



ANALYSIS OF FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN MASJADSOLEIMAN USING SWOT STRATEGIC MODEL

Mahmoudi , Mohammad Reza and Arun, Das

Department of Studies in Geography, university of Mysore, Mysore, India

ABSTRACT

Tourism is an industry which requires sufficient knowledge about economic, social and cultural determinants in each region. MasjadSoleiman city with oil and gas resources and located closer to proximity to countries like Persian Gulf region, India, Afghanistan and Pakistan as well as the commercial-industrial free zones has the potential of attracting tourists around the world, through the scientific management and planning, to turn into a significant tourism center in the region and to be one of the main tourist attraction resorts in the region. The obtained analyses from SWOT model indicate that this city despite having the capacity to be transformed into an exemplary touristic area, decision making plurality and managerial issues, lack of sufficient infrastructure and poor advertisement form the main barriers to achieve this goal. Nevertheless, the grounds for job creation, revenue in foreign currency and infrastructural investment with weight advantages of 0.40, 0.28 and 0.18, respectively, obtained from the statistical calculation are considered to be among the most important opportunities and presence of historical monuments, sports-recreational attractions and sand beaches and natural attraction are found to be among the most important strengths next to possibility of development. Reformation of managerial institutions, promotion of advertisement, interaction and consultation between authorities of the free zone and the associated organizations of tourism, people and ecotourism are among the key solutions for development of tourism in this region.

Key words: tourism and development, MasjadSoleiman, SWOT

1. INTRODUCTION

Principally, economic development in every country requires investment in different economic sectors and activities of the country. Without investment in infrastructural and super-structural plans employment, production and economic welfare is not expectable. To realize this, today, many countries in the world show keen interest in attracting of foreign capitals (Shakeri and Salimi, 2006: 1). Investment in tourism infrastructure and utilization of potential regional capacities for attraction of tourist is one of the proper solutions for this purpose. Tourism development as a series of economic activities has significant impact on the reinforcement of economic foundations of societies and the role of tourism as a new source of

job creation, income generation, receiving more tax, attracting foreign currency and reinforcement of social infrastructure which result in growth and development of other industries has been confirmed in numerous studies (Kazemi, 2008: 1). Today, in the early years of the 21st century, tourism industry has turned into one of the most lucrative industries of the world, an intensive competition among many countries for attraction of tourists is striking and tourism industry as a dynamic industry with unique characteristics has a significant share in economic and production activities of developed and developing countries. Based on the forecast of the Tourism Organization, in 2020 there will be about one billion and sixty million tourists and the earned income earned from international tourism in 2020 will reach one trillion and half (Unwto, 2007). Tourism industry as an activity exerts impact of which has been demonstrated in the process of balanced and rationalistic development throughout the world, A wide range of policy makers and planners of political and executive systems in all countries have shown keen interest in it. Organizational societies, especially executive systems have found that in the tourism process, economic, social, political, environmental, technologic and other positive effects are hidden, and in occasional tourist process, empowerment of workforce, political and international interests, and propagation of ethnic culture in other parts of the world are necessary (Ebrahimzadeh et al, 2007: 267).

Realization of sustainable development depends on making allowance for three approaches holistic, futuristic and equality-oriented. The first approach holds that development is sustainable when viewed in political, economic and ecologic contexts. In the second approach, estimation of tourists' current needs and host society along with protection of environment and safeguarding of equal opportunities for future generation are of interest (Tolayee, 2007: 142). Objectives of sustainable tourism are improvement of life quality in the host society, observance of equality between two generations and within a generation, upkeep of environment quality through protection of environmental system, preservation of cultural integration, and social solidarity between societies as well as provision of facilities, so that the visitors are given the opportunity to get valuable experiences (Gui, 2007: 315). The World Commission of Economic Development (WCED) defines sustainable development as a development that while meeting current needs does not cause damage to resources required by the future generation. Bramwell and Lane consider tourism sustainable development contingent to implement the plans which secure long term regeneration of natural environment and human resources in tourism activities (Alvani and Piroozbakht, 2006: 107). Presently, tourism and tourism economy is being transformed into one of the main pillars of the world commercial economy. Besides, many development planners and policy makers refer to tourism industry as the main element of sustainable development. To achieve tourism development, such factors such as suitable organizational structure, human resource planning and training, tourism laws and regulations, and capital inflow are indispensable. To achieve sustainable and desirable development in tourism, presence of an able and integrated management and coordination between the public and private sector is of high importance (Madhoushi and Naserpour, 2003: 7). A key aspect in tourism development planning which is not usually emphasized is engaging of the public in planning and decision making. The truth is that planning is done for inhabitants of a region (the original owners of tourism resources in the region in question), thus they ought to be given the opportunity to participate in the planning process and should be determining its forms, local people community should also allowed to take part in future tourism process of the region, and to express

