

Research Paper: Strategic Planning of Rural Tourism with the Participatory Approach of the Host Community (Case Study: The Rural's District Maydan of Khanaqain in the Northeast of Iraq)

Nareen Foad Abdolkarim¹, Mohammad Akbarpour^{2*}, Omidali Moradi³

1. MSc. Student, Department of Geography, Faculty of Literature and Humanities, Razi University, Kermanshah, Iran.

2. Assistant Professor, Department of Geography, Faculty of Literature and Humanities, Razi University, Kermanshah, Iran.

3. Instructor of Department of Geography, Faculty of Literature and Humanities, Razi University, Kermanshah, Iran.



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ABSTRACT

Purpose: The aim of the current research is the strategic planning of rural tourism with the participatory approach of the host community in the rural District Maydan of KHANAQIN in northeastern Iraq.

Methods: This research is applied in terms of purpose and descriptive-analytical regarding the Implementation method. The statistical population of the present study includes households in the target villages of District Maydan. Therefore, according to the size of the villages and the time limit, cost, etc., Cochran's formula was used to determine the sample size of the residents of the tourist villages of District Maydan, and 153 people were concluded, and the sampling method was Simple non-random.

Results: The findings obtained from the final evaluation of SWOT factors in the framework of the AHP model show that in the group of strengths, easy access to the Iranian market (PARVIZKHAN market and...) (Final weight, 0.315), the existence of historical and ancient monuments such as Sheikh JEBRAEEL (final weight, 0.274) and easy and suitable access for tourists (final weight, 0.163) were the most important strengths and lack of advertising, respectively, Information through ESHRAGH TV radio and television (final weight, 0.284), Lack of familiarity of local people in dealing with tourists (final weight, 0.195) and the unwillingness of local people to invest in the tourism sector (final weight, 0.158) were most important weaknesses, respectively.

Conclusion: Tourism is one of the economic and social activities of the current human societies. This activity is a response to humans' inner needs to relax, learn about cultures and benefit from natural and pristine beauty. One of the sub-branches of the tourism industry is rural tourism, which can play an important role in integrated and sustainable rural development due to the natural and cultural capacities in the villages. At the same time, the existence of tourist villages in the neighborhood of square villages and their complementary role (final weight, 0.184), lemon and orange orchards in the region (final weight, 0.155), and the great desire of Iranians to visit Iraq and KHANAQIN, and Kurdish areas (final weight, 0.123), respectively, among the most important opportunities in the studied area, as well as the increase in the cost of services and products compared to before (final weight, 0.349), the increase in garbage and waste by tourists (weight final weight, 0.216) and the high density of tourists and crowded District Maydan compared to other areas (final weight, 0.198) are among the most important threats of the studied area.

* Corresponding Author:

Mohammad Akbarpour, PhD

Address: Department of Geography, Faculty of Literature and Humanities, Razi University, Kermanshah, Iran.

Tel: +98 (912) 4361258

E-mail: m.akbarpour@razi.ac.ir

1. Introduction

Today, tourism has become one of the world's largest and most profitable economic sectors (Higham & Luck, 2002: 35), and today it is known as the third economic industry in the world (Oila et al., 2012: 569). In today's era, tourism is considered an influential factor in expanding relations between nations. It is regarded as the creator of job opportunities in the economic sector and the creation of socio-cultural interactions (Pourahmad et al., 2013: 2). Considering the benefits of tourism, many countries consider this industry as the primary source of income, employment, private sector growth, and infrastructure development (Lee, 2010: 423). In this regard, rural tourism is also considered a part of the tourism industry, which can play an influential role in the development of these areas with proper and conscientious planning, identifying the advantages and limitations of rural tourism, and as a result, national development and diversification of the national economy (Rumiani et al., 2018: 218). Due to this problem, tourism villages have been noticed in recent years, and planners and policymakers have made a lot of effort with new strategies for tourism. Therefore, due to the importance of tourism, on the one hand, this industry can be a tool for the development of rural areas (Lee & Chang, 2008). On the other hand, it is essential for solving agricultural problems, increasing employment and income, and economic and social changes in the system of host societies (Elisabete & Raschi, 2013). Nowadays, in many countries of the world, rural tourism has attracted a lot of attention from tourists. It is considered one of the most popular forms of tourism and a passage to achieve sustainable development, an important part of social and economic development policies (Stasiukynasm et al., 2013). With its multi-dimensional nature, in addition to meeting the needs of tourists, it causes significant changes in the local community and influences the economic, social, cultural, and environmental dimensions (Ghadami et al., 2010). It can affect the quality of life of the local community (Andereck & Nyaupane, 2011) and play a major role in improving the abilities of local people, developing human resources, creating job opportunities, improving living standards, filling the gap between urban and rural areas in various fields and reducing migration to big cities (Shams Al-Dini, 2010). It also causes the prosperity and prosperity of the economy and creates diversity and commercial and industrial jobs, increasing income and transforming rural communities' economic development (Eliott, 1997). Considering the importance of the subject and the recognition of rural tourism de-

velopment indicators, we can provide a model for providing a suitable strategy for improving rural tourism in this region by upgrading these indicators in the District Maydan of khanaqain. From 44 villages in this region, nine have tourist attractions including the cuneiform tablet in Darband Beiloleh village, the pristine nature of Sartak mountain, Yazgwed Castle in Darband village, Sheikh JabraeelSheikhan, Ashkeeft Sarvaldareh, carvings of Beiloleh ,Bemo Sartak Heights, Gome Bahri in Hajilar village, its moderate climate in the cold season, Bani Sartak Recreation Area, Tagha Recreation Area, and Bemo Heights chain which welcomes many tourists throughout the year.

