0.02	2	0.04
	16-Functional failure in the relief and rescue stations	0.03	2	0.06
	17-Poor monitoring the performance of Provider of Tourist Services	0.03	2	0.06
	18-Very high number of services and invading the river privacy and destruction of natural landscapes	0.04	2	0.08
	19-Capital outflows from the region and little exploitation of natives from tourism revenues	0.03	2	0.06

Table 2- EFE matrix for sustainable development of Darband region in Tehran

Opportunities	External factors	Weight	Rank	Score
	1- Different types of pollutions in Tehran metropolis and people's motivation to have fun in mountain areas with perfect climate	0.08	3	0.24
	2- Few small number of mountain resort in Tehran considering its large population. suppliers' high ability of bargaining such as business owners	0.08	3	0.24
	3- positive approach of future programs to develop tourism	0.06	3	18

	in northern areas of Tehran			
	4- financial well-being of the regional market in north river valleys of Tehran	0.07	2	0.14
	5- ability to implement various mountain sports in this region	0.09	3	0.27
Total		0.35		0.98
Threats	1- Development of 6 other river valleys in Tehran as other options of mountain tourism	0.06	2	0.12
	2- existing of other recreational areas including parks as alternatives for some mountain tourism activities such as climbing slops	0.06	3	0.18
	3- high price of land in Tehran and availability of alternative investment opportunities			
	4- uncontrolled entry of construction investors to the region	0.08	1	0.08
	5- lack of environmental awareness of tourists and inadequate protection of the nature	0.09	2	0.18
	6- lake of attention to inappropriate width of paths and low quality of sidewalks	0/05	2	0.10
	7- lack of law enforcement against illegal constructions in northern Tehran	0.09	1	0.09
	8- insecurity and social abnormalities to stay overnight	0.09	3	0.27
	9- lack of encouraging policies by government to attract investment in the advantages of the tourism			
Total		0.65		2.26