their views on the type of society they like to live in and the way the obtained benefits are distributed. However, since spending such time guaranties presence and support of the natives, the composed plans and contribution of their capital in development plans will be justifiable in every aspect.

Considering that Iranian economic structure after discovery and exploitation of oil resources has been strongly dependent on oil export and the revenues in foreign currency obtained from it, the efforts made for a way out from the present this situation and adoption of non-petroleum economic policies has not been much fruitful. Now, for creation of a comprehensive and sustainable development and replacement of new income sources in place of oil resources in the country, it is necessary to make most of all the facilities and capabilities. In tune with the demand Iran is one of the most spectacular countries of the world, so Iran our country is one of the first ten countries in terms of (cultural and civil) tourist attractions and the first five countries in terms of (natural environment) diversity and the first three countries of the world in terms of handicrafts diversity (Zangiabadi et al, 2006: 1). In addition, in South Asia, Iran is ranked second after India, in attracting the largest number of tourists and earning revenue from tourism (WTO, 2000: 11). MasjadSoleiman city with rarely comparable natural attractions, intact cultural attractions such as traditional customs, local dances and handicrafts with worldwide reputation (Kazemi, 2008: 2) can become an important tourist destination in voyage to cities, historical attractions, battle fields, renovated edifices and parks and the outlook formed out of cities (Atichison, 2002: 23) and at the same time, urban tourism can be useful when is linked to other urban functions. as urban sustainability includes three factors environmental, social-economic, cultural and skeletal factors (Camagni, 1998: 116). Hence, planning of urban tourism involves three levels: market, urban growth and local communities, Meanwhile rural tourism provides various tourism activities, since it involves visit of dwelling places, events, festivals, different types of sports and recreations (Soteriades, 2002: 617). Now, natural and morphologic conditions and climatic elements together with economic, social and cultural structure of MasjadSoleima have created diverse forms of urban and rural spaces each of which in terms of natural and human functions are distinct from other regions. In this paper, determinants of tourism development, its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats in MasjadSoleiman was investigated, byadopting a scientific approach based on the existing realities. the contributing factors to tourism development in MasjadSoleiman are identified and applicable strategies to tourism development are addressed.

Determinants of tourism industry

Numerous factors affecting this service industry are classified into general groups of increasing factors and decreasing factors.

1. Increasing factors: population growth, age distribution changes, urbanization increase, decrease of work hours, increase of vacations, educational factors, level of literacy and culture, social relations, use of personal transportation means, and promotional activities of the country's tourism industry are among the influential factors in the growth of tourism industry.

2. Decreasing factors: political instability, civil and foreign wars, unrest and terrors, revolutions and hijacking are among the influential factors in reduction of visitors to these places (Ali Asgari, 1373: 24).

Systemic approach to tourism

This approach considers tourism as a series of inter-related elements and segments which move as a whole in the direction of a specific goal. If we take system as a set of related and coherent elements which form a unit and follow a specific goal, then perception of tourism as a system will be a comprehensive approach to knowledge of this phenomenon; a phenomenon which is composed of different parts including businesses, tourists, society and environment (Kazemi, 2006: 34-36). In this research, tourism and its determinants in MasjidSoleiman using such approach have been treated.

