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ISSN (2790-976X)

## The Ecotourism Potential Evaluation of the Village of Karvandar Using SWOT Model

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**Received Date: 27-Apr-2022 Accepted Date: 10-June-2022 Published Date: 30-June-2022**

### Abstract

*Today, the industry of tourism, especially ecotourism has a significant role in regional development as a new approach for the development and coexistence of man and society for economic efficiency. The village of Karvandar that is located at the transit road of Chabahar to Melk and Khash to Iranshahar has the advantage of ecotourism due to climatic and weather conditions and natural and cultural attractions and Virgin and beautiful sceneries. The goal of this research is the ecotourism potential evaluation of the village of Karvandar by using swot model. According to the results of this study and by using the SWOT model, aggressive strategy in tourism planning is one of the best strategies and solutions to optimize the current situation and organizing ecotourism in the region. This region can be effective in tourist attraction and tourism growth in Sistan and Baluchestan if the weaknesses be removed.*

**Keywords:** Tourism industry, Ecotourism, Village of Karvandar, SWOT model

### Introduction

Economic development in any country requires investments in various economic sectors and its activities basically and without investment in infrastructure projects, the expansion of employment, production and the economic prosperity cannot be expected. To fulfill this important, many countries have a strong tendency to attract foreign capital today (Shakeri and Salimi, 2006:1).

Nowadays at the beginning of the twenty-first century, tourism has been become one of the most lucrative industries in the world and there is an intense competition among countries to attract more tourists and industrial and tourism industry with dynamic and unique features has allocated an important part of economic and productive activities of developed and developing countries (umwto, 2007).

Today the phenomena of tourism are considered to a valuable source of revenue for many countries and hence more investment must be done in this sector for its improvement (Tremblay, 2006, 34). Tourism can be an alternative source of income especially when other sectors a falling short in term of revenue generation (Papoli Yazdiand Saghaei, 2007, 82).

Tourism have different types and forms depending on different environmental conditions (Cater, 2002, 43). Geomorphologic attractions, climate, mineral springs, vegetation and animal species associated with underground corridors with water flow or no flow of water in economic planning studies and tourism, are the most important factors.

Geomorphologic attractions, climate, hot mineral springs, vegetation, different animal and bird species, rivers and underground water reservoirs are all major factors effecting tourism and plays a vital role in tourist attraction (Fennel, 1998, 315).

Rural tourism is a valuable source of employment and income and can be an important tool for social, economic development of rural communities and it is associated with agricultural policy in many countries and it is often a means to protect the rural environment and culture and can have a major role in the development and maintenance of the village.

So tourism has been changed into an economic activity in the present age and it is going to be considered as the first pioneer industry in global economy. The importance of tourism is so remarkable that economists call it as an invisible export.

There are many places and cities in the city of Khash and it has a great potential to attract domestic and foreign tourists due to the specific climate, historical - cultural and natural conditions and other features. In this regard, the village of Karvandar that is located at the transit road of Chabahar to Melk and is also located at the route of all passengers traveling from the North and North East of the country and the central provinces to Chabahar so, this village can have an important role as a place for rest of tourists between the ways of the destinations.

Due to the fact that the industry of tourism is now one of the most important sources of income and employment, so this region can play an important role in this regard.

### **Background research**

Williams (1975), consider rural areas as quality tourist destinations places which lacks in urban lifestyle.

According to Katz and Krakby (1991), rural tourism has major influence on the development of rural communities.

Brouder et al (2013), conducted a research in relation to tourism development in the northern region of Sweden and concludes that similar results can naturally generalized to other small surrounding communities that has ecotourism. It also states that tourism is developing in almost all regions of the world considerably in Europe.

Finally he came to conclusion that geographical economic assessment such as: ecological, cultural, economic and local factors are important to understand evolution of tourism in rural peripheral areas (Lanza, et al, 2005).

Dann, (1996) emphasizes that sustainable development of rural tourism requires strategic plans that includes major steps such as facilitation, involvement and effective participation, development and deployment, cohesion and stability, as well as functional rehabilitation are necessary.