These villages have unique characteristics in terms of the economic, social, and environmental development process and geographical location. Although these villages have been affected by the phenomenon of tourism due to their privileged geographical location and benefiting from many capabilities in the field of nature tourism, rural tourism, and agriculture, due to the lack of accurate and scientific understanding of the capabilities and bottlenecks and capabilities They and the lack of a comprehensive and systematic planning in exploiting the existing capabilities, so far, these capabilities have not been used in order to guide the natural, social and economic processes to achieve sustainable rural development, and in case of investment in the rural tourism sector and The support of the government and the cooperation of institutions and people in rural areas can be fruitful in the direction of the villages of the study area to take a step towards sustainable development. In this article, taking into account the above and understanding the potentials and limitations of tourism in the villages of District Maydan, it has been tried to have a positive and constructive impact on proper tourism planning, while answering these questions from the perspective of the residents of the villages in Mayadn of Khanqin city. what are the potentials of implementing rural tourism there? According to the residents of the villages District Maydan of khanaqain, what are the limitations of implementing rural tourism there? According to the residents of the District Maydan of khanaqain, what are the solutions for implementing rural tourism there?

2. Literature Review

Today, tourism activity as a subset of economic activities should play its part in sustainable regional development and in shaping reconstruction processes and creating new opportunities, diversifying the economy, reducing poverty and increasing social welfare. etc. should be paid special attention (Figueredo et al., 2011).

when the benefits of tourism are more than its cost; The perception of local stakeholders towards tourism development changes (Chen et al., 2018). Therefore, achieving sustainable tourism requires the presence of tourists who have a responsible behavior (Malek Shahi, 2019), but tourism activity also faces some negative economic, social and environmental effects, and rural settlements as a social space It may be threatened through the development of tourism activities and move towards instability (Hall & Muller, 2004; Khodadadi, 2011). In another perspective; from the point of view of Hall, Brun and Cabrini, the development of tourism activities in rural areas can pave the way for creating socio-economic dynamics (Babakhanzadeh & Lotfi, 2012); Identifying the needs and demands of customers is also essential (Abdollahi & Abbasi, 2016) and sustainable development by strengthening the capacities of local people; By adopting appropriate methods for resource management and its optimal use, with regard to ensuring the security of current and future generations, equal access to resources, as well as education and awareness, good governance and the like, efforts to contain and avoid risks (Parasad, 2003). Empowerment of local tourism stakeholders is a key factor for positive impact in the sustainable development of tourism (Jani, 2018; Hamilton & Alexander, 2013), but there are major problems in measuring the sustainability of rural areas as micro and local levels. And in another view, the existing indicators are mainly based on a top-down approach (Riley, 2001) and are mostly designed by stakeholders and interested institutions, based on their understanding of the concept of sustainable development (Morse & Fraser, 2005). This is while in planning tourism development, attention should be paid to the positive and converging role of empowering methods of local stakeholders in sustainable tourism and regional development planning (Shafiee Sabet & Herati Fard, 2019).

In the 21st century, the tourism service industry, as one of the shaping forces of today's world, is a main tool for one of the growing subcategories of tourism, rural tourism or rural tourism, which has countless and increasing interest. As a part of the huge tourism industry, rural tourism can play a major role in empowering local people and diversifying economic growth, as well as creating new job opportunities in rural areas and in close connection with other economic sectors (Jalalian et al., 2014). Rural tourism gained significant importance and status in the 19th century and has become one of the most important topics in the scientific communities of the world, and experts have tried to increase the role of tourism in the economic and social revival of villages with different models and methods (Anabestani & Vesal,