Research methodology

This research is of descriptive-analytic type. For collection of the required data and information, documentary and library inquiries were made and field studies were carried out, and with the given information, services and general condition of tourism in the region were addressed. Next, to analyze the findings, SWOT model was used. For this purpose, internal environment (strengths and weaknesses) and external environment (opportunities and threats) of the region was studied and then for completion of the obtained information, using the questionnaire, an opinion survey was conducted using the questionnaire among the people and tourism authorities of MasjidSoleiman and by weight assignment to the aimed items, SWOT matrix was completed and finally suitable strategies of Masjidsoleiman tourism were suggested. In this research, using KukranFormula the statistical sample was determined which included two groups: the public (150 people) and tourism officials (30 people). Normally, to determine sample size, a variety of methods is mentioned, but in general, these methods can be divided into four groups: based on personal judges, based on the provided minimum qualification values, based on statistical calculation, and sample estimation in light of facilities (Ezki and DarbanAstaneh, 2001: 269-270). For this purpose, in this research, based on statistical calculations, adjusted Kukran Formula has been applied.

$$n = \frac{\frac{t^2 p - q}{d^2}}{1 + \frac{1}{N} \left[\left(\frac{t^2 p - q}{d^2} \right) - 1 \right]}$$

In this formula;

n: sample size

N: statistical population (target)

p: percentage of attribute distribution in population (i.e. ratio of people with the understudy attribute)

q: percentage of people without the attribute in population

d: difference of attribute's real ratio in population to value of researcher's estimation for presence of the attribute in population the maximum ratio of which is 0.05 and sampling accuracy depends on it.

t: variable size in natural distribution (normal distribution pertaining to Gous Curve) which is extracted from the respective table at the intended level of confidence.

$$p = 0.95$$

$$q = 0.05$$

$$d^2 = 0.0025$$

$$N = 77128$$

$$t = 2.81$$

$$n = ?$$

$$n = \frac{(2.81^2 \times 0.95 \times 0.05) / 0.0025}{\left[1 + \frac{1}{77128} \left(\frac{2.81^2 \times 0.95 \times 0.05}{0.0025} - 1 \right) \right]} = 150$$

This statistical size, i.e. 150, is associated to local population. To determine number of sample for the group of managers and officials of the organizations associated to MasjadSoleiman tourism, the questionnaire was distributed among almost all members of this group. Number of this group amounts to 30 people.

SWOT technique

SWOT technique or matrix which sometimes is also called TOWS, is a tool for identification of the existing threats and opportunities in external environment of a system and recognition of its internal weaknesses and strengths for assessment of the situation and composition of a strategy for guidance and control of this system. This value (SWOT) is the direct result of the model developed in Harvard Business School. In fact, this method is the best strategy for organizations (MoradiMasihi, 2002: 40). In short, this technique is a tool for analysis of situation and strategy formulation and this is done through:

- Recognition and classification of the system's internal strengths and weaknesses;
- Recognition and classification of the existing opportunities and threats in external environment of the system;
- Completion of SWOT matrix and composition of different strategies to lead the system in future (Golkar, 2005: 49). In other words, SWOT model is one of the strategic tools of correspondence of intra-systemic strengths and weaknesses with extra-systemic opportunities and threats. SWOT model provides systematic analysis for identification of these factors and choice of a strategy which create the best fit between them. From the perspective of this model, a suitable strategy maximizes strengths and weaknesses and minimizes weaknesses and threats. For this purpose, strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and threats in four general states of SO, WO, ST, WT are linked and

strategy options are chosen from among them (Harrison and Carven, 2003: 192). To construct the matrix of threats, opportunities, strengths and weaknesses, eight stages should be passed through:

- A list of major opportunities which exist in the external environment of the organization;
- A list of the major threats existing in the external environment of the organization;
- A list of organization's major internal strengths;
- A list of organization's major internal weaknesses;
- Compare internal strengths and external opportunities with each other and put the result in the respective box in the group of SO strategies;
- Compare internal weaknesses with the existing opportunities and put the result in the group of WO strategies;
- Compare internal strengths with external threats and put the result in the group of ST strategies;
- Compare internal weaknesses with external threats and put the result in the group of WT strategies (David, 2001: 364-366).

