THE STRATEGIC ANALYSIS OF APPROPRIATE MARKETING FOR INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN ASALOUYEH-PARS SPECIAL ECONOMIC ZONE (THROUGH SWOT ANALYSIS METHOD)

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ABSTRACT

Special economic zones have been established as the levers of economic development for presence of foreign and domestic private sector in the countries` economy with the aim of attracting foreign investment, transferring technology, creation employment and presence in the international target markets. Export areas are of trade policy tools among the countless gadgets that are used to boost non-traditional export. Attracting foreign investments is an international activity so includes two internal and external dimensions. Being aware of the strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and threats of this category and their evaluation needs these dimensions true understanding. On this basis, the present research has been performed by the aim of strategic analysis appropriate for marketing investment opportunities in Asalouyeh-PARS special economic zone (through SWOT analysis method).

Using simple and efficient model of SWOT in performing this search leaded us to the acquisition of points hidden in special zone that has happened for the first time.

The minimum effective step of this research is identifying and recognizing the strengths and weaknesses and the opportunities and threats within the special zone and its long and effective

step was to provide at least 10 strategies with respect to the questions and the research goals that we hope this research is the basis for new and qualitative move in the region.

Regarding to the strong and weaknesses, opportunities and threats of Pars special zone- Asaluye, different strategies have been identified for this region. Internal and external factors with their coefficients have been determined. Strengths: 20866   Weaknesses: 3092   opportunities: 30276   threats: 10512. For identifying total conditions of Pars special economic zone- Asaluye, each sector`s final factor (SWOT) coefficient has been used. According to the obtained results, Pars special economic zone strategies, Asaluyeh – should being closed to competitive strategies authorities should try to use the opportunities and delete weaknesses and step to competitive strategies.

Key words: Economic special zones, SWOT model, Marketing strategy, investment opportunities

INTRODUCTION

Special economic zones have been established as the levers of economic development for the presence of foreign and domestic private sector in the economy of countries with the aim of attracting foreign investment, transferring technology, creation of employment and presence in the international target markets. Today, most of the countries in the world due to lack of internal resources for investment, tend to attract foreign capital. Foreign investment usually is done in two templates, foreign investment with having a part of share and direct foreign investment. (Ghotbi, 2011)

Identifying the areas suitable for investment and creation of the necessary infrastructure to attract investors is a necessary affair (Gilan NIA et al, 2003)   .No country without an active participation in international trade and global economy could not achieve appropriate growth and improvement(Ahmadi Hadid, 2007). Therefore the challenge with which the improving countries and of course our country face with, is that how they can have an active role in international activities.

As global competition intensifies the importance of international operations management by large service companies increases (Musa Siza, 2008).

Foreign investment means transferring funds or materials from a country to another one for its appliance in constituting an economic institution in the country in exchange for direct or indirect participation in its benefits. One of the general forms of countries` investments, is foreign investment which has

an effective role in countries` improvement and specially improving countries (Zoolghadr, 2007).

International organizations have different views about special zones. Unido refers to special zones as a tool for encouraging industrial development with the aim of exporting industrial goods (salami, 2011). Anectad tends to change the present international business structure that is to the detriment of underdeveloped countries and one of the tools for making a change in in this structure, is economic special zones (Salimi, 2011). On the other hand, the developing countries which seek for making economic special zones, believe that these areas can help them getting free from underdevelopment dilemma. This means that entering management and capital to the country and integration of domestic production factors with external technical knowledge, puts the country on the path of development with the global economy. In other word, special zone can change the potential excellences to economic factual abilities and being a strong bridge for connecting their national economy to international economy, especially in a period that the countries compete for subscribing in world business organization (Abbasi, 2003).

These countries believe that special zones are the gateway to enter the world market and taking advantage of the relative domestic economy in international trade. Economic improvement, externalism economy and escaping from closed economy are a deniable requirement in these countries in such a way that their durability depends on these requirements achievement. In this way, international experience suggests a broad awareness of the countries of the role of special zones in the economic development of regional, industrial, marketing and the expansion of relations with global markets (Iran's economy network 2014). Our country is passive in attracting investors sector and no activity is done in field of advertising for projects presentation and providing investment incentives (Alian, 2009). Attracting foreign investment is an international activity, therefore includes two internal and external dimensions. Being aware of strength, weaknesses and threats of this issue and their evaluation, needs a true understanding of these dimensions it means finding the strengths and weaknesses in internal dimension and weaknesses of the process and finding the opportunities and threatens in international dimension.