2016). According to Li (2005), the basis of rural tourism is the integration of environmental views, farm activities and special cultures in the village, which creates the grounds for recreation and diversity, and creates job opportunities and income for local people, and by influencing economic, social dimensions and the environment of rural areas, while attracting the participation of villagers in the development of rural, regional and national economy with the potential to preserve and protect natural resources and the environment, it leads to the realization of sustainable rural development (Shukati Amghani et al., 2016). According to Sezabo, rural tourism is a type of tourist activity that provides additional income for those whose main occupation is agriculture. Mourfi also believes that in explaining approaches and analyzing rural tourism design systems, 4 main elements of planning, i.e., human activities, communication, space and time, should be determined and investigated (Ghaffari et al., 2011). Therefore, encouraging rural tourism in both developed and developing countries has become a common strategy because the expansion of tourism in rural areas has positive consequences such as promoting economic growth, diversifying and stabilizing rural areas through job creation in business and Tourism works bring additional income along with agricultural activities, industry and services, improving abandoned and unused buildings and creating opportunities for marketing heritage, symbols and identity (Heydari Sarban & Maleki, 2015). Therefore, rural tourism causes the economic development of the local community, providing welfare, improving infrastructure, providing quality experiences for the host community, and overall improving their quality of life (Djekic, 2007). therefore; In terms of the background and records of the research, the most important sources that have been written about the development of rural tourism so far are as follows:

Akbarpour and Arbabi (2016) in a research titled "Analysis of Tourism Development Obstacles in Tourism Target Villages of North Khorasan Province" came to the conclusion that by taking the necessary measures and providing facilities and services to solve problems through appropriate planning and strategies, including the development of programs Education, revitalization and development of the tourism infrastructure of the villages and the introduction and recognition of the attractions and tourism products of the target villages can be taken in the direction of the development of the target villages from the perspective of tourism.

Shokati Amghani et al. (2016) in research concluded that one of the factors of rural tourism development includes the socio-cultural factor. In this context, based

on the findings of the research, without doubt one of the most important obstacles in the development of tourism is the lack of familiarity among the villagers of the region with the benefits and advantages of the tourism industry, the conflict between the culture of tourists and the people of the region, the lack of sufficient motivation among the villagers of the region to participate in Tourism activities are the unwillingness of the people and the private sector to invest in tourism in the region and the dominant tendency of the people to exclusively use the village spaces in the form of villas and private gardens in the region.

Asadi Karam (2019) in research entitled development of a strategic plan for tourism development in sample areas of rural tourism, a case study of Meymand in Babak city, concluded that the existence of 17 identified strengths and opportunities against 12 weaknesses and threats in this village indicates the potential are affecting the functions of tourism in Meymand.

Korani (2020) in research entitled Explaining the scenario, strategies and implementation strategies for the development of rural tourism in the Rijab region has come to the conclusion that in the matrix of internal factors, weak points prevailed and in the matrix of external factors, threats prevailed, and the defensive model for the development of rural tourism in Rijab region has a higher priority.

Khartashvili et al. (2019) in the research titled rural tourism in Georgia in transition: regional sustainable challenges and have come to the conclusion that for the positive impact of tourism on rural areas, a prominent rural tourism structure should be created at the national level, which Focus on strategic issues and general norms of rural tourism. They also suggested; Management organizations should be formed in the tourism destination and in that general regulations and regional laws and marketing should be in line with close cooperation with local stakeholders.

Fonz et al. (2011) identified the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of rural tourism in the Aragon region of Spain and used SWOT analysis as a tool to measure the sustainable state of rural tourism and concluded that despite the existing problems, rural tourism in this region is sustainable and Sustainability will be in the future.

Trib and Pedison (2023) in the research titled tourism crisis strategy have come to the conclusion that destination strategies are important for the future of tourism.

The idea of critical tourism strategy is first developed further and then applied.

The main difference between the present research and the previous studies is the identification and prioritization of the rural tourism potentials District Maydan of Khanaqin in order to create new businesses and flourish the rural economy.

3. Methodology

This research is applied in terms of its purpose and descriptive-analytical in terms of its method. To collect the required information and data, document reviews and field studies, such as interviews and questionnaires, have been used. The statistical population in this research, therefore, the statistical population of the current research includes households in the villages targeted for tourism in District Maydan. Therefore, it was not possible to collect data and information from all the villages of its households due to its extent. Therefore, according to the size of the villages and the time limit, cost, etc., the Cochran formula was used to determine the sample size from the entire statistical population of District Maydan (255 households). There are 153 people in the field of tourism and the non-random sampling method is also available. In order to analyze the information and provide suitable strategies on the development of rural tourism District Maydan in Khanaqin city, the SWOT matrix was used, and for this purpose, a list of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats was identified and analyzed. Information about strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats were extracted from the questionnaires. At the same time, in order to complete the information, the method of interviewing the officials and those involved in the cultural heritage of Khanaqin city, who were 14 people, was also used. Then, by adjusting the internal and external strategic factors that are the basis for developing strategies, the SWOT strategic matrix was extracted. Finally, according to the expert views and considering the views of the interviewees, each SWOT factor was weighted and by using the AHP-SWOT model combination through the Expertchoice software, after additional analysis, the best strategies for the development of rural tourism in District Maydan were determined according to weight priority.

District Maydan of Khanaqin city is located at 44 degrees 59 minutes to 45 degrees 48 minutes east longitude and 33 degrees 55 minutes 20 seconds to 35 degrees 5 minutes north latitude in the northeast of Diyala province. Also, is limited to Jalawla and Kelar city from the north, Baqubah from the west, Khanaqin from the south,

and Iran from the east. The area of the studied area was approximately 2652 square kilometers (Abdullah Hasoun, 2009). So that the area of this part includes 73% of the area of Khanaqin city (Figure 1).