IE matrix

Final score of IFE matrix

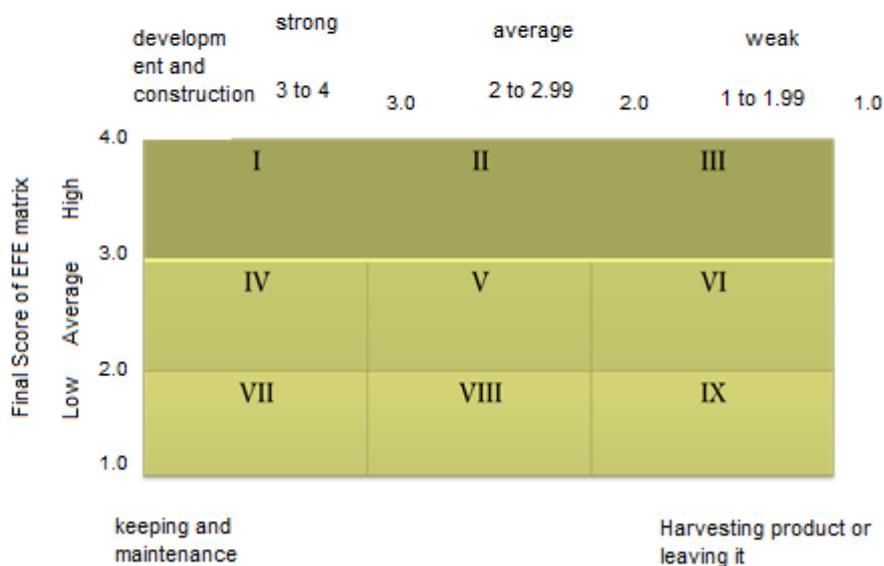


Diagram1: IE matrix of sustainable development of Darband tourism

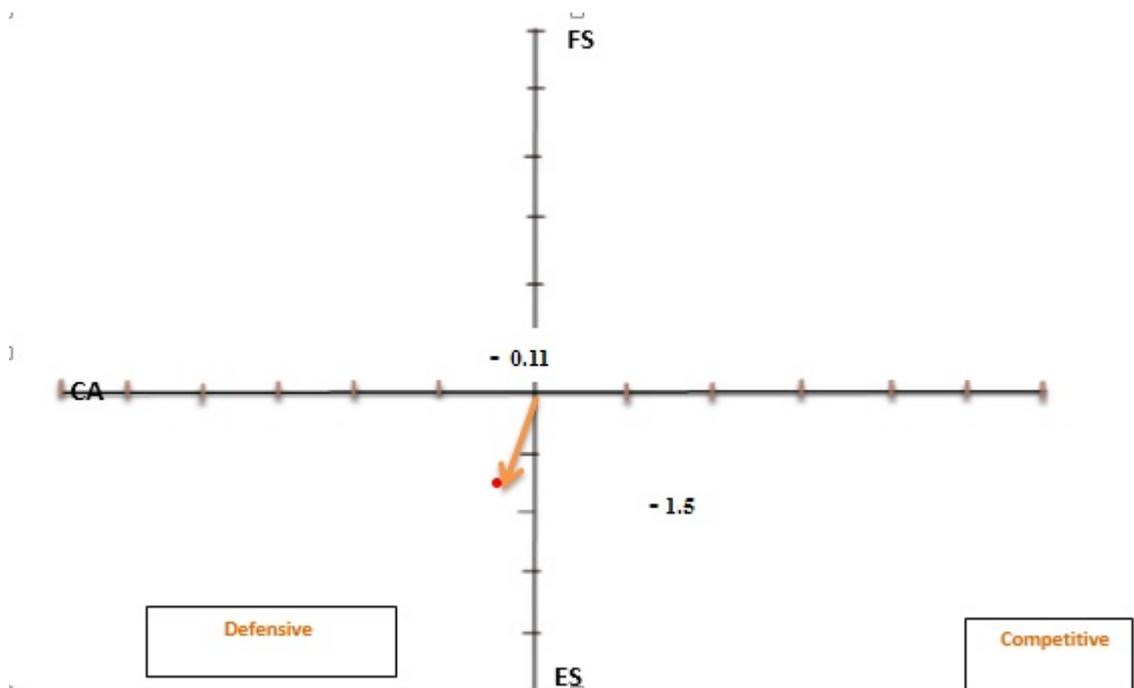


Diagram2: matrix of strategic measurement and success assessment

3. Conclusion

After analysis of IE matrix with coordinates of (3, 2.95) which is indicative of keeping the current conditions and removing the contradictory activities with the regional sustainable developments, in the SPACE matrix with coordinates of (-1.5,-0.11) we achieved the defensive state. The given points and direction of these goals are indicative of some problems which the other river valley of Tehran are also included in that. For example, in the Darake river valley also the violation of the river district has led to the social insecurity of dedicating a semi-private route for public access which necessitates the diversion of movement from these routes. Other restriction of Kan River valley is the existence of high amount of flowing wastewater which is regarded as one of major disadvantages of Tehran river valleys. One of factors of visual pollution and blockage of margin of the river valleys is irregular constructions, which is obvious in the Darabad river valley. Lack of continuous walking route in the margin of river especially in the city district is a weakness point in the route of tourism in especially Welenjak. In respect of landscape, we can refer to the Farahzad river valley that like Darband view has changed because of disharmony of the around residual buildings and removed natural vegetation. In the most part of the world river valleys can provide for environmental and economic opportunities such as increasing safety and proper ecological conditions, stability of river district, increasing of diversity of promenades and sport facilities. For example, Sascachovan, Kolorado, and Gudalop. According to the above perspective, the sustainable development strategies of Darband should targeted toward prevention from more construction, structure strengthening, supervision on standardization (quality and price), prevention from more pollution of water, prevention from construction on riverbed, inciting people to adopt green behaviors, and use of mechanisms of destination management.

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