



University Of Isfahan

Urban - Regional Studies and Research Journal
4th Year – No. 16 - Spring 2013
ISSN (online): 2252-0848
ISSN (Print): 2008-5354
<http://uijs.ui.ac.ir/urs>

Environmental Assessment of Zanjan city from the perspective of sustainable development based on SWOT technique

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Received: May 08, 2011/ Accepted: February 12, 2012, 27-30 P

Extended abstract

1-Introduction

Environmental problems are one of the most fundamental problems in modern city and the result of conflict and confrontation with the natural environment. Recently, cities are confronted with numerous environmental problems and the incidence of environmental pollution, resource degradation and loss of natural spaces. Zanjan as one of the most important cities in the North West has many environmental issues such as incomplete sewage disposal system, physical development of the City and the degradation and loss of agricultural lands and gardens and etc.

The dominant approaches in current attempt are qualitative and quantitative and

the type of research is applied. The research methodology is descriptive analysis. In this article, the environmental structure of Zanjan is evaluated and analyzed using the SWOT technique in four stages. And in the end to resolve the existing problems, strategies are prioritized and suggested based on QSPM matrix.

2- Theoretical bases

Theory of sustainable urban development is the result of discussions of environmental advocates regarding environmental issues especially the urban environment which were presented following the concept of sustainable development to protect environmental resources.

- General environmental considerations in planning for sustainable urban development are as following:

- Linear flow of material (data) input to the urban system should be as close as possible to a cyclic process (recycling materials).

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- Serious and careful study and assessment of environmental impact of urban development plans.
- Defining thresholds and ecological capacity of the environment.
- Reduction of air pollution, noise, solid waste and wastewater. Maintaining healthy urban environment

3- Discussion

Analysis and evaluation of environmental features of Zanjan have been carried out based on the quality and quantity of their techniques using SWOT strategic planning in the context of internal environmental factors (strengths and weaknesses) and external environmental factors (threats and opportunities, mainly in the city of Zanjan) in four hierarchical stages.

1. Evaluation strategic factors of internal and external environmental situation in Zanjan;
2. Determine the type of strategy on the coordinate axis;
3. Codifying the four SWOT strategic solutions;
4. Prioritizing strategies using QSPM matrix.

4- Conclusion

Results of this study demonstrated that the total weighted score of the table of internal factors matrix is 2.64 and for external factors matrix is 2.36. The obtained number was lower than average; in fact, the strengths and opportunities are not used properly to overcome weaknesses and threats and weaknesses outweigh the strengths and the threats are dominant to opportunities. In addition, the type of resulted strategy is the variety (contingency) strategy.

5- Suggestions

Finally, in order to resolve existing problems, strategies based on the QSPM Priority matrix have been proposed.

- Improving the quality of urban environment through organizing and developing green spaces and forest parks in urban, regional, district and local scale in Zanjan.

- Creating fresh ecotourism spaces and attractive promenades in the peripheral margins of Zanjan's Chai River

- Providing a sustainable urban development model with an environmental approach and strategic partnership of Urban Management

- Establishing integrated management of urban environment and comprehensive environmental program in Zanjan

Key words: environment, sustainable development, SWOT technique, Zanjan city

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