4. Findings

In this article, in order to perform a SWOT analysis and to identify and determine the strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the study area, the required information was first collected with the help of a questionnaire from the residents of the villages of District Maydan. Then, considering the given answers, a second visit was made to check the correctness and accuracy of the answers, and additional information was obtained through interviews with the residents. Finally, the most important internal and external influencing factors on the development of rural tourism in Mawere determined.

Elaboration of rural tourism development strategies in District Maydan using the combination of AHP method and SWOT model

It can be said that SWOT analysis, as an important tool in the strategic planning process, sometimes has some flaws. For example, when SWOT is used, the analysis does not have the possibility of a comprehensive assessment of the decision-making situation, and it is mostly limited to determining the list of a number of factors in

the groups of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. Since the planning process often involves a large number of criteria and their interdependencies, the use of SWOT may be insufficient. Therefore, according to the above and to increase efficiency in the strategic planning process, the most important solution proposed in this article is the integration of SWOT models with AHP. Because AHP is one of the methods that provides the necessary conditions for quantifying SWOT factors and providing the possibility of evaluating decision-making situations with SWOT. In this combination, SWOT provides a basic framework within which the analysis of the decision-making situation is carried out, and AHP helps in making it as analytical as possible. In this article, after determining the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of rural tourism development in District Maydan using SWOT model, AHP method was also used to prioritize SWOT factors and then prioritize SWOT groups. At the same time, in order to improve the quality of the AHP-SWOT analysis, all the experts and officials of the Cultural Heritage Department of Khanaqin city, who were 14 people, were familiar with the studied area or live there, and were asked to weigh the factors. SWOT contribute to the framework of the AHP model. Analytical Hierarchy Process (AHP) is a flexible, powerful and simple method that is used to make decisions in situations where conflicting decision-making criteria make it difficult to choose between options (Zebardast, 2001).

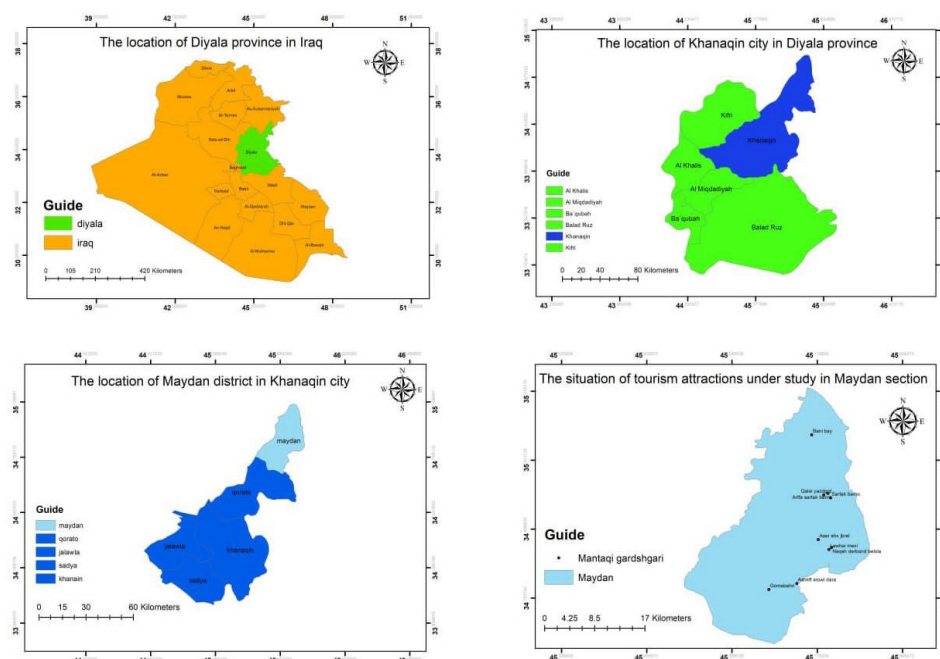


Figure 1. Location map of the villages of District Maydan in Khanaqin city of Iraq

Table 1. SWOT internal and external influencing factors in the fields of rural tourism development District Maydan in Khanaqin