### **The study area**

The village of Karvandar is located at southwest of the city of Khash in Sistan and Baluchestan province and it is also located at a distance of 50 km from the road of Khash to Iranshahr near the Karvandar River. For this reason this region is like plains and is surrounded by mountains and it has a beautiful landscape. The palm groves and wheat, barley, rice fields and orchards located near it and Karvandar River have given a beautiful landscape to the region.

### **Research Methodology**

In order to achieve the objectives of the research, in this paper, a combination of methods (survey and descriptive and analytical methods) have been used. According to the information available, tourism attractions, facilities and services and its situation and its effects on the development of community has been

studied at this stage and then in the later stages of research, Swot analysis method has been used to analyze the information and to provide rural tourism development strategy.

**Discussion and Conclusion**

For presenting of Strategies and development policies for rural areas through tourism, it will be inevitable to know four factors of (swot) to eliminate weaknesses, threats, and to improve strengths and opportunities.

Table (1): SWOT matrix of main factors affecting rural tourism in the studied region

Interior	Exterior
<p>Strengths (S)</p> <p>S1 = beautiful and unique landscape with ....</p> <p>S2 = existence of heights and the surrounding mountains for mountain climbing</p> <p>S3 = sports and recreational attractions</p> <p>S4 = easy and convenient access to the area</p> <p>S5 = being nearby to the transit road of Chabahar to Melk</p> <p>S6 = the existence of Karvandr and Golafshan and Golafshan Pirgol dam</p> <p>S7 = the existence of local customs and culture</p> <p>S8 = having a calm environment without noise</p> <p>S9 = the existence of an appropriate market for sale</p>	<p>Opportunities (O)</p> <p>O1 = increasing motivation for travel and recreation</p> <p>O2= the existence of the transit road of Chabahar – Milk</p> <p>O3 = increasing population of the village with Planning and Investment</p> <p>O4 = increasing of the incentives of private sector for investment</p> <p>O5=There are specialists and experienced manpower</p> <p>O6= the existence of governmental and nongovernmental organizations</p> <p>O7 = failure to provide appropriate services and facilities</p>
<p>Weaknesses (W)</p> <p>W1 = unsuitable facilities and accommodation equipments</p> <p>W2 = poor health facilities and services</p> <p>W3 = unwillingness of people to invest</p> <p>W4 = unsuitable facilities and recreational equipment</p> <p>W5 = lack of trained specialists</p> <p>W6= poor distribution of tourists in different seasons</p> <p>W7 = Unfavorable environmental infrastructure</p> <p>W8 = lack of planning and investment</p> <p>W9 = contradiction between tourists' culture and people</p> <p>W10 = lack of knowledge and lack of awareness of villagers</p> <p>W11 = tendency of most people to use their own farms and gardens</p>	<p>Threats (T)</p> <p>T1=enhancing of facilities and services in recreational areas</p> <p>T2=not to provide facilities and licenses by the state</p> <p>T3=increasing willingness and motivation for tourists to travel</p> <p>T4=density of over-population and crowding</p> <p>T5=pollution of water resources, soil and climate of this area</p> <p>T6= increasing social offenses with the arrival of tourists</p> <p>T7=the loss of trees and vegetation cover and old monuments</p> <p>T8=destruction of agricultural land and rural areas</p> <p>T9=the loss of local traditions, such as language, culture, etc</p>

Source: research results

**Analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threat:**

As it has been shown in table, 9 interior strengths against 11 interior weaknesses and 7 exterior opportunities against 11 exterior threats have been identified and investigated in the studied rural areas. This means that from total of 16 strengths and opportunities as advantages and 20 weaknesses and threats as limitations and constraints facing rural areas of the region can be identified to develop tourism. So reviewing and providing appropriate policies is necessary to eliminate the weaknesses and threats by using the strengths and opportunities.

Now, each of the weaknesses, strengths, opportunities and threats from the opinions of three participants (authorities, people and tourists) will be analyzed and will be studied in this research.