Environmental study

Before being able to start the composition stage, an organization has to study and explore its external environment in order to discover potential opportunities and threats. In addition, it needs to explore its internal environment to find out about its strengths and threats. Environmental survey is surveillance, evaluation and publication of the obtained information regarding organization's internal and external environments between key and influential people of that organization (Hanger and Al, 2002: 60-61). In general, SWOT analysis framework in this research is as follows:

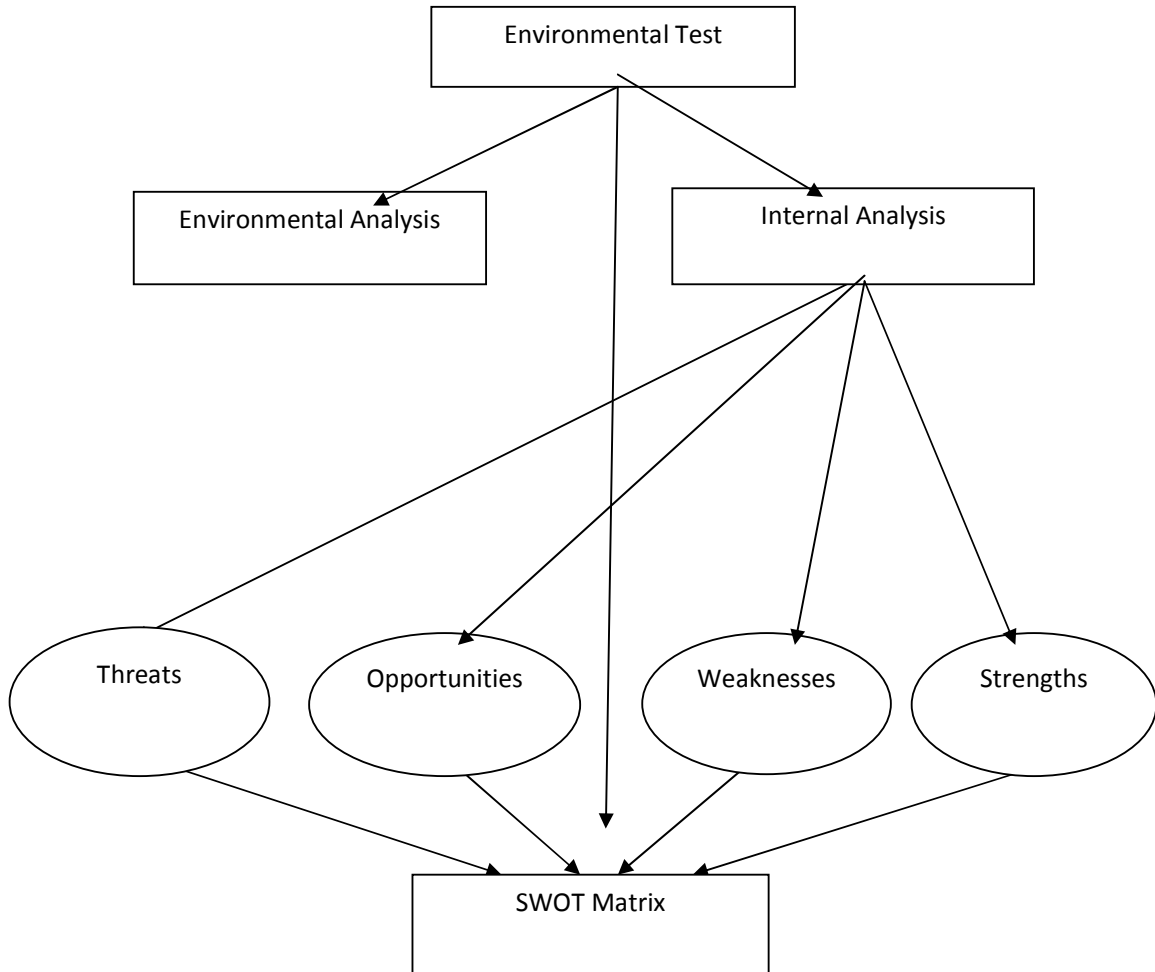


Diagram: SWOT analysis framework (MohammadiDehcheshmeh and ZangiAbadi, 2008: 3).

