

An Analysis of the National Place of the Mashhad City on the Socio-Economic Development Based on the City- Competitive Brand on the Horizon of 2024

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Abstract

Today, one of the most important parameters affecting the economic, social, urban development is competition, and competitiveness issue in the introduction and illustration of customer-friendly branding in global, national, and regional arenas. During this process, one of the challenges of urban management to increase efficiency by urban brand building is regarded as a solution to the urban development process. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to evaluate the national status of Mashhad in the field of socio-economic development based on urban-competitiveness brand by the year 2024 using the Meta-SWOT technique. The research method is descriptive-analytical and the purpose is applied. Data and information are collected through library studies, (the development document of Mashhad) and surveys. The statistical population is consisted of 40 experts and researchers related to the research topic. The results show that the location of the city of Mashhad in the competitive map from the point of view of the economic development parameter (Y-axis) with a score of 3.05 from 5 possible points in 2024 among its rivals is after Tehran, which with a score of 3/90 is in the highest position. Also, in the context of the social development parameter (Chart X), the city of Mashhad in the target year with a score of 2.90 out of

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the 5 possible points would have a lower position than Tehran with a score of 4.45, and Shiraz and Isfahan with the common score of 3.45. The most important macroeconomic variables affecting socio-economic development of Mashhad with respect to its competitive brand include international sanctions, rulers, and urban management in Mashhad, tensions between Iran and some Islamic countries of the region, and the existence of Atabat Aliat in neighboring countries (Iraq, Syria).

Introduction

Development can be considered as a political, social and economic process that results from living standards and improves the standard of living (Meshkini & Muazez Brabadi, 2017: 122). It is necessary to carry out a comprehensive assessment of the state of the parameters affecting economic, social and environmental development to formulate a scientific and rational infrastructure for development policy, (Yu et al. 2010: 1218). Indeed, in the modern era, all countries and metropolises try to gain the most profit and profit-making in this compactness and proximity than their other competitors. (Liu & Sun, 2015: 275). As Larry Wright of 1995 has said, the future war of cities will be marketing for production and competitive competition for introducing top-notch urban brands (Pfefferkon, 2005:11). Now considering these definitions, one of the most important parameters influencing the economic and social development of countries is competition and the competitiveness of brands in the global arena. Branding and improving the image of a city is an essential and vital strategy for participating in intergovernmental and regional competition areas in the new global economic equations (Changelvaei & Saleh Kashani, 2017: 1) because urban competitiveness is considered as the ability of urban economics to grow continuously or maintain a standard of living (Rabieh & Khajui, 35: 2014). The metropolis of Mashhad has the potential to compete with its national and regional rivals in various sectors due to its ability and potential in various fields including tourism, as the most important urban brand by better illustrating this valuable city brand to excellence position to achieve an impact on socio-economic development at the national level.

Research method

The method of research is descriptive-analytical, and the purpose is practical. Data collection and research data have been carried out in two phases. Field information was collected through questionnaires and interviews with 40 experts and specialists in related organizations and universities. Among the total of 40 questionnaires, 20 were distributed to researchers and academics, and 20 to experts of related organizations (municipalities, governorate) in Mashhad and other rival cities.

Results

Based on the competitive map, the status of the city of Mashhad in terms of the economic development parameter is in a tight position rather than some rival cities in the prospective year of 2026. After Tehran, having a point of 3.90, the city of Mashhad has the highest position with a point of 3.05 out of 5 possible points in 2026 among its rivals based on the economic development parameter (Y-axis). In the context of the next parameter, namely, social development (Chart X), as it is known, the city of Mashhad in the target year with a point of 2.90 out of 5 possible points has a lower position than Tehran with a point of 4.54, Shiraz and Isfahan, with a common point of 3.45. Also, according to the findings, among the macro variables affecting socio-economic development of Mashhad based on its urban branding, the tensions and issues that have arisen between Iran and some Islamic countries of the region, including Saudi Arabia, the existence of the holy shrines in the neighboring countries of Iraq and Syria, the rulers of Mashhad and international sanctions have the most effect.

Conclusion

It is necessary that the metropolis of Mashhad pay attention to a number of macro variables that have a strong and sometimes unpredictable effect on its success or failure to benefit from the brand of its city and subsequently socio-economic development. The tensions and issues that have arisen between Iran and some Islamic countries of the region, such as Saudi Arabia, the presence of the holy shrines in the neighboring countries of Iraq and Syria, the rulers of Mashhad and international sanctions have the highest impact on the success of the competitive brand in Mashhad and socio-economic development. Therefore, it is imperative that the planners of Mashhad, with coherent planning, try to manage these issues in cooperation with national management in the country. Is it not that after a political tension between Iran and Saudi Arabia, the number of 700 thousand pilgrims entering the city of Mashhad in the Gulf states has declined annually, and the same has led to many consequences, including the collapse of the business improvement under these severe unemployment conditions in Iran and Mashhad? Also, other target markets, including Muslims in Iraq, Turkey, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Central Asia, Azerbaijan, and even India, can be scheduled.

Keywords: Socio-economic development, Urban branding, Competitiveness, Meta-SWOT, City of Mashhad

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