

Identification of Barriers to Strategic Plan of Tourism Development in Shiraz City

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to investigate and rank barriers to implementation of the strategic plan for tourism development in Shiraz. The method of this research is practical based on the purpose. The method is descriptive because it describes the conditions with phenomena. The statistical population consists of 140 managers of tourism organizations in Shiraz. A sample of 90 people was selected based on Morgan table. Data gathering tool was a researcher-made strategic barrier questionnaire. The validity of the questionnaire was achieved by experts and the reliability of the questionnaire was equal to 0.82 by using the test confidence coefficient for the whole questionnaire, which is much higher at least at 70% level. Therefore, the questionnaire has a high reliability. To investigate the research hypotheses and factor ranking, the t-student test and the topsis method have been used, respectively. The results of the research showed that systemic, managerial, structural, cultural, resource, and planning constraints are among obstacles to the implementation of the strategic plan for tourism development in Shiraz. Limitations of the barriers had the highest rank and planning constraints had the lowest rank.

Key words: Barriers, Program, Strategic Plan, Tourism Development in Shiraz

INTRODUCTION

A long time has passed since the strategic planning debate was raised in strategic organizations and managers of many organizations try to solve their problems through strategic planning of debates. After turning to strategic planning and investing in its implementation for a period of time, the first thing that engages the minds is the discussion of the success or failure of strategic planning. The general feeling in many units implementing these programs is based on its inefficiency in solving the problems of the industrial units of the country. This is despite the fact that today many famous and successful companies in the world have invested heavily in this area. (Moran, 2016)

According to a study by Fortune magazine, most major companies in the world have failed to meet their strategic goals (Phelps and colleagues, 2016). In Iran,

many organizations have used strategic planning tools and methods, but often failed to achieve the competitive advantage. Statistics show that 90% of the world's major companies fail to achieve their strategic goals, of which 30% are unsuccessful in the development phase and 70% in the implementation phase. Today, one of the challenges facing corporate executives is to develop strategies and implement them correctly. Unfortunately, many obstacles create problems for the implementation of the strategies. Understanding these bottlenecks is essential in order to achieve successful organizations that think about development, corporate ethics and organizational reputation. On the other hand, the lack of proper organizational structure, inefficient collaboration, resource misallocation, and also inappropriate control system, rewards and incentives, are among organizational barriers to the implementation of strategies (Rahimnia and colleagues, 2014).

In the highly complex area of today's activities of the organizations, the multiplicity of factors, the speed of change, the interest of organizations in achieving long term success have made strategic planning and strategic management an inevitable necessity. Without the use of Strategic and systemic thinking and designing future prospects of their organization, managers are not able to

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lead and manage correctly in this complex arena. In this age of advancement in science and technology, strategic planning is a useful tool for managers and experts in organizations and in related field of activities. The implementation of the strategic plan in organizations has its own barriers and problems, and recognizing these factors and obstacles is necessary to provide solutions to reduce them and help successful implementation of strategies. Therefore, considering what has been said, studying and recognizing the barriers to implementation and the failure factors of the strategic plan in the implementation phase and the ways to reduce them are important and necessary steps towards achieving the goals and implementing strategies and plans. If we identify why the strategies fail in the implementation phase, we will see the success of more managers and organizations in achieving strategic goals. This is essential in the growth and advancement of the organizations in today's competitive and turbulent environment and prevents the wastage of a lot of investments in the field of strategic management.

Today, tourism is considered as the pillar of sustainable development, and in the meantime, tourism attractions play an important role in this industry (Hussein Nejad, 2015). Tourism is one of the most dynamic and largest economic activities of the present era, and plays an important role in local sustainable development. Making more use of its economic, social and cultural benefits brings about an ever-increasing expansion of tourism. Therefore, tourism policy making and planning are considered as the most important tool for sustainable development of this industry (Ghanbari and Akbari, 2015). With its natural and historical potential of tourism, Shiraz city has the potential to become a tourist destination in the region. With the proper planning and the identification of the existing strengths and limitations, it can play an effective role in national and regional economic development. Based on this, this study seeks to find the barriers to the implementation of the strategic development plan for tourism in Shiraz and the ranking of the barriers.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Below are some of the researches done in Iran and abroad on this subject.

