



Research Paper

Application of analytical models in the formulation of balanced regional development strategies Case Study: Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad Province

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Abstract

Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad province, due to its valuable resources and geographic location, can be considered as one of the important industrial hubs, but it has not been able to properly traverse the development path and is recognized as a disadvantaged province. The main purpose of this study is identifying the strengths and weaknesses of Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad Province and Providing Development Strategic Plan. The study, in terms of purpose is an applied one and In terms of method it is kind of explanatory and on the basis of data nature is a qualitative research. The statistical population includes senior managers of the province from which 23 individuals were selected. Documentary and field methods have been used to data collection. Data analysis has been carried out by SWOT Model, Combining it with Analytic Hierarchy Process (AHP), results of investigating current situation in this province indicate that abundant oil, gas and mineral resources, appropriate geographical and communication location between regions as the most important strengths, and lack of factories, industrial and mineral workshops, severe weakness in necessary infrastructure of urban centers, and lack of paying attention to rural settlements are known as the weaknesses in this province. possibility to develop activities such as horticulture, animal husbandry and fish breeding are considered as the most important opportunity and staying away from country's economic network, lack of strong connection between settlements, lack of security context to investors have been recognized as the most important threats to this province. Based on these strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, suggested strategies for the development of the province.

Keywords: Strategic Planning, analytical models, regional development strategies, Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad Province.

Extended Abstract

Introduction:

Access to national and regional development is the great ideal of any nation, and realizing this, requires that the planners and policymakers within a detailed understanding of the state of the country and the region select the best models to determine the path of development (Pourmohammadi and Zali, 2009: 33). One of the important tasks of development planners is to assess and identify the development potentials of geographical areas, so that this knowledge can provide the basis for improvement and development of areas (Parizadi et al., 2012: 27). For this purpose, to understand the differences in the level of development of the regions, it is necessary to first examine the current status of each region and then accordingly regional planning can be done to reduce or eliminate the differences (Ismailzadeh and Partners, 2016: 84). Therefore, studying and identifying regional areas

and analyzing their capabilities and bottlenecks is of great importance in the process of regional development planning, and awareness of these opportunities and bottlenecks is nowadays a necessity for presenting development schemes and plans (Einali et al., 2016: 60).

Methodology:

This research is an applied research in terms of purpose, and based on the nature of the data, is a Mixed-method research. The statistical population includes senior managers of the province. The research is a survey research in terms of data gathering, which uses a combination of both documentary and field methods to collect the required data. In order to conduct this research, the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the province were identified and these factors were rated by experts including experts in the field of development and the most important strategies were obtained. Finally, according to these strategies, a strategic regional development plan for the province's development was presented. To analyze the data using SWOT analysis and its integration with the AHP model, the most important development potentials and constraints of the province were extracted and strategies were presented to remove development obstacles in the province.

Findings:

In the present study, using high-level plans such as Provincial Spatial Plan, provincial development document and according to experts in this field, the most important internal factors (strengths and weaknesses) and the most important external factors (opportunities and threats) presented in the tabular form. Then, considering the variety of issues using Strategic Analysis technique (SWOT), the conditions affecting the developments in the province and their effectiveness were investigated. Then the most important internal factors including strengths and weaknesses as well as the most important external factors affecting the status of Kohgiluyeh and Boyer Ahmad province in the format of opportunities and threats were identified and evaluated based on the AHP process. Since the questionnaire of this research was paired comparisons, it was not necessary to measure validity and reliability and the accuracy of the responses was calculated by calculating the adaptation rate. Each of the SWOT factors has a number of sub-criteria and in AHP method these sub-criteria are compared in pairs. After the data collection, Expert choice 11 software was used to perform the calculations. Accordingly, pairwise comparison of SWOT factors in AHP format was carried out to plan for development of Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad province

Conclusion:

Therefore, using SWOT analytical model results, the approaches and strategies for provincial development planning were divided into four aggressive, adaptive, contingent and defensive strategies as follows:

1. *SO Strategy: Aggressive-Action Strategies (Maximum-Maximum):* - Proper context for establishing constructive economic interactions with neighboring provinces, especially southern provinces, to create dynamics in the province's commercial sector.-Provincial industrial development in the field of oil and gas as the basic economy of the province.-Facilitating the exploitation of mines in the province taking into account environmental principles and sustainable development and avoiding crude sales and enhancing the value added of the mining sector with the development of mineral processing industries.-Facilitating and serious efforts to accelerate the development of the province's agricultural sector and increase hydro-electric power generation through adequate annual rainfall.
2. *WO strategy, adaptive strategy, (minimum - maximum):* - Establishment of industrial and mining factories and workshops and development of oil and gas related activities in the province with regard to the capability and availability of mineral and industrial resources in the province and the possibility Development of the province in the field of oil and gas.-Strengthen and properly organize communication networks, both by land, air and rail, in the province, and establish strong links with ports in the south of the country to promote economic and commercial activities at national and transnational levels.-Special attention to rural areas of the province with emphasis on growth and development of activities such as

gardening, beekeeping, animal husbandry, aquaculture and establishment and promotion of infrastructure and superior services in urban centers of the province with the aim of attracting surplus rural population and Preventing migration from the villages of this province to the prosperous provinces in the country.

3. *ST Strategy, Contingency Strategy (Maximum - Minimum):* - Establish strong linkages between provincial settlements and strengthen transnational communication and economic links with appropriate location across provinces. -Improve the rational and psycho-administrative structure and establish industrial organizations and settlements to secure and facilitate investment, especially in the oil and gas industries. - Optimal water engineering and proper planning to strengthen water resources management. - Improving the level of up-to-date technologies in different areas of the province's development, especially the mining sector, to enhance the province's competitiveness in national and transnational areas.
4. *WT Strategy, Defense and action Strategy, (Minimum - Minimum):* - Strengthen transport lines, especially rail and air, and enhance the technology level in the province to form strong links between settlements and service centers at the provincial and country level. Serious efforts to establish major conversion industries with the aim of enhancing the dynamics of economic activity and the provincial role-playing in the national economy by providing appropriate plan to facilitate the bureaucracies governing investment and creating a safe environment for the investor. Providing superior services in the main cities of the province as a supportive and influencing population in the urban and rural centers of the province and the management of the province and the future prospects of water resources with the aim of its proper utilization, especially for the more dynamic agricultural activities in the rural settlements.