Internal factors	Strengths (S) ←	S1. The existence of historical and ancient monuments such as Sheikh Jebraeel S2. Easy access and suitable for tourists S3. The existence of suitable infrastructure for tourism S4. Government investment in the tourism sector S5. Easy access to the Iranian market (Parvizkhan Market and...) S6. Beautiful view of the area at night S7. Public and private sector investments in the field of tourism S8. The existence of local and traditional customs and culture	External factors	Opportunities (O) ←	O1. The existence of touristic villages in the neighborhood of the villages of square sector and their complementary role O2. lemon and orange orchards in the region O3. The presence of tourist attractions in the Square (Sheikh JEBRAEEL, DARBAND) O4. The great desire of Iranians to visit Iraq and Khanaqin and Kurdish regions O5. increasing the government's attention to investment in rural tourism O6. communication routes of the region (being on the communication route to Iran) O7. Increasing the motivation of the private sector to invest in tourism
	Weaknesses (W) ←	W1. inappropriateness of environmental and physical infrastructure (such as rural roads and sewers) W2. Inadequate comfort and accommodation facilities and equipment W3. lack of trained personnel in the tourism sector W4. improper distribution of tourists in different seasons of the year (low density in autumn and winter) W5. The unwillingness of local people to invest in the tourism sector W6. lack of advertising and information through radio and television W7. lack of familiarity of local people in dealing with tourists W8. inappropriateness of health facilities and services W9. lack of government planning and investments W10. Lack or Lack of access to communication tools such as post and internet		Threats (T) ←	T1. increase tourism facilities and services in competing tourism areas T2. increase in garbage and waste by tourists T3. Environmental pollution of the villages in the district compared to other nearby villages T4. increase in social crimes with the arrival of tourists in the village compared to before T5. high density of tourists and crowding of the Square compared to other areas T6. increase in the cost of services and products compared to before T7. Failure to provide facility permits from the government for tourism in the village

Source: research findings, 2021



AHP is one of the most comprehensive systems designed for decision making with multiple criteria; Because this model provides the possibility of formulating the problem in a hierarchical manner and it also has the possibility of considering different quantitative and qualitative criteria in the problem. On this basis, a pairwise

comparison of SWOT factors in the form of AHP was done in the development of rural tourism in the District Maydan, weighting and prioritization were done, and the results of the findings are shown in Tables 2 to 6 and Figures 2 to 5.

Table 2. Pairwise comparisons of factors in the group of rural tourism development strengths of District Maydan

Relative weight	S8	S7	S6	S5	S4	S3	S2	S1	Strengths
0.274	5	5	5	1	5	6	3	1	The existence of historical and ancient monuments such as Sheikh Gabriel
0.163	5	4	4	0.25	4	5	1	0.33	Easy access and suitable for tourists
0.029	0.5	0.33	0.25	0.2	0.5	1	0.2	0.16	The existence of suitable infrastructure for tourism
0.049	1	1	1	0.16	1	2	0.25	0.2	Government investment in the tourism sector
0.315	6	6	6	1	6	5	4	1	Easy access to the Iranian market (Parvizkhan market and...)
0.077	4	2	1	0.16	1	4	0.25	0.2	Beautiful view of the area at night
0.048	1	1	0.5	0.16	1	3	0.25	0.2	Public and private sector investments in the field of tourism
0.042	1	1	0.25	0.16	1	2	0.2	0.2	The existence of local and traditional customs and culture

C.I.=0.0786255

Source: research findings, 2021



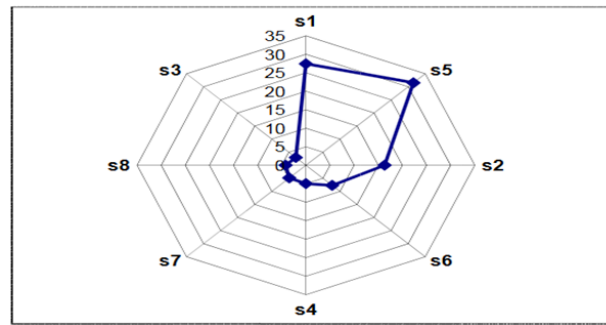


Figure 2. The diagram of the final weight of each of the strengths (AHP-SWOT)

JSRD

Table 3. Pairwise comparisons of factors in the group of weak points in the development of rural tourism in District Maydan

Weaknesses	W1	W2	W3	W4	W5	W6	W7	W8	W9	W10	Relative weight
W1. inappropriateness of environmental and physical infrastructure (such as rural roads and sewers)	1	3	4	3	0.33	0.25	0.33	1	4	1	0.075
W2. Inadequate comfort and accommodation facilities and equipment	0.33	1	4	4	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.33	3	0.33	0.048
W3. lack of trained personnel in the tourism sector	0.25	0.25	1	0.25	0.2	0.16	0.16	0.25	0.33	0.25	0.019
W4. improper distribution of tourists in different seasons of the year (low density in autumn and winter)	0.33	0.25	4	1	0.2	0.16	0.2	0.25	4	0.25	0.036
W5. The unwillingness of local people to invest in the tourism sector	3	5	5	5	1	0.25	0.33	4	5	4	0.158
W6. lack of advertising and information through radio and television	4	5	6	6	4	1	3	5	6	4	0.284
W7. lack of familiarity of local people in dealing with tourists	3	5	6	5	3	0.33	1	4	6	3	0.195
W8. inappropriateness of health facilities and services	1	3	4	4	0.25	0.2	0.25	1	4	0.33	0.069
W9. lack of government planning and investments	0.25	0.33	3	0.25	0.2	0.16	0.16	0.25	1	0.33	0.025
W10. Lack or Lack of access to communication tools such as post and internet	1	3	4	4	0.25	0.25	0.33	3	3	1	0.087

