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**A Survey on Capacities and Problems for Sustainable Development of Mountainous  
Valleys Using the SWOT Model  
Case study: Kardeh Valley in the North of Mashhad City**

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**Introduction**

After several decades of struggle for development of rural districts and protection of water and soil of these regions, Unfortunately, The Poverty and jobless and damages to natural resources is further on progress in many countries, particularly rural regions of the developing countries. The reason for this situation is that ,the index for poverty reduction, jobless and imbalance in development definition has not been considered for three decades (1950-1980) and the development has been defined only as a per person income . The surveys and different experiences in the far distance of the world, particularly in developing countries, shows that the reduction in poverty, reduction in jobless and sustainable utilization of natural resources in rural environment as well as a decrease in distance between poor's and wealthy people could not be achieved successfully only by looking to agricultural problems. But a structural looking to residents in villages and consideration of all residents' problems if accompanied with a progress in non – agricultural business and income creation, using all rural capability in the region, could be a good solution for rural problems. Therefore ,in recent decades, the policies of the countries toward the different economic activities particularly in development of rural tourism as generation of a new income has been recommended to resist against the rural poverty and rural jobless. Attention to non agricultural activities in rural environment accompanied by social– economic improvement in rural families (those with no or less property and water) will bring a reduction in environmental hazards of the rural districts and also will reduce the urban problems of suburbs and environmental pollution.

Now days, the new participatory look is the central column of sustainable development .Participatory management is a people satisfactory method and includes the role of local societies in sustainable development as a determinant factor. Participation in decision making, share in responsibility and having the authority, could be the best particularity and a symbol of real participation. Participation in public affairs will familiarize the most of people with possibilities and particularly with limitations

exist around them. They will learn to act not only as an individual but also as a social group so that the potential of people power in different levels could be appeared. Using the managers and the local superior groups to determine the most appropriate strategies for development is the correct decision. Although it has not the benefits of horizontal participation but it is close to Ozalid Strategy and it has been useful and suitable method in many regions particularly in rural regions of developing countries. Therefore, to make the activities of the rural societies sustainable, the present research is to make known the various capacities of mountainous valleys for creation of variation in job occupation and enhance the income based on the views of local authorities and using SOWT model. To achieve the results and goals of the research, two important questions should be answered:

- 1- Considering the natural conditions of the in villages of Kardeh valley, What are the strength points, the weak points, opportunities and threats in this region ?
- 2- To reduce the existing problems and challenges in this region particularly in natural resources, which kind of guidelines and strategies are there with consideration of the weak points and opportunities?

### **The Method of Investigation**

This investigation has been done through field study and with a descriptive-analytic method using SWOT model. In the field study, local managers questioners (including village governor and members of Islamic council in the study area) with a total number of 45 persons were used. The study and determination of weak points, strength points, opportunities and threats were undertaken in two steps in the study area. The collected data were classified and totalized and based on totalized data and using SWOT model of David, the appropriate strategies were compiled and presented.

### **Discussion and Results**

#### **The external factors evaluation Matrix**

The external evaluation matrix is the result of strategic study of external factors. In matrix, the opportunities and threats of external environment are collected and evaluated. If the amounts of total external factors were between 1 to 2.5, the result would show the treat and if between 2.5 to 4 it determines the existing of opportunities. So, the number 2.18 in the matrix table of external factors evaluation shows that a relative threat in the area exists.

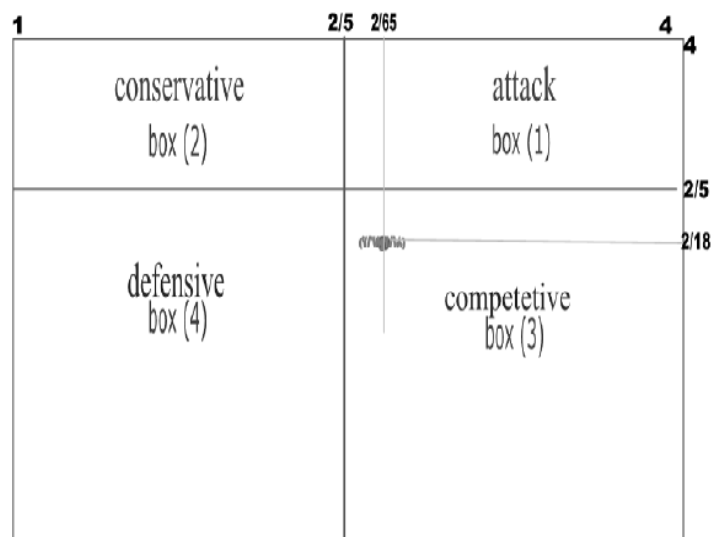
#### **Internal factors evaluation matrix**

The internal factors evaluation matrix is the result of strategic study of internal factors. This matrix writes and evaluates the main strength points and weak points. if the amounts of final internal evaluation of internal factors were between 1 to 2.5, this indicate the weakness and if the result shows number 2.5 to number 4 that means the strength . So the number 2.65 in the internal factors evaluation means that a relative strength exists in the study area.

