Strategic Planning for Tourism Development by SWOT Method (Case Study: Shiraz City)

Received: April 8, 2011/ Accepted: November 13, 2011, 29-32 P

1- Introduction

Nowadays, tourism as a dynamic industry and unique characteristics includes an important part of economic activities and production in the developed and developing countries. This industry covers all the phenomena and relationships resulting from the interaction of tourists, suppliers and vendors of tourism products, governments and host communities, in the process of attracting and welcoming of tourists. Results and achievements of the tourism industry involve considerable results such as aspects of employment and its impact on development and economic-social functions mentioned in a region or country. For the city of Shiraz that has numerous cultural attractions and historical and natural potential, development of tourism industry can be very helpful.

2- Methodology

The methodology of this research was based on descriptive-analytical methods. For collecting information and data required, documentation and field studies such as interviews and using these data, the attractions, facilities, services and tourism situation in region has been investigated. Then, the SWOT analysis matrix was used for data analysis and presentation of tourism development strategies in the Shiraz city.

3- Discussion

The Shiraz city due to good weather and having historical and unique civilization sites is one of tourism centers in national and international levels. These
city due to Persepolis neighborhood, each year hosts a large number of domestic and foreign tourists. Moreover, Shiraz has valuable natural potential. But so far, this city failed to their real position in tourism field, especially in terms of attracting tourists and the number of tourists to achieve stability coefficient. In this paper, SWOT strategic planning process has been used for analyzing the functioning of tourism in Shiraz. A four-stage process of strategic planning including; first, external (opportunities and threats) and internal (strengths and weaknesses) factors evaluation matrix; second, analysis of strategic factors; third, external and internal matrix and matrix of quantitative strategic planning and finally, appropriate strategies for development of tourism in the city of Shiraz, has designed and presented. Moreover, after consideration of relevant information, the major external and internal factors were identified in the matrix were evaluated. Number of external factors determined to be 19. From this amount, 9 factors cause tourism opportunities of Shiraz and 10 threatened it. Firstly, the factors that led to the opportunity and then those that threaten the Shiraz tourism sector are located in the matrix. Number of domestic factors also determined to be 22 including the strengths and weaknesses of tourism in Shiraz. So that, firstly 11 strength factors and then 11 weakness factors of tourism are placed in the matrix, then using the expert viewpoints and comments of those interviewed, individual affecting factors were heightened. Finally, by adjusting the strategic planning and internal and external factors that are the base in the strategies planning, the SWOT matrix was extracted and accordingly, quantitative strategic planning, appropriate strategies and priorities matrices of tourism development are identified.

4- Conclusion

In the present study, using strategic planning process, the abilities and functions of tourism and develop these functions, the action and determine strategies to provide practical solutions for Shiraz tourism development. In this process, with assessment capabilities and opportunities of Shiraz tourism, findings indicate that tourism planning strategies acceptable in this city, conservative strategies would be planned in first priority and second priority planning aggressive strategies. Thus, first WO primary strategies and then SO strategies were selected in the SWOT matrix priorities. In fact WO2 conservative strategy with 6.16 scores represents the best strategy on tourism development will be considered in Shiraz. To achieve this, the strategy to familiarize hotels and travel agencies managers with new methods of advertising and marketing of tourism, increase awareness of tourism interested in the unique attractions of Shiraz city and surrounding areas. Consequently increase the number of tourists and increase tourists to stay in the city is practical. However SO1 invasive strategy with 7.3 scores is considered as the most effective strategy for the conservative strategy. To achieve goals and enjoying the tourist development strategy, strengthening and increasing the amount of facilities and services offered
alongside the importance of tourism attractions and resources in national and international levels, with the aim of attracting more tourists, especially the satisfaction of foreign tourists in order to introduce position of historic -civilization sites of Shiraz to other countries are recommended with the aim of attracting even more foreign tourists and create sustainable employment and income on the other hand.

**Keywords**: strategic planning; tourism development; SWOT; city of Shiraz.

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