Table (2): Matrix ranking and priorities SWOT analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats

(in terms of people, officials and tourists)

Tourists				Authorities				People				SWOT analysis
Rank	Relative weight	Average weight	Total weight	Rank	Relative weight	Average weight	Total weight	Rank	Relative weight	Average weight	Total weight	Strengths (S)
1	0.47	4.32	580	1	0.47	4.22	106	1	0.46	4.13	644	S1
4	0.41	3.67	506	2	0.45	4.08	102	4	0.43	3.86	564	S2
5	0.41	3.65	504	8	0.31	2.81	89	4	0.41	3.69	568	S3
6	0.40	3.75	429	7	0.32	2.91	67	6	0.40	3.56	549	S4
3	0.45	4.07	561	4	0.45	4.04	101	2	0.45	4.8	620	S5
2	0.46	4.12	569	2	0.47	4.32	102	7	0.39	3.48	547	S6
9	0.27	2.47	341	9	0.30	2.68	89	8	0.36	3.21	484	S7
7	0.40	3.62	500	5	0.40	3.37	82	5	0.41	3.66	563	S8
8	0.35	2.69	368	6	0.35	3.13	75	9	0.29	2.64	406	S9
Tourists				Authorities				People				SWOT analysis
Rank	Relative weight	Average weight	Total weight	Rank	Relative weight	Average weight	Total weight	Rank	Relative weight	Average weight	Total weight	Weaknesses (W)
1	0.38	4.17	575	2	0.35	4.09	94	1	0.36	3.92	607	W1
3	0.32	3.48	480	7	0.26	2.88	72	5	0.32	3.35	550	W2
9	0.29	3.21	423	8	0.25	2.71	65	11	0.27	2.99	463	W3
6	0.31	3.42	472	4	0.27	2.96	68	3	0.33	3.61	538	W4
8	0.30	3.23	459	11	0.18	1.92	48	9	0.30	3.32	518	W5
5	0.31	3.40	469	3	0.37	4.04	97	3	0.34	3.70	574	W6
4	0.32	3.49	482	9	0.23	2.50	60	4	0.32	3.57	539	W7
2	0.33	3.58	494	6	0.26	2.88	72	6	0.32	3.68	570	W8
11	0.26	2.91	402	5	0.27	2.95	65	10	0.28	3.04	468	W9
10	0.29	3.19	440	10	0.20	2.02	55	8	0.31	3.38	530	W10
7	0.31	3.41	470	1	0.38	4.16	104	7	0.32	3.30	525	W11
Tourists				Authorities				People				SWOT analysis
Rank	Relative weight	Average weight	Total weight	Rank	Relative weight	Average weight	Total weight	Rank	Relative weight	Average weight	Total weight	Opportunities (O)
2	0.55	3.82	527	1	0.63	4.40	110	2	0.54	3.51	595	O1
1	0.55	3.86	532	3	0.50	3.48	87	1	0.55	3.86	599	O2
6	0.41	2.89	399	4	0.45	3.16	79	5	0.45	3.17	485	O3
3	0.53	3.68	508	2	0.52	3.64	91	4	0.52	3.61	559	O4
5	0.42	2.92	403	5	0.43	3.04	76	3	0.54	3.76	586	O5
4	0.51	3.54	489	6	0.39	3.75	68	7	0.37	3.56	400	O6
7	0.40	2.78	389	7	0.39	3.72	66	6	0.43	3.04	471	O7
Tourists				Authorities				People				SWOT analysis
Rank	Relative weight	Average weight	Total weight	Rank	Relative weight	Average weight	Total weight	Rank	Relative weight	Average weight	Total weight	Strengths (S)
2	0.41	3.57	492	5	0.40	3.56	89	6	0.36	3.23	498	T1
3	0.40	3.56	491	6	0.39	3.052	88	9	0.28	2.56	399	T2
1	0.41	3.67	507	9	0.34	3.08	77	7	0.29	2.62	408	T3
5	0.39	3.48	480	7	0.39	3.54	85	3	0.40	3.60	543	T4
4	0.40	3.56	491	3	0.45	3.05	89	4	0.40	3.61	552	T5
6	0.37	3.30	456	8	0.37	3.30	74	5	0.38	3.41	516	T6
9	0.30	2.71	474	1	0.49	4.43	102	2	0.41	3.69	568	T7
7	0.37	3.33	459	2	0.47	4.22	97	1	0.43	3.81	586	T8
8	0.34	3.09	426	4	0.44	3.96	95	8	0.29	2.60	405	T9