Strategies combination

SWOT matrix allows composition of four different choices and strategies. In practice, some strategies overlap with action of each other or they are implemented simultaneously and aligned with each other. In fact, according to state of a system, four groups of strategies differing in responsiveness can be composed:

1. Defensive strategy: general purpose of defensive strategy or minimum-minimum strategy which is also known as “survival strategy” is reduction of system’s weaknesses to neutralize threats.

2. Adjustment strategy: adjustment strategy or minimum-maximum strategy by reducing weaknesses tries to make most use of the existing opportunities. An organization may in its external environment notice presence of some opportunities but due to its organizational weaknesses is not able to exploit them. In such conditions, adoption of adjustment strategy can enable the organization to utilize the opportunity.

3. Exigency strategy: this strategy uses system's strengths to face the threats and its purpose is maximization of strengths and minimization of threats. However, since the past experience has shown that inappropriate use of power can lead to undesirable results, an organization should not thoughtlessly use its power in dealing with threats.

4. Aggressive strategy: all systems wish a position in which they simultaneously are able to maximize their strengths and opportunities. Unlike defensive strategy which is a reactive solution, aggressive strategy is a proactive strategy. In this strategy, organization using its strengths moves towards expansion of its product and service market (Golkar, 2005: 53).

Analysis of factors associated to Masjad Soleiman tourism

This model is one of the methods used to organize external factors in the form of opportunities and threats and internal factors as strengths and weaknesses. This method is used for analysis of influential factors facing a system (city, region, village, etc) using ranking (grading) factors based on the given importance to each influential factor. To prepare and build a table of these factors and their impact on tourism functions and their analysis, the following stages have been followed:

In column one (external and internal factors), the most important strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats facing the system are identified.

In column two (weight), each factor is given a weight ranging from one (most important) to zero (least important) based on the impact of their probability on the system's current strategic position (based on the obtained findings from identification and analysis of the current situation). The greater the weight is, the stronger the impact on the system's current and future position will be (sum of 2 regardless of number of factors).

In column three (ranking), each factor is given a score of 5 (very good) to 1 (weak) based on the obtained findings and analysis of the current situation. This ranking shows how a system responds to each external factor.

In column four (weight score), the weight is multiplied by the rank of each factor (column 2 multiplied by column 3) to obtain its weight score, so for each factor a weight score of 1 to 5 is obtained where 3 is average.

Finally, weight scores of all the external and internal factors are separately summed in column 4 and then total weight score is calculated. The total weight score shows how a system responds to existing and potential factors and forces in its external environment. Mean total weight score in a system in a given area is always 3 (Hunger and Willen, 2005: 90-92). If this value is higher, its significance is more and if it is smaller than this, it is of less significance and influence.

External Factors Analysis Summary (EFAS) for Masjad Soleiman tourism

To organize external factors in categories of opportunities and threats facing the system, using ranking factors significance, impact of each opportunity and threat on MasjadSoleiman regional functions was calculated as follows:

Table 1: Results of external factors analysis (opportunities)

Opportunities	Weight	Ranking	Weight score
1. Job creation and income generation for country	0.1	4	0.4
2. Lack of resources and natural and cultural outlooks in rival regions	0.07	4	0.28
3. Investment in infrastructural and super-structural installations	0.06	3	0.18
4. Cultural exchanges	0.03	2	0.06
5. Possibility of access to international markets	0.03	3	0.09
6. Proximity to the Persian Gulf, Pakistan and Afghanistan	0.05	3	0.15
7. The possibility of being transformed into medical-health care center of the region	0.03	1	0.03
8. Establishment of new airport and increase in the number of flights	0.07	4	0.28
9. Development of MasjadSoleiman Bus and Transportation Terminal	0.04	3	0.12
10. Development of parks and recreational centers as one of development strategies	0.03	2	0.06
Total	0.51		1.34

Table 2: Results of external factors analysis (threats)