Trapp et al. (2017) conducted a research paper entitled "The Strategic Barriers and Opportunities of Innovative Infrastructure in the Water Organization." This research was practical and carried out in Germany. After studying in the Water Organization, the strengths and weaknesses of strategic plans were identified in the organization using Swat matrix.

Ali Abadi (2016) conducted a research named rating barriers to strategic planning in the leather industry in the Sadaf leather company. The statistical population of the research consisted of 50 employees of the company. A questionnaire was used for data collection and SPSS software was used for data analysis. The results of the research showed that five barriers to the implementation of the strategic plan include personal barriers, environmental constraints, administrative constraints, and organizational constraints.

Chukwumah, F. O., & Ezeugbor (2015) examined the problems of implementing strategic plans for the development of secondary schools in the state of Anambara and used exploratory factor analysis to identify factors such as pure theorizing, pure pragmatism, pure hierarchical attitudes, Cultural infrastructure and financial constraints.

Elbanna (2016) conducted a research entitled analysing the Comprehensive Strategic Plan in Emerging Economies. To investigate the research, first the literature on the economies of developing countries such as Malaysia, Turkey and Thailand were reviewed. Using statistical analysis and employing factor analysis, the main strategies including 22 cases were extracted from 55 primary factors. Then, Friedman test was used to rank these factors.

Karimfar (2016) conducted a research aimed at investigating and rating obstacles to the implementation of the strategy based on the experts of the Social Security Organization of Isfahan province. The statistical population consisted of social security experts in Isfahan province consisting of 364 people. The Cochran formula was used to determine the sample size including 116 people.

The tool for collecting data was a researcher-made strategic barrier questionnaire. In this research, one-way t-test and Friedman's nonparametric test were used.

The results of the research showed that systemic, managerial, structural, cultural, resource, and planning constraints were barriers to implementing a strategic plan in Isfahan Social Security Organization.

Hossein Nejad (2015) conducted a research aimed at strategic planning of tourism development, with an emphasis on tourism in Sardasht. The research method in this research was descriptive analytic and SWOT model was used to analyse the weaknesses and strengths of tourist and ecotourism phenomena and drawings were drawn using GIS. The results of the research showed that strategies for developing the tourism industry in Sardasht city were ST strategies and planning should be adjusted and implemented accordingly.

Ghanbari and Akbari (2015) studied the tourism capabilities of Niasar district and provided strategic solutions for the development of tourism in this place. The data gathering tool was documentary, library, and a questionnaire. Finally, using the SWOT analytical model, the strategies for tourism development were presented. The statistical population of this research was tourism experts in Kashan city (including 20 experts from the Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism Organization). The results of the swot model showed that despite having strengths and opportunities such as natural geography, proper water and resources, and many historical and cultural attractions, Niaser area suffered from weaknesses such as lack of attention of the authorities towards investment and credit allocation in the area, seasonality of tourism and also the existence of mines near historical-cultural attractions. The study sought to provide appropriate strategies for the development of the tourism industry in Naysar area. Among the strategies, the strengths were first with the score of 3.361, and the weaknesses, opportunities and threats ranked next with the scores of 3.269, 3.084 and 3.085, respectively.