#### **The written strategies:**

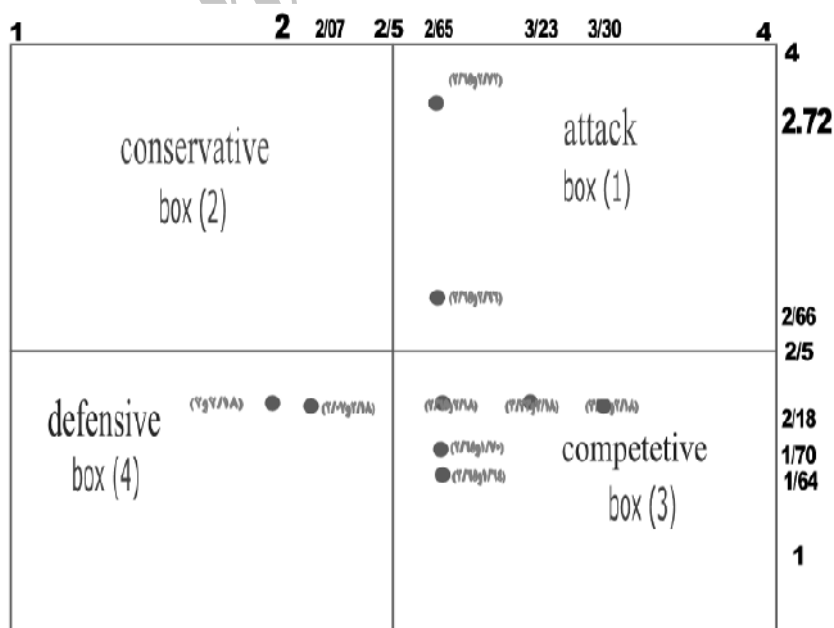
Considering the extracted data from questioners, the internal and external factors evaluation matrix was written and by using the SWOT analysis matrix, the strategies were written too. At the end, using the 4 boxes matrix of internal and external factors (IE), the appropriate strategies were selected from presented strategies and then the result was proposed.

**The final mark for internal factor evaluation(IFE)**



As it is shown in matrix of external factors, variation in job occupation considering the limited source for water will come in box (3) or competition box. This point shows that diversify in occupation with consideration of water limitation has a good situation but from the point of external factors it has not a good situation.

**The final mark for internal factor evaluation(IFE)**



As it is shown in the table, the points resulted from Minimum and Maximum of internal and external standard deviation around the points (2.65, 2.18) shows that the concentration of points are in box (3) and dispersion of points are in boxes of (1) and (4). This means that, in addition of competition strategies, the attack and defending strategies should be compiled and be executed too.

### Conclusion

The result of the present investigation, based on the views of local managers, gives us a new guideline in all-inclusive development with consideration the capabilities and the problems of space and location in the mountainous valleys in the suburbs of towns.

Based on the investigation results, the area under investigation has appropriate conditions from the points of internal factors. But the area has not a good condition from the points of external factors. therefore, considering the results achieved from the four boxes matrix of internal and external factors and concentration of mean points in box number three (competition) and dispersion of points in boxes No.1 (Attack) and No.4 (conservative action), the competitive strategies and diversification in job occupation, considering the limitation in water resources as the first priority and the conservative action and defending as later priority, should be confirmed.

According to the present investigation results, the following strategies as appropriate strategies are presented on the priority importance:

- 1- Creation of jobs in the form of productive – service cooperatives to reduce the pressure on water and soil resources
- 2- To improve the water utilization method in agricultural sector
- 3- The promotion and strengthening the mechanism of participatory management with the priority in using the skilled and educated local human power.
- 4- To create and develop the multipurpose people companies.
- 5- Improvement and approving the laws and the pertinent regulation in water resources management.
- 6- Creation and strengthening the watershed management to protect the natural resources.
- 7- Development and promotion the required skills in the optimum utilization of resources through organization of local and regional training workshops.
- 8- Creation and development the changeable industries and packaging to enhance the increased value of agricultural and husbandry products.
- 9- Creation and development of new methods in utilization of soil and water resources.

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