Threats	Weight	Ranking	Weight score
1. Negative advertisement at global level against Iran	0.07	4	0.28
2. Regional competition	0.09	4	0.36
3. Low hygienic standards and shortage of specialized health care facilities	0.05	3	0.15
4. Suitable seasonal distribution of visitors	0.04	3	0.12
5. Little foreign investment in tourism sector	0.05	3	0.15
6. Hot and humid climate in most days of the year and shortage of fresh water	0.04	3	0.12

7. Extreme poverty in the region and influx of immigrant population	0.04	3	0.12
8. Environmental threats and damage to historical, cultural and natural monuments	0.06	3	0.18
9. Religious and ideological issues	0.03	2	0.06
10. Change in the structure of society	0.02	2	0.04
Total	0.49		1.84

* It should be noted that total weight scores of external factors has been 1 and their weight score 3.18

Given the above tables, the most important opportunities which exist for MasjadSoleiman in tourism development from the viewpoint of the respondents (city authorities, local population and tourists) are: job creation with weight score of 40%, income generation in foreign currency for the country, building of an international airport and increase in number of flights with a weight score of 0.28, and investment in infrastructural and super-structural installations and facilities with a weight score of 0.18 were ranked the first, second and third opportunities, respectively.

Results of internal factors, analysis concerning MasjadSoleiman tourism

To organize and classify the internal factors in two categories of strengths and weaknesses in order to evaluate the management method and system's reaction to these factors, given importance of the expected value in MasjadSoleiman tourism, their study and coefficient of their impact is separately determined in the following table.

Table 3: Results of internal factors analysis (strengths)

Strengths	Weight	Ranking	Weight score
1. Historical monuments and rich cultural heritage	0.07	4	0.28
2. Pleasant climate in cold season of the year	0.04	2	0.08
3. Diversity of natural environment their intactness and diverse geographical sights	0.05	3	0.15
4. Proximity to neighboring and Persian Gulf countries	0.06	4	0.24
5. Susceptibility of the region for investment and planning in tourism	0.02	2	0.06
6. Presence of a peaceful environment away from the noisy environment of big cities	0.03	2	0.20
7. Sports and recreational attractions	0.05	4	0.12
8. Geographical position	0.04	3	0.02
9. No shortage of land for touristim use	0.02	1	0.12
10. Connection to territorial whole	0.04	3	0.12
11. Prepared air and land transportation	0.04	3	1/43

Sum	0.40		1.43
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From the viewpoint of the respondents, the most important strengths possessed by MasjadSoleiman city in the area of tourism are: historical monuments and rich cultural heritage with a weight score of 0.28, proximity to coastal areas, southern countries of the Persian Gulf with a weight score of 0.24, sports and recreational attractions with a weight score of 0.20, and diversity of natural environment and their intactness and presence of geographical sights with a weight score of 0.15 are ranked as the first, second, third and fourth strengths, respectively. In addition, in view of the respondents, all the three factors poor management, poor advertisement and organizational non-coordination with other related organizations on the one hand, and population on the other hand with a weight score of 0.28 have been found the most salient weaknesses, and lack of suitable connecting roads and lack of connection with a score of 0.24 are ranked next.

Table 4: Results of internal factors, analysis (weaknesses)

Weaknesses	Weight	Ranking	Weight score
1. Poor management and lack of stability in management	0.07	4	0.28
2. Shortage of suitable connecting road	0.06	4	0.24
3. long distance of airport from the region	0.04	3	0.12
4. Poor advertisement	0.07	4	0.28
5. Lack of lodging and serving place for all walks of people	0.03	2	0.06
6. Shortage of hygienic and service facilities	0.04	3	0.12
7. Inappropriate environmental and skeletal infrastructure	0.05	3	0.15
8. Inappropriate recreational and sports installations and facilities	0.03	2	0.06
9. Being situated far away from populated and large urban centers	0.04	3	0.12
10. Non-coordination with tourism-related organization and population	0.07	4	0.28
11. Lack of minimum amenities in touring sites	0.05	4	0.20
12. Absence of night life in population centers and tourism destination	0.03	2	.0680
Total	0.60		1.97

* It should be noted that total weight score of external factors has been 1 and their weight score 3.18

Strategic Factors Analysis Summary (SFAS)

In this model, using the tables of internal and external factors analysis and combining them, the most important strategic factors in MasjadSoleiman tourism is presented. In fact, by analysis of strategic factors, the planners who take strategic decisions can limit strengths, weaknesses, threats and opportunities to fewer factors. This is done by reexamination of the weights of each factor present in the tables of internal and external factors analysis. In fact, the heaviest factors present in the two tables should be transferred to the table of strategic factors analysis (Hunger and Willen, 2007: 127-130). Hence, the strategic factors affecting MasjadSoleiman tourism is summarized in table 5.