Information broadcasting to attract foreign investor in large projects is very weak that is

of serious damages. Increasing foreign investors` attraction in large projects relates on increasing investment incentives, information making and vast advertisement and increasing the culture of honoring foreign and domestic investors (Bagoom et la, 2013).

In other word, being aware of strengths and weaknesses of special zones in marketing and on the other hand understanding the opportunities and threats existing in the environment, gives this ability to are managers to evaluate their strategic position and by using these rules and concepts in strategic management, can solve his possible problems. In other word in present global and ultra-competitive economic world that the internal effects of the organizations` activities in different parts of the world have been dependent on each other and even relationship between them is more complex, it can be said that reaching to the new targets of companies` marketing, depends on appropriate marketing strategies` planning by the managers and decision makers.

As far as economic special zone final target in marketing strategy planning is building confidence and trust to regions and area legal and supports, successful managers also in order to fulfill this aim, are required to have appropriate marketing strategies in order to better usage of existing resources and making

more accurate understanding of environmental opportunities and threats by consuming the minimum of costs, time and managing power and making and maximizing the conditions in attracting investment. Iran`s today's conditions and limitations imposed due to sanctions against our country, have been influential on the country's capital transfer that regarding to new conditions, a hope and optimism for situation improvement has been evolved which of course needs time. In previous years unfortunately the fearing of Iran which has been approved in the international environment against Iran and has created a poisoned propaganda and wrong environment of investment in Iran, has led foreign investors alien with Iran environment. Therefore trying to increase investment security through stability in government policies and lack of continuous change in rules can be considered as one of the first preferences for encouraging foreign investment. Exchange rate changes are of other factors that have negative impact on direct foreign investment in Iran. In this regard, correcting the currency system and its stabilization can have an effective role in attracting foreign investment. In addition to mentioned variables, nominal wage index and tariff rates, and domestic investment restoration, are of other factors having

negative impact on direct foreign investment in Iran (Yazdaniyan, 2011).

Totally, with regard to the possibility of foreign direct investment in different countries, compliance in only one or more variables of financial and technical-economic incentives or supportive factors, geographical and political in order to proceed mentioned companies to invest in a particular project in a country will not be sufficient. But the evaluation of all factors and as a series form, leads up to the adoption or rejecting the investment. Attracting direct foreign investment in the country is not possible without changing the politicians and masters` point of view and making an appropriate condition for inverts' entrance. In this regard, until the proper cultural, social and political conditions not being provided, foreign companies do not have any interest for direct investment in Iran and the country's top dignitaries should change their approach to foreign investment. With regard to the special economic zones importance, especially Southern Pars economic zone, the researcher tries to analyze the marketing appropriate strategy for investment opportunities in Pars special zone (Asaluye) through SWAT theory. Hope this research result can remove existing obstacles.

RESEARCH METHOD

The present research is descriptive. Therefore the present research method or plan is qualitative which means that it is detected through qualitative content analysis and with the help of reviewing the relevant texts and theoretical foundations in this field and reviewing the experiences of selected research and interviews with the managers and expertise of the Pars special economic zone (Asalouyeh).

Statistical Society includes all managers and senior experts of Pars special economic zone (Asalouyeh). Statistical sample in this research is part of the statistical population that will be selected through census. In present research, census method has been used. In this method, sampling has been done according to managers' abilities and knowledge on attracting investment marketing strategies in the special zone and SWAT model. Total statistical community includes 60 individuals and the researcher has distributed and collected 60 questionnaires.

For gathering data, regular interview for identifying subjected variables has been used. After the interview and recognizing the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, a questionnaire has been designed to find the importance degree relating to the market strategic analysis through SWAT method.

In this research, descriptive analysis and explanatory analysis methods have been used for the analysis of the data.