Source: research results

**Providing rural tourism development strategies and solutions:**

**Table (3): competitive- aggressive strategy (so)**

- 1.Emphasis on the development of natural tourism and eco-tourism
- 2.Efficient and targeted use of the incentive among urbanites in order to make effective use of natural and human attractions of the village of Karvandar
- 3.Identification and development of attractions and facilities to compete with other competing regions
- 4.Using special forces in order to create a the cooperative forms of people
- 5.Coordination between institutions and related sectors to integrate tourism functions
- 6.The main focus for the use of rural natural and no fees attractions and tourist activities to create employment and income

Source: research results

**Table (4): Diversification Strategies (ST)**

1. Diversification of activities, tourism facilities and services in order to use a wide range of people and also to satisfy tourists
2. Development of agricultural tourism in order to take advantage of landscapes, gardens and green spaces to gain income and to create employment
3. Diversification of advertising programs to introduce tourist attractions and products of this villages and tourist attraction
4. determining of the optimal capacity of population density in recreational centers in the studied village

Source: research results

**Table (5): Review Strategies (WO)**

1. Review how government plan and support the rural tourist areas
2. Reviewing of distribution tourism facilities and services and other services in the village
3. Reviewing of rural territorial laws and regulations (land, agricultural and residential) in order to exploit them to the public and to prevent exchanging and price increase of land
4. Reviewing of the type and usage of public participation in the village to develop the facilities of the village and the assignment of jobs to the local people

Source: research results

**Table (6): defensive strategies (WT)**

1. Holding seminars and conferences (Development of investment in rural tourism) by the village council and other institutions and relevant authorities and invite different investors
2. Encouraging people to participate in the development and equipping of rural infrastructure, tourist facilities and equipment by the support of government
3. Educate and inform people on how to deal with tourists, as well as educating tourists about the culture, customs and rituals, and local laws and traditional
4. Codifying of special legislation for efficient use of tourism attractions, products and services of village for tourists to prevent the destruction and loss of these attractions

Source: research results

**Conclusion and Suggestions**

The results of the analysis of capability survey of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of Karvandar region for tourism development from the perspective of people, officials, and tourists shows that Karvandar region with beautiful and unique landscapes, historical and cultural characteristics and Karvandr river, Karvandr waterfall, Karvandr and Golfshanpirgol dam and being near the transit road of Chabahar to Melk and having rice fields and good weather has necessary requirements for the development of tourism. The participation and cooperation of the government and the private sector for investment is necessary for the promotion of tourist attraction in the region and some strategies will be suggested for the development of tourism in the region which includes:

1. Emphasis on natural and indigenous tourism development because of the relative merits to develop this type of tourism in the study village.
2. Identifying and taking advantage of the attractions, products and other tourism relative merits in the region.
3. Using the expertise and experienced forces to create a cooperative association of public and also promote tourism education through various meetings and sessions with people.

4. Coordination between the different institutions and sectors related to the integration of rural tourism functions by coordinating meetings and implementing management arrangements with government and non-governmental agencies, public and entrepreneurs.
5. Preparing the groundwork and utilization of the support of private sector to invest in tourism industry in the Krvandar region.
6. The main focus of tourist activities on utilization of the available resources and tourist attractions without tourism use such as Karvandri river, gardens, rice fields, mountains, aqueducts, waterfalls and green space around the Karvandri river.
7. Development of agricultural tourism in order to take advantage of landscapes, gardens and green spaces to gain income and to create employment and also prevent the destruction of crops and vegetation.
8. Providing the security of tourist sites in Karvandri to avoid social violations and other violations
9. Diversification of activities, tourism facilities and services in order to use a wide range of people and also to satisfy tourists.
10. Diversification of advertising programs to introduce natural and human attractions, cultural and architecture characteristics and rural customs.
11. Reviewing of rural territorial laws and regulations (land, agricultural and residential) in order to exploit them to the public and to prevent exchanging and price increase of land.
12. Review and development of relevant institutions and organizations in the studied region to educate people and tourists to take efficient and purposeful advantage from the benefits and positive effects of tourism.

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