Rahimnia and colleagues (2014) presented a conceptual model for evaluating organizational barriers to implementing organizational strategies and organizational health in the context of organizational culture. Because the strategic thinking is one of the key features of organizations, organizations can overcome the organizational obstacles to implementing a strategy through organizational health. By using morale, loyalty, communication, partnership, leadership and targeting, they reduce organizational barriers to implementation of the strategies and achieve a higher level of performance. In the meantime, organizational culture as a platform that affects all organizational interactions will be able to help strengthen the components of healthy organizations and successful implementation of the strategies. Therefore, the proposed model studied the organizational obstacles to strategic implementation and organizational health in the context of the organizational culture. It is hoped that the directors, especially the municipalities, will be able to take advantage of this model to overcome organizational obstacles to the strategic implementation and achieve healthy organizations.

At the beginning of this research, after introducing the introduction to the strategic plan, strategic barriers and their factors were addressed. The collection of materials based on studying and reviewing the resources are placed in the following theoretical model.

METHODOLOGY

The method of this research is practical based on the purpose. The method is descriptive because it describes

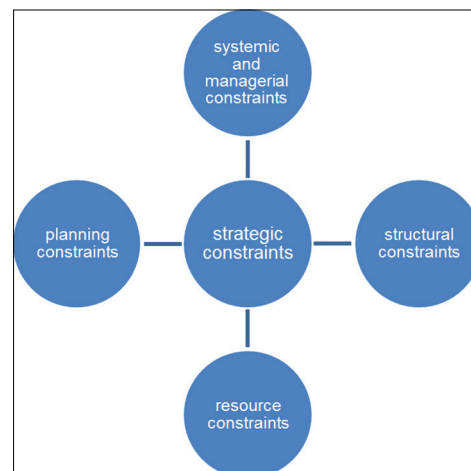


Figure1. Research model

the conditions with phenomena. The statistical population consists of 140 managers of tourism organizations in Shiraz. A sample of 90 people was selected based on Morgan table. Data gathering tool was Karimfar strategic barrier questionnaire (2016). The validity of the questionnaire was achieved by experts and the reliability of the questionnaire was equal to 0.82 by using the test confidence coefficient for the whole questionnaire, which is much higher at least at 70% level. Therefore, the questionnaire has a high reliability. To investigate the research hypotheses and factor ranking, the t-student test and the topsis method have been used, respectively.

The topsis method consists of 7 steps.

1. Creating a decision matrix including m options and n benchmarks. In this research, m or the studied options are effective factors that are derived from the literature of the subject and the review of the previous work and the review of the questionnaires prepared by the experts. To measure these factors, five criteria (very low, low, moderate, high, very high) have been used, and for each of these criteria, five numbers (1-5) have been assigned.
2. Normalizing the decision matrix is done as follows:

$$NIJ = \frac{x_{ij}}{\sqrt{\sum_{i=1}^m x_{ij}^2}}$$

Due to the weight of the options, and because of the positive and negative loads that options can have in this method, the decision matrix is normalized before the start of the task. The numbers obtained from the distributed questionnaires among people make decision matrix in such a way that each person chooses a number or a certain criterion of the mentioned

criteria in the preceding paragraph for each option or any vital factor of success. As a result, the number of people who selected that particular criterion will be placed in the cell corresponding to that table. The same procedure continues until all cells take value in this way, then the matrix is normalized according to the above formula and it is prepared for the next step.

3. Assigning weight to a normalized decision matrix is calculated as follows:

$$V_{ij} = w_j \times n_{ij}$$

In this study, antherapy method has been used to calculate the weighted matrix. The weight of each column is derived from the standard deviation of that column on the total deviation of that column. Then the resulting number is multiplied by the normalized matrix numbers and the weighted matrix is obtained.

4. Identifying the ideal or non-ideal solution or option that is calculated in accordance with the following method:

$$A^+ = \{(\max v_{ij} | j \in J), (\min v_{ij} | j \in J') | i = 1, 2, \dots, m\}$$

$$A^- = \{(\max v_{ij} | j \in J), (\min v_{ij} | j \in J') | i = 1, 2, \dots, m\}$$

In this phase, positive and negative ideal options are obtained, so that the furthest option to the ideal negative solution and the closest option to the positive ideal solution can be found. For each column of the weighted matrix, the ideal positive option (that is, the critical factor of the success that achieved the highest point in this particular criterion) and the negative ideal option (that is, the critical factor of the success that achieved the lowest score in this particular criterion) have been calculated in order to find the distance to the positive and negative ideal option through Euclidean method.