C.I.=0.149409

Source: research findings, 2021

JSRD

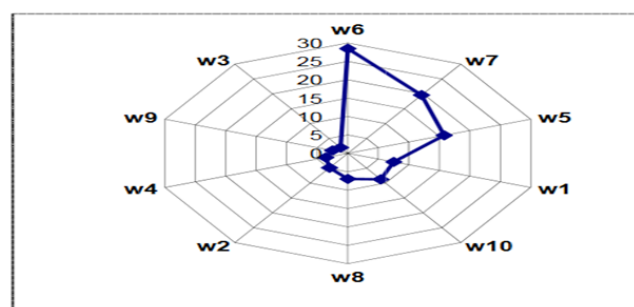


Figure 3. Final weight diagram of each weakness (AHP-SWOT)

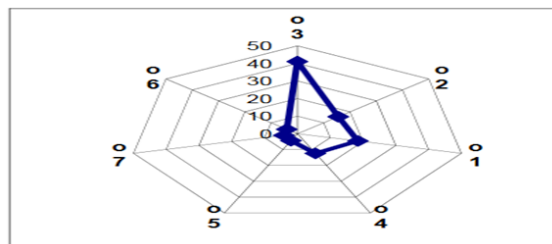
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Table 4. Pairwise comparisons of factors in the group of opportunities in the development of rural tourism in District Maydan

Opportunities	O1	O2	O3	O4	O5	O6	O7	Relative weight
O1. The existence of touristic villages in the neighborhood of the villages of square sector and their complementary role	1	1	0.2	4	4	4	4	0.184
O2. lemon and orange orchards in the region	1	1	0.25	1	5	5	5	0.155
O3. The presence of tourist attractions in the Square (Sheikh JABRAEEL, DARBAND)	5	4	1	5	4	5	5	0.41
O4. The great desire of Iranians to visit Iraq and KHANAQIN and Kurdish regions	0.25	1	0.2	1	4	5	4	0.123
O5. increasing the government's attention to investment in rural tourism	0.25	0.2	0.25	0.25	1	1	1	0.043
O6. communication routes of the region (being on the communication route to Iran)	0.25	0.2	0.2	0.2	1	1	1	0.040
O7. Increasing the motivation of the private sector to invest in tourism	0.25	0.2	0.2	0.25	1	1	1	0.041

C.I.=0.114957

Source: research findings, 2021

**Figure 4.** Final weight diagram of each opportunity (AHP-SWOT)**Table 5.** Pairwise comparisons of factors in the group of threats in the development of rural tourism in District Maydan

Threats	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5	T6	T7	Relative weight
T1. increase tourism facilities and services in competing tourism areas	1	0.2	5	0.33	0.2	0.2	4	0.068
T2. increase in garbage and waste by tourists	5	1	6	4	1	0.33	6	0.216
T3. Environmental pollution of the villages in the district compared to other nearby villages	0.2	0.16	1	0.2	0.2	0.2	1	0.031
T4. increase in social crimes with the arrival of tourists in the village compared to before	3	0.25	5	1	0.33	0.25	5	0.106
T5. high density of tourists and crowding of the Square compared to other areas	5	1	5	3	1	0.33	6	0.198
T6. increase in the cost of services and products compared to before	5	3	5	4	3	1	6	0.349
T7. Failure to provide facility permits from the government for tourism in the village	0.25	0.16	1	0.2	0.16	0.16	1	0.029

C.I.=0.12023

Source: research findings, 2021

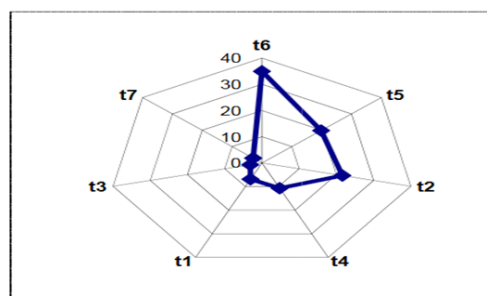
**Figure 5.** Final weight diagram of each threat (AHP-SWOT)

Table 6. Final intergroup priority matrix of SWOT factors in the direction of rural tourism development in District Maydan