In descriptive analysis method, to describe the properties of the sample reviewed, setting up the tables and charting is used. In this research after gathering the questionnaires, they are examined as persistency point of view then statistical table and diagrams are prepared and data description and analysis will be performed through using data analysis software.

Gathered data are of qualitative type changed to quantitative. For data analysis descriptive tests have been used. Data analysis is a multi-stage process through which the data collected using collecting tools in statistical sample (society), will be summarized, coding and classifying and …..At the end will be processed so the condition for different analysis and their relations on the purpose of hypothesizes testing will be prepared. In this process the data are refined in terms of conceptual and experimental aspects and different statistical techniques have an important role in inference and popularizations. For data and information analyzing according to pre-defined targets, data related to each variable concluded from designed questionnaires, have been described

in form of statistical numerical characteristics and the

Using appropriate statistical patterns, research hypotheses have been tested and at the final step, final analysis and wrapping is performed.

RESULTS

First hypothesis:

Identify the strengths to maximize the exploitation of opportunities for attracting domestic and foreign investment through marketing strategies formulation. (SO)

On the basis of valuation of strengths according to primary coefficients, the results indicate that S1in first grade, S5 in second grade, S4 in third grade, S3 in fourth grade and S7, S8, S6, S2, S9ز, S10 in next grades and after final coefficients`` calculation and identifying the strengths grades, the results show that S1 in first grade, S4 second grade, S5 in third grade, S3 in fourth grade, S2 fifth grade, S8 sixth grade, S7 seventh grade, S6 eighth grade, S9 ninth grade, S10 in tenth grade and total strengths coefficients is 2.866. According to opportunities` valuation on the basis of primary coefficients, the results show that O2 is in first grade, O4 and O5 In second grade, O6 third grade, O1 in fourth grade, O3 in fifth grade, O7 in sixth grade, O8 in seventh grade, O9 in eighth grade, O10 is in ninth grade and after calculating the final

coefficients and identifying the opportunities grades, the results show that O2 is in the first grade, O5 second grade, O1 in the third grade, O3 in fourth grade, O8 in fifth grade, O4 in sixth grade, O6 in seventh grade, O7 in eighth grade, O9 in ninth grade, O10 in tenth grade and the total opportunities coefficients is achieved 3.276.

Strategy(maximum- minimum)strengths and opportunities (so solutions)	
S_1O_2	1
S_4O_5	2
S_5O_1	3
S_3O_3	4
S_2O_8	5
S_8O_4	6
S_7O_6	7
S_6O_7	8
S_9O_9	9
$S_{10}O_{10}$	10
2.866 و3.276	

Therefore by use of existing strength point, necessary operations should be performed. The above table shows the different operations finely. Variety of factors in any strategy, are put together and with combining them, we define the strategy that includes both combined aspects. It means that in case of defining a strategy on the basis of strengths and opportunities (maximum strategy- maximum), we should select the strategy which refers to one aspect of opportunities so we are able to strengthen one of the strength points we have identified.

Second hypothesis :

Identify the strengths and threats deletion or decrease for attracting domestic and foreign investment through marketing strategies formulation. (ST) minimum- maximum strategies (threats and strengths): In this sector, for getting away from the threats, the strengths should be increased.

On the basis of valuation of threats according to primary coefficients, the results indicate that T5 is in first grade, T4 in second grade, T7 in third grade, and T1 and T3 and T8 are in fourth grade, T6 in fifth grade, T2 in sixth grade, T9 in seventh grade, T10 in eighth grade and after final coefficients` calculation and identifying the threats grades, the results show that T2 is in first grade, T5 in second grade, T1 in third grade, T6 in fourth grade, T4 in fifth grade, T7 in sixth grade, T3 and T8 in seventh grade, T9 in eighth grade, T10

in ninth grade and total threats` coefficients is 1.512.