Table 5: Strategic Factors Analysis Summary (SFAS)

Strategic factors	Weight	Ranking	Weight score	Planning		
				Short term	Medium term	Long term
S1: rich historical and cultural heritage	0.08	4	0.32			
S2: sports and recreational attractions	0.07	4	0.21	*		*
S3: proximity to neighboring countries and the Persian Gulf coasts	0.08	4	0.32			*
W1: poor advertisement	0.09	4	0.36	*	*	
W2: insufficient appropriate connecting roads	0.05	4	0.20	*	*	*
W3: non-coordination with organizations associated to tourism	0.07	4	0.28			
W4: poor management and instability in management	0.06	4	0.20	*		
O1: job creation and income generation in foreign currency for the country	0.09	4	0.4	*		*
O2: lack of resources and natural and cultural sights	0.07	4	0.28	*		
O3: opening a new airport and increase in number of flights	0.06	4	0.18	*	*	*
O4: investment in infrastructural and super-structural installations	0.08	3	0.32	*		*
T1: negative propaganda against Iran at the international level	0.09	4	0.36	*		*
T2: regional competition with Guader Free Zone in Pakistan and regions ...	0.06	4	0.18	*		*
T3: environmental threats and damage to historical monuments	0.05	3	0.15	*		*
Total	1.00		3.76			

Now, by overlap of factors with each other, different strategies, i.e. competitive / aggressive (SO), diversity (ST), revision (WO), and defensive (WT) are composed as follows.

1. Competitive / aggressive strategies (SO): this strategy, it is focuses on internal strengths and external opportunities which are:

- Development of air lines for passengers and goods transit over the region;
- Using the region's potentials for development of water and summer sports and attraction of sports tourists;
- Development of the city's hotels and restaurants for tourist attraction and creation of new jobs for local population;
- Utilizing MasjadSoleiman's tourism potential.

2. Diversity strategies (ST): these strategies are focused on internal strengths and external threats and concern the following aspects:

- Development of tourism information network, information supply and tourism education;
- Reinforcement of advertisement and awareness via mass media about the region's tourism capacities at domestic and international level and removing tourists' negative image regarding the region's security and cultural condition.

3. Revision strategies (WO): while laying stress on internal weaknesses, these strategies by profiting from external opportunities, try to resolve the weaknesses of this tourism area and involve the following actions:

- Improvement and promotion of tourism (scientific, health care, commercial and recreational) products, joint investment of the public and private sectors in construction of infrastructure, and advertisement of the region's tourism products aiming at domestic and foreign tourists;
- Interaction and consultation of the free zone's authorities, organizations and offices associated with tourism for advance of tourism plans;
- Profiting from the public's collaborative power in all phases of the tourism planning.

4. Defensive strategies (WT): these strategies emphasize on resolving MasjadSoleiman's vulnerability and include the following actions:

- Composition of rules and regulation regarding development and reformation of managerial institutions, application of specialized management in tourism segments and stability in management for correct implementation of long term plans;
- Drawing popular contribution in promotion, protection and sustainable utilization of the natural, historical and cultural areas and preventing environmental and historical-cultural damages;

- Promotion of wellbeing in the region and establishment of modern specialized hospitals, employment of specialists, and equipment of the current medical centers with modern outfits for the attraction of visitors who seek scientific and medical tourism.

