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Special Economic Zone based on SWOT Analysis and Quantitative Strategic Planning Matrix (QSPM)

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Abstract

Mirjaveh Special Economic Zone is a growing region that has a natural and God given attraction inside, and unique natural and historical attractions around it, especially in the Temin and Ladiz areas. This special economic area with many strengths will be able to take advantage of its opportunity. The purpose of the present study was to identify the strengths and weaknesses and opportunities and threats in front of tourism development and the Mirjaveh special economic zone and provide the appropriate and efficient strategies. Identifying and analyzing strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats using the SWOT model, and quantitative strategy planning matrix (QSPM) has been used to select the best tourism development strategy. To determine the weight of SWOT factors, a questionnaire based on the Likert scale was designed as 5 items and completed by 20 tourism specialists and experts in the level of Sistan and Baluchestan province. The results of the research show that aggressive strategies are the most suitable strategies for the development of tourism in the special economic zone of Mirjaveh. The SO1 strategy, with an average of 2.571, with emphasis on the development of ecotourism (natural tourism), has been proposed at the natural absorption centers as the best suggestion.

Introduction

Statement of the problem

Economists consider the tourism industry as the third most dynamic and growing economic phenomenon in the aftermath of the oil and automobile industry (Nazari, 2001:5). Tourism as an economic tool (Liu et al., 2006: 159; Chen, 2015:225) has a significant effect on strengthening the economic

foundations of societies (Kazemi, 2008:81). According to a vision document on the horizon of 1404 (2025), tourist attraction should be 1.5 percent and its income should grow by 2 percent and the admission of 20 million tourists with revenue of about 25 billion dollar, but according to available statistics, not only this part of the Fourth program has not been achieved, but it seems that the goals are ambitious in the 20-year perspective of Iran considering the conditions of tourism in this country (Gholizadeh, 2010:6). Therefore, the planning, guidance and development of Tourism industry is one of the most important sources of income and employment creation (Dwyer et al., 2004: 307), which also has great social, cultural and environmental impacts (Azam Et al., 2018:332) indicate as a necessary requirement, but it is possible to guide this process by identifying the capabilities and constraints in each region of the country. Sistan and Baluchestan province has considerable potential for attracting tourists due to its privileged tourism destinations such as Chabahar Sea, Taftan Volcanic Mountain, Sistan Chah-nime and old history and the unique cultural heritage that in general, it can have a significant impact on the economy of the region. However, evidence suggests that the tourism industry is not booming in the province. Especially existing programs haven't succeeded in attracting tourists interested in nature and environment.

In this regard, the city of Mirjaveh with the advantages of being borderline and having a 220km common border with Pakistan, the market border, having metal and non-metallic mines and good climate for breeding camel is considered as one of the strategic cities of Sistan and Baluchestan province. This issue especially with the advent of the special economic zone of Mirjaveh and its implementation in 1397 found significant importance (Sistan and Baluchestan Province governor general¹, 2018). According to this, the present research aims to answer this fundamental question:

What are the strengths, weaknesses, threats and opportunities of tourism development in the special economic zone of Mirjaveh? What are the best strategies to develop the tourism industry in this region?

Case Study:

Special Economic Zone of Mirjaveh

Materials and methods

The city of Mirjaveh is located east of Sistan and Baluchestan province and is bordered by Pakistan over 350 km. The city is connected to Pakistan from the northeast, east and south east, and from north and west with Zahedan city and south and southwest with Khash city. The city is located at 29 degrees 1 minute and 4.9 second's latitude and 61 degrees 27 minutes and 2.2 seconds longitude and 858 meters high above sea level. The distance of the center of Mirjaveh city to the country is about 1900 km. The city's total area is more than 6000 square kilometers and consists of three parts: Ladiz, Rig Malek and Central part, the

1- <https://www.sbportal.ir/>

city consists of seven districts, three of its rural districts in the Ladiz area (Ladiz, Junabad, Temin), two districts in the central part Suburbs and Andeh) and two villages located in the Rig Malek district (Rig Malek and Tahlab). The Ladiz section with an area of more than 3500 square kilometers is the widest part of this city (Sistan and Baluchestan province governor general, 2018).

This research is an applied development research in terms of its purpose. The method of analysis in this research consists of three main stages: First, to identify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats ahead of the tourism of the special economic zone of Mirjaveh interviewed with a number of experts in the tourism sector of the Cultural and Tourism Heritage Organization of Sistan and Baluchestan, tourists, owners of province travel agencies, university professors, and experts in this issue in the governorate general of Sistan and Baluchestan and the Zahedan Chamber of Commerce. Then, according to expert opinions and specialists opinions, each factor is weighted. Finally, by defining internal and external strategic factors that provide the basis for strategies compilation, extracted SWOT matrix and based on this, determined the quantitative strategic planning matrices, appropriate strategies and priorities for tourism development in the special area Economic Mirjaveh and the approaches derived from these analysis are presented as solving strategies. The statistical population of this study consists of 20 experts and specialists related to tourism in the province. It should be noted that the data of this research were collected during the period of Ordibehesht to Khodad month in 2018.

Discussion and Results

The purpose of this study was to identify internal factors (strengths and weaknesses), external factors (opportunities and threats) and develop the tourism development strategy of the special economic zone of Mirjaveh. Using internal factor evaluation matrix and external factors assessment matrix, list strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and threats to the development of tourism in the special economic zone of Mirjaveh and weighted by each of these factors. Then, using the SWOT matrix of strengths points cross with opportunities and threats, as well as weaknesses with opportunities and threats, the development strategies of tourism in the special economic zone of Mirjaveh were categorized into four categories of SO, ST, WO, and WT strategies respectively. In the next step, using the internal and external factors assessment matrix (IE) determined the competitive position of the tourism area, the output of this matrix, SO strategies category (use of strengths and opportunities) suggested for the development of tourism in the special economic zone of Mirjaveh. In the final stage, the attractiveness of the SO group strategies was identified by summarizing the quantitative strategic planning matrix (external factors-internal factors) (Table 1).

Conclusion

Due to the close proximity of the special economic zone of Mirjaveh to the water-rich rivers of Sianjan (the bitter water), the Ladiz and Gazu rivers, it is possible to develop mankind natural landscapes, which will have a great impact on attracting domestic and foreign tourists interested in nature. Also in the vicinity of the city of Mirjaveh and the special economic zone; there are natural and God given attractions of Temin and Ladiz that have a cool and temperate climate in the warm seasons. The emphasis is on the attraction of sports tourists and the possibility of holding sports events such as tennis, motor riding, swimming, basketball, biking, etc. in the cold seasons that cannot be held in other provinces and regions of the country, can be held in the special economic zone. The holding of these events will require the provision of infrastructure such as organizing and identifying natural attractions adjacent to the special area, hotel and restaurant construction, Special health areas and large stores for households shopping's. Therefore, it is suggested that the managers and policymakers of the special economic zone of Mirjaveh during the establishment of the special uses of the region will consider the important issue of nature and surrounding structures.

Key Words: Tourism Strategy, Mirjaveh SEZ, SWOT Matrix, Quantitative Strategic Planning Matrix (QSPM)