

Strategic Spatial Planning of Small Size Towns using Meta-SWOT Model (Case Study: Taft City, Yazd Province)

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Received: 2 January 2016 Accepted: 9 March 2016

Expanded Abstract

Introduction

Attempts to stabilize small and medium-size cities involve appropriate strategic planning. A range of local challenges hampers the efforts to achieve such stabilization processes in medium and small sized towns. These challenges are widely known. They have been explored in many case studies. Though the challenges differ from town to town, a few generalizations can be made, independent of the shortcomings related to geographic location, environmental circumstances and local economic history, or present and past politico-administrative conditions. Strategic planning as a useful tool for management is used to help an organization to better conduct works and ensure that our organization is acting along with our purposes. Hence, one of the most common models of strategic planning for urban development is SWOT model. However, nowadays, experts after many years of using this model concluded that SWOT is based on intellectual inspiration and that it was non-systematic. On the other hand, it avoided quantification and do not have predictive power.

Methodology

This research with the aim of strategic development of Taft city, for the first time attempts to introduce strategic model of Meta SWOT in urban and regional studies. To do this, we have used descriptive and analytical approach and also documentary and survey and field methods for data collection and analysis of data. Meta-SWOT model is used to provide strategy.

The location of this research is the town of Taft in Yazd province. Taft is located in a valley bounded by mountains on three sides. The area of this town is about 15 square kilometers, and most of the spaces in that are occupied by old neighborhoods and gardens. Generally, the town is formed by two sections, the northern part and the southern part that are named 'Garmsir' (i.e. hot area) and 'Sardsir' (i.e. cold area), respectively. The current town has 24 large and small neighborhoods. The people of the town tended toward Zoroastrianism before the arrival of Islam in Iran, but today most of the people are Muslims. Nevertheless, Zoroastrians are seen in some sporadic parts of the town (AFGO, 2002).

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Results and Discussion

According to the results of this research, attention of the authorities to development, particularly in the distribution of funds and the elimination of sanctions and inflation is a priority issue. It is necessary to develop an integrated planning for many problems such as a drought, water crisis, and intensified migration. This requires the integration of planning. The correct use of the potential of the agricultural sector involves establishment of factories processing agricultural products, encouragement of farmers to use modern methods of agriculture and irrigation. These factors can be instrumental in economic dynamism of Taft.

Conclusion

As it was argued in this research, the findings indicated that urban development is necessary for the residents of the area. It can be concluded that:

- distribution of authority and responsibility to Taft development funding or removing the sanctions and inflation is a priority issue. Development of city planning is essential because sanction problems such as drought destroys gardens, water crisis, and intensified migration require consistency in planning.
- Correct use of the potential of the agricultural sector are including the establishment of factories for processing agricultural products, encouragement of farmers to use modern methods of agriculture and irrigation. This factor can be successful in economic dynamism in Taft.
- Use of public administrators and local authorities is required to encourage participation and collaboration.
- In both urban and economic planning, housing is important and should be coordinated with a planned housing problems in the city. The high volatility of future housing can be prevented.

Keywords: Meta-SWOT, small and medium size cities, strategic spatial planning, Taft City, Yazd Province.

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