CONCLUSION

Given the findings of this research, MasjedSoleiman city has a fair climate during winter season throughout the whole year with diverse natural and environmental attractions. Apart from this intact and beautiful nature, it offers special geo-tourist attractions which together with its rich and traditional culture and historic antiquity is a collection of the best tourist attractions in a small area in the most remote part of the country, indicating high capacity of this region for being transformed into an exemplary touristic region at national and regional level. Results of the study and analyses indicate that Masjad Soleiman with 228 tourist attractions can be one of the important tourism axes in the country. Based on the study of the current situation and identification of strengths and opportunities in tourism development on one hand, and weaknesses and threats in the process of the region's tourism development, effective solutions to this process according to SWOT model indicate that weakness and instability of management, poor advertisement and non-coordination between the tourism-related organizations and the public are the main reasons of underdevelopment of tourism in MasjadSoleiman. Development strategies and improvement of managerial institutions and application of professional management in tourism segments, management stability for implementation of long term plans, promotion of advertisement and awareness about the region's tourism capacities, removing tourists' negative image of the region's security and cultural conditions, interaction and consultation between authorities of the free zone and tourist organizations and the public, and profiting from the region's potential for development of water and winter sports as well as promotion of ecotourism have been found the most crucial tourism development strategies. In addition, sub-strategies such as development of air lines for passenger and goods transit and development of therapeutic tourism will be instrumental in this regard.

5. SUGGESTIONS

Considering the stated shortcomings and problems in tourism development in MasjadSoleiman city, for growth and thriving of this industry in the region and improvement of tourism functions and realization of more revenue and profits in tourism industry, the following actions are suggested:

1. Employing educated managers well-informed in tourism issues at the top for decision making and executive affairs;
2. Coordination between managers of the free zone and other organizations associated to tourism of MasjadSoleiman region;
3. Engaging people in decision making and execution of tourism projects;
4. Creation of an integrated organizational arrangement in tourism industry and improvement of the current executive organization;

5. Suitable investment in cultural areas and education of local population to properly communicate with tourists by holding training courses;
6. Launching extensive and proper advertisement and preparing and distributing of advertisement brochures inside the country and in neighboring countries for further acquaintance of tourists with facilities and attractions of the region;
7. Improvement of internal and external transportation infrastructure: construction of international airport in MasjadSoleiman city and provision and increase in number of domestic and international flights, and completion of MasjadSoleiman railway project;
8. Introduction of relative advantages of investment in tourism of masjad soleiman by the managers of the region to the investors;
9. Making allowance for the costs required for marketing studies;
10. Preparing ground to resolve executive barriers and bottlenecks and amendment of the existing regulations;
11. Creating new tourism capacities at regional level;
12. Appropriate planning to reduce costs for tourists by organizing group tours, providing special discounts via travel agencies and airline companies and hotels and offering exceptional discounts to foreign tourists as incentives;
13. Creating tourism information bank and profiting from tour guides;
14. Preservation and renovation of tourist information at regional level in line with sustainable development;
15. Construction of necessary facilities in tourist sights;
16. Development of Iran's diplomatic and economic relations with other countries;
17. Thinking out contrivances for attraction of more foreign visitors and allocation of specific areas in the region and the region's boundaries to them;
18. Development and improvement of amenities and recreational facilities and construction of sport projects to attract sport tourists;
19. Improvement of residential infrastructures and dining salons conform to international standards and correspond to different tastes and social classes;
20. Considering that the first and the most important factor in tourist attraction is security of travel destination of the region and no tourist has to go to a region which is insecure in his view. Thus, the respective organizations in tourism and security ought to establish full security by coordination and having integrated programs, and to change the image held by tourists about security state of the region;
21. Establishing tour and travel agencies and firms in MasjadSoleiman and opening their offices in the country's touristic cities and in some cases outside the country and having directed activities in the direction of tourism industry marketing and expanding advertisement;
22. Revival of traditional jobs corresponding to the region's ethnic culture such as handicrafts and their supply to tourists,

23. Active participation in domestic and international tourism exhibitions as well as holding different tourism exhibitions in the region;
24. Holding different feasts and festivals in the course of the year especially in four seasons and holidays;
25. establishing specialized and super-specialized hospitals and profiting from experienced physicians in these centers for attraction of therapeutic tourists from neighboring countries.

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