SWOT intergroup factors	The final priority	order of priority	Cumulative priority
S5. easy access to the Iranian market (Parvizkhan market and...)	0.315	1	1
S1 . The existence of historical and ancient monuments such as Sheikh Gabriel	0.274	2	2
S2. Easy access and suitable for tourists	0.163	3	3
S6. Beautiful view of the area at night	0.077	4	4
S4. Government investment in the tourism sector	0.049	5	5
S7. Public and private sector investments in the field of tourism	0.048	6	6
S8. The existence of local and traditional customs and culture	0.042	7	7
S3 .The existence of suitable infrastructure for tourism	0.029	8	8
W6. lack of advertising and information through radio and television	0.284	1	9
W7. lack of familiarity of local people in dealing with tourists	0.195	2	10
W5. The unwillingness of local people to invest in the tourism sector	0.158	3	11
W10. Lack or Lack of access to communication tools such as post and internet	0.087	4	12
W1. inappropriateness of environmental and physical infrastructure (such as roads and rural roads and sewage	0.075	5	13
W8. inappropriateness of health facilities and services	0.069	6	14
W2. Inadequate comfort and accommodation facilities and equipment	0.048	7	15
W4. improper distribution of tourists in different seasons of the year (low density in autumn and winter)	0.036	8	16
W9. lack of government planning and investments	0.025	9	17
W3. lack of trained personnel in the tourism sector	0.019	10	18
O3. The presence of tourist attractions in the Square (Sheikh Gabriel, DARBAND)	0.41	1	19
O1. The existence of touristic villages in the neighborhood of the villages of square sector and their complementary role	0.184	2	20
O2. lemon and orange orchards in the region	0.155	3	21
O4. The great desire of Iranians to visit Iraq and Khanaqin and Kurdish regions	0.123	4	22
O5. increasing the government's attention to investment in rural tourism	0.043	5	23
O7. Increasing the motivation of the private sector to invest in tourism	0.041	6	24
O6. communication routes of the region (being on the communication route to Iran)	0.040	7	25
T6. increase in the cost of services and products compared to before	0.349	1	26
T2. increase in garbage and waste by tourists	0.216	2	27
T5. high density of tourists and crowding of the Square compared to other areas	0.198	3	28
T4. increase in social crimes with the arrival of tourists in the village compared to before	0.106	4	29
T1. increase tourism facilities and services in competing tourism areas	0.068	5	30
T3. Environmental pollution of the villages in the district compared to other nearby villages	0.031	6	31
T7. Failure to provide facility permits from the government for tourism in the village	0.029	7	32

Source: research findings, 2021



Determining the implementation priorities of intervention in the direction of rural tourism development in District Maydan

The results obtained from the final evaluation of SWOT factors in the framework of the AHP model show that in

the group of strengths, easy access to the Iranian market (Parvizkhan market and...) (final weight, 0.315), the existence of historical monuments and ancient like Sheikh Gabriel (final weight, 0.274) and easy and convenient access for tourists (final weight, 0.163) in order of the most important strengths and the lack of advertising and

information through Eshragh TV (final weight, 0.284), the lack of familiarity of local people in dealing with tourists (final weight, 0.195) and the unwillingness of local people to invest in the tourism sector (final weight, 0.158) are the most important weaknesses. At the same time, the existence of touristic villages in the neighborhood of square villages and their complementary role (final weight, 0.184), lemon and orange orchards in the region (final weight, 0.155) and the great desire of Iranians to visit Iraq and Khanaqin and Kurdish regions (final weight, 0.123), in order of the most important opportunities of the studied area, as well as the increase in the cost of services and products compared to before (final weight, 0.349), the increase in garbage and waste by tourists (final weight, 0.216) and the high density of tourists and crowding of the Square compared to other areas (final weight, 0.198) are among the most important threats of the studied area.





In the final analysis of the influence and mutual influence of the strengths and weaknesses as well as the opportunities and threats with the aforementioned priorities, we are guided to intervention strategies in the form of the SWOT model, which can be operationalized in terms of implementation as described in Table 7. There-

fore, according to the above table, 6 strategies have been obtained for offensive strategies (SO), 6 strategies for diversity strategy (ST) and 6 strategies for revision strategies (WO) and finally 5 strategies have been obtained for defensive strategy (WT). It has been stated that it shows that the potentials of District Maydan of Khanaqin can be used to create new businesses and flourish the rural economy of the region.

5. Discussion

Today, the tourism industry is considered one of the most important economic activities in the world, which, in addition to economic benefits, provides a very suitable opportunity for visitors to become aware of the importance of preserving culture and how to protect local culture and natural sights. It generates good income for local communities and vice versa. The results of combining SWOT factors and AHP model show that, in general, among the 32 SWOT priorities, the priorities that have the most impact include the top 10 priorities of weaknesses and opportunities, 2 factors each, and strengths and threats, 3 factors each. Factors for the development of rural tourism in District Maydan are:

Table 7. The final strategies for rural tourism development in District Maydan in the form of SWOT-AHP model