5. Calculating the separation boundary by using the n-dimensional Euclidean distance. Determining the distance of each option from the ideal solution is calculated as follows:

$$d_i^+ = \sqrt{\sum_{j=1}^n (v_j^+ - v_{ij})^2}$$

And it is calculated from non-ideal solution as follows:

$$d_i^- = \sqrt{\sum_{j=1}^n (v_j^- - v_{ij})^2}$$

6. Calculating Relative Proximity to the Ideal Option as shown in the following formula, this indicator represents the relative weight of the distance that i-th alternative has from a negative ideal, so the greater the C_i value for an option, the more distance from the negative ideal and the higher rating than other options. And if we reduce this amount by one, this indicator

will indicate the distance from the positive ideal, so the lower its amount for an option, the higher its rank will be.

$$c_i^+ = d_i^+ / d_i^+ + d_i^-$$

7. Finally, the best option is an option that has relatively more proximity to the ideal solution and in fact has a higher C_i .

FINDINGS

Student- t test was used to identify the strategic plan barriers. Based on Table 1, all four components of resource constraints, structural and cultural constraints, planning constraints, and management constraints are among the most influential factors.

Frequency distribution table

In order to examine the barriers of the strategic plan, four variables are considered. These variables are shown in Table 1. The first step in the topsis method is to form the decision matrix. Table 1 shows the raw data obtained from the answers to the questionnaires.

Solution Method

The decision matrix is made in accordance with Table 1. The second step of the topsis method is the normalization of the above table, which is obtained according to the

following formula $N_{ij} = \frac{x_{ij}}{\sqrt{\sum_{i=1}^m x_{ij}^2}}$ Then, in the third

step, we should weigh the normalized matrix by using the entropy method. To do this, a standard deviation was required and the calculations were done with the help of the Topsis software. In step four, the ideal or non-ideal solution is calculated according to the formula below, so that the furthest option from the ideal positive solution

Table 2: Frequency distribution table

Factors	Very low	Low	Average	High	Very high
Management constraints	3	14	24	29	20
structural and cultural constraints	4	18	22	27	19
planning constraints	3	9	26	26	26
resource constraints	2	6	25	26	31

Table 1: Student- t test

	t-test	Significance level	Result
Management constraints	5/11	0/000	Confirmed
structural and cultural constraints	4/23	0/000	Confirmed
planning constraints	4/48	0/000	Confirmed
resource constraints	6/08	0/000	Confirmed

and the closest option to the positive ideal can be found to prioritize options.

$$A^+ = \{(\max_{j \in J} v_{ij}), (\min_{j \in J'} v_{ij}) | i = 1, 2, \dots, m\}$$

$$A^- = \{(\max_{j \in J} v_{ij}), (\min_{j \in J'} v_{ij}) | i = 1, 2, \dots, m\}$$

In the next step, the calculation of the size of the distance based on the Euclidean norm for the ideal positive and negative solution was performed according to the following table.

Prioritizing Organizational Factors Based on Topsis Method

At this stage, the relative proximity to the ideal option has been calculated, and thus an option that has a relatively close proximity to the ideal solution is chosen as the best option.

According to the step-by-step calculations, resource constraints have a relatively close proximity than other options and are considered to be the most important factor. And the variable of planning constraints has the least importance.