<p>Offensive strategy (SO)</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Encouraging the private sector to invest in the field of tourism through the granting of facilities by the government to investors - Holding classes and training courses; - Development and attention to cultural, historical-ancient and pilgrimage attractions such as Sheikh Gabriel; - Yasir development of the tourist sector such as parks and recreational and welfare complexes in the region; - Improving the quality of handling infrastructure roads and services; - Holding festivals, and religious and cultural ceremonies with neighboring countries 	<p>Review strategy (WO)</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Educating and informing people about tourism and how to interact with tourists; - Improving and strengthening health and service facilities, especially in Khanaqin tourist areas; - Supervision of services provided to tourists; - Development and improvement of centers providing services to tourists along the routes leading to Khanaqin and District Maydan - Paying more attention to the development of cultural and historical tourism; - Using the experiences of tourist areas adjacent to Khanaqin and even other countries in the field of tourism.
<p>Diversification strategy (ST)</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increasing monitoring of centers that provide services to tourists, especially monitoring the prices of houses and villas for rent, etc.; - Creating and expanding security for tourists and local people; - Preventing congestion and overcrowding of tourist centers through the creation and expansion of tourist spaces for tourists; - Proportion of tourist guide signs along the roads leading to the square section in Arabic, Kurdish and English languages for easy access of tourists to entertainment-tourism centers; - Compilation of rules and regulations related to how to use tourist-entertainment centers and inform and educate tourists and people about these regulations; - Building information centers for tourists and using trained people in these centers. 	<p>Defensive strategy (WT)</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - More investment for advertising, especially through the media; - Strengthening the tourism infrastructure of District Maydan with emphasis on native and local tourism; - Creating a happy and memorable atmosphere for tourists by providing them with suitable services and their return to the region; - Using expert people in all stages of planning and implementing tourism projects; - Improvement and development of health and security issues, especially threats such as ISIS, etc., in the tourist areas of District Maydan.

Source: research findings, 2021

1- The presence of tourist attractions in the District Maydan (Sheikh Jebraeel, D arband) (final weight, 0.41) strength (O3).

2- Increasing the cost of services and products compared to before (final weight, 0.349) threat (T6).

3- Easy access to the Iranian market (Parvizkhan market and...) (Final weight, 0.315) Strength (S5).

4- Lack of advertising and information through Ishrak TV (final weight, 0.284) weakness (W6).

5- Existence of historical and ancient monuments such as Sheikh Gabriel (final weight, 0.274) strength (S1).

6- Increase in trash and waste by tourists (final weight, 0.216) threat (T2).

7- High density of tourists and overcrowding in the District Maydan compared to other areas (final weight, 0.198) threat (T5).

8- Lack of familiarity of local people in dealing with tourists (final weight, 0.195) weakness (W7).

9- Existence of touristic villages in the neighborhood of the villages of District Maydan and their complementary role (final weight, 0.184) opportunity (O1).

10- Easy and convenient access for tourists (final weight, 0.163) strength (S2).

As a result, the results of the findings of this research are consistent with the findings of Akbarpour & Arbabi (2016), Shokati Amghani et al. (2016), Asadi Karam (2017), Korani (2020), Khartashvili et al. (2019) and Foner et al. (2021) are consistent.

Rural tourism can develop and play a positive role in the lives of rural people when it is first accepted by the local people and their collective participation is followed, therefore, the strategic model of rural tourism development for the target villages according to the cultural, economic and social situation. Special conditions District Maydan in three stages or three steps. These three steps are: 1- Acceptance of tourism by local people and development of local participation. 2- Development of infrastructures and facilities needed for tourism. 3- Informing and advertising. 1) The first step: planning and planning regarding the acceptance of tourism by the local people and the development of local participation in the field of tourism activities; 2) The second step: planning and developing infrastructures and facilities needed for tourism while managing the environment; 3) The third step: providing information and advertising in the field of introducing various resources and attractions of rural tourism and the capacity of providing tourism services in the direction of sustainable marketing and attracting tourists.

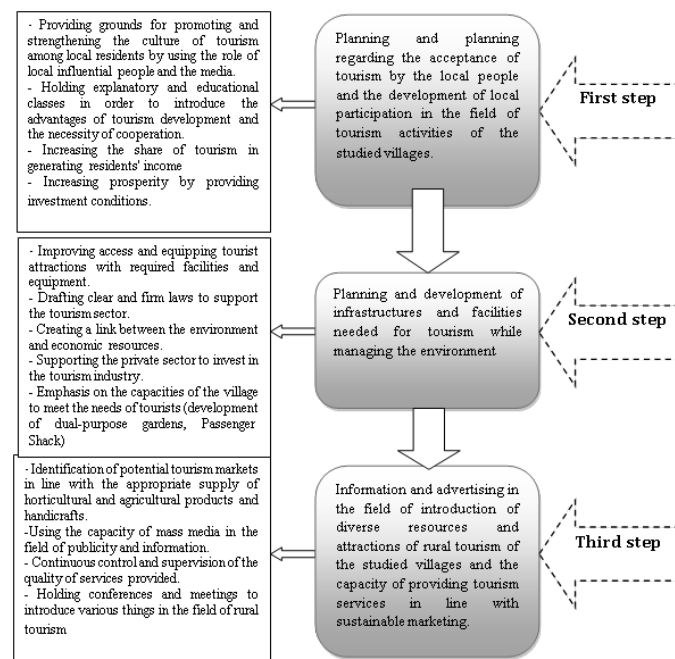


Figure 6. Strategic model of tourism development in the tourist District Maydan

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Conflict of Interest

The authors declared no conflicts of interest.

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