RESULTS

The main objective of this research was to identify obstacles to the implementation of the strategic plan for tourism development in Shiraz. In this research, it was tried to identify, categorize and rank barriers to implementation of the strategies in tourism development in Shiraz, considering the importance and sensitivity of the implementation phase in the strategic management process. In this research, the statistical population consisted of tourism staff and strategic barrier questionnaire was used

Table 3: The distance based on the Euclidean norm

Factors	Di+	Di-	Cli+
Management constraints	0/09	0/010	0/5319
Structural and cultural constraints	0/14	0/11	0/4482
Planning constraints	0/11	0/08	0/4049
Resource constraints	0/14	0/11	0/5565

Table 4: Prioritization of factors

Factors	Cli+
Management constraints	0/5432
Structural and cultural constraints	0/5217
Planning constraints	0/4385
Resource constraints	0/4001

to collect data. The results of the research showed that systemic and managerial constraints, structural and cultural constraints, resource constraints, and planning constraints are obstacles to the implementation of a strategic plan for tourism development in Shiraz. And limitations of the barriers have the highest rank and planning constraints have the lowest rank.

In other words, the limitations of the organization and managers prevent the correct implementation of the strategic plan. Also, factors such as the emergence of new managerial, economic and political priorities, resistance from attitudes and beliefs that are incompatible with change, lack of support on the part of senior managers, lack of guidelines and guiding principles, or a model for guiding efforts and enforcement actions and inability in the management of change are among the factors that affect the lack of realization of the strategic plan. The culture existing in the tourism development company of Shiraz and the lack of proper structure in the organization are important organizational limitations for implementing the strategic plan. It can be said that problems such as the lack of sufficient communication that weakens the structure of communications in the organization, the failure (weakness) of motivational factors in promoting the desired behaviour in the organization, the excessive commitment of individuals to other activities (non-core activities), working in contrast to the organizational structure and the lack of principles and mechanisms for identifying and solving executive problems result in obstacles on the way of the implementation of the strategic plans in Shiraz tourism.

The lack of adequate financial resources in the Tourism organization, the lack of human resources familiar with the strategic plans of the organization, improper management of human resources in the tourism organization, poor or inadequate cooperation and sharing of information, and the misallocation of financial resources to staffing are obstacles to the strategic plans of the organization. The results of this research are consistent with the research by Rahmani et al. (2012), Akbar pour Shirazi and Safdari Ranjbar (2014), Rahimnia and colleagues (2014), Karimfer (2016).

SUGGESTIONS

Since system and management constraints are one of the obstacles to the implementation of the strategic plan in the tourism development company of Shiraz, the following points are suggested:

- Creating new management, economic, and political priorities for the establishment of an appropriate strategic plan

- Training managers for resistance from attitudes and beliefs that are incompatible with change
- Supporting the operational implementation of the strategic plans on the part of senior executives
- Having guiding lines and principles, or a model for guiding efforts and enforcement actions
- Teaching managers to create the ability to change the attitudes of the employees

Since structural and cultural constraints are one of the obstacles to the implementation of the strategic plan in the tourism development company of Shiraz. It is suggested that:

- Creating the culture of a strategic plan for the staff in the organization.
- Creating motivational factors in encouraging desirable behavior in the organization in order to implement the strategic plan
- Reducing excessive commitment of the individuals to other activities (non-core activities).
- Studying and reducing activities against the organizational structure.
- Studying and reducing the degree of misunderstanding in the field of communication in the organization.

Since structural and cultural constraints are one of the obstacles to the implementation of the strategic plan in the tourism development company of Shiraz, it is suggested that:

- Making the resources of the organization available to experts to carry out the strategic plan.
- Providing the sufficient human resources for the implementation of the strategic plan.
- Studying and reducing inappropriate resource allocation (weakness in resource allocation) in the organization.
- Studying and reducing weak or inadequate participation and information division in the organization.

Since planning constraints are one of the obstacles to implementation of the strategic plan in the tourism development company of Shiraz, it is suggested that:

- Identifying and reducing the ambiguous and unclear responsibilities of strategic plans.
- Identifying and correcting the weak or vague strategies in the program
- Deleting inappropriate connection between the program and the Outlook.
- Providing efficient and suitable system and educational programs for implementing a strategic plan

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