According to opportunities` valuation on the basis of primary coefficients, the results show that S1 is in first grade, S5 and In second grade, S4 in third grade, S3 in fourth grade and S7, S8, S6, S2, S9 and S10 are in next grades and after calculating the final

coefficients and identifying the strengths grades, the results show that S1 is in the first grade, S4 in second grade, S5 in the third grade, S3 in fourth grade, S2 in fifth grade, S8 in sixth grade, S7 in seventh grade, S6 in eighth grade, S9 in ninth grade, S10 in tenth grade and the total strengths coefficients is achieved 2.866.

Strategy (minimum-maximum), threats and strengths(ST strategies)	
$S_1 T_2$	1
$S_5 T_5$	2
$S_4 T_1$	3
$S_3 T_6$	4
$S_2 T_4$	5
$S_8 T_7$	6
$S_7 T_3$	7
$S_6 T_8$	8
$S_9 T_9$	9
$S_{10} T_{10}$	10
2.866 و 1.512	

Therefore by use of existing strength point, the threats should be decreased to the minimum point. The above table shows the different strategies finely. Variety of factors in any strategy, are put together and with combining them, we define the strategy that includes both combined aspects. It means that in case of defining a strategy on the basis of strengths and threats (maximum strategy-minimum), we should define a strategy which refers to one aspect of strengths so we are able to delete one of the threats points we have identified.

Third hypothesis :

Taking advantage of opportunities in identifying weaknesses and changing them to strengths or decreasing weaknesses` degree for attracting domestic and foreign investment through marketing strategies formulation. (WO)

In this sector, by using opportunities, the weaknesses should be decreased or removed.

On the basis of valuation of opportunities according to primary coefficients, the results indicate that O2 is in first grade, O4 and O5 in second grade, O6 in third grade, O1 in

fourth grade, O3 in fifth grade, O7 in sixth grade, O8 in seventh grade, O9 in eighth grade and O10 is in ninth grade and after final coefficients` calculation and identifying the opportunities grades, the results show that O2 is in first grade, O5 in second grade, O1 in third grade, O3 in fourth grade, O8 in fifth grade, O4 in sixth grade, O6 in seventh grade, O7 in eighth grade, O9 in ninth grade and O10 is in tenth grade and total opportunities` coefficients is 3.276.

According to weaknesses` valuation on the basis of primary coefficients, the results show

that W1 is in first grade, W4 In second grade, W3 in third grade, W2 in fourth grade, W6 in fifth grade, W5 in sixth grade, W7 in seventh grade, W9 and W10 in eighth grade, W8 in ninth grade and after calculating the final coefficients and identifying the weaknesses grades, the results show that W1 is in the first grade, W4 in second grade, W2 in the third grade, W6 in fourth grade, W3 in fifth grade, W5 in sixth grade, W7 in seventh grade, W8 in eighth grade, W9 in ninth grade, W10 is in tenth grade and the total weaknesses coefficients is achieved 3.092.

Strategy (maximum- minimum) opportunities and weaknesses (OW strategies)	
O_2W_1	1
O_5W_4	2
O_1W_2	3
O_3W_6	4
O_8W_3	5
O_4W_5	6
O_6W_7	7
O_7W_8	8
O_9W_9	9
$O_{10}W_{10}$	10
3.276و3.092	

Therefore by the use of existing opportunities, the weaknesses should be minimized. The above table shows the combination of different strategies finely. Variety of factors in any strategy, are put together and with combining them, we define a strategy that includes both combined aspects. It means that in case of defining a strategy on the basis of

opportunities and weaknesses (maximum strategy- minimum), we should define a strategy which refers to one aspect of opportunities so we are able to delete one of the weaknesses we have identified.

Fourth hypothesis:

How economic special zones can decrease the effects of threats by reducing weaknesses or

delete their impacts so attract domestic and foreign investment through marketing strategies formulation. (WT) minimum strategies- minimum (threats and weaknesses) On the basis of valuation of weaknesses according to primary coefficients, the results indicate that W1 is in first grade, W4 is in second grade, W3 is in third grade, W2 in fourth grade, W6 in fifth grade, W5 in sixth grade, W7 in seventh grade, W9 and W10 are in eighth grade and W8 is in ninth grade and after final coefficients` calculation and identifying the weaknesses grades, the results show that W1 is in first grade, W4 in second grade, W2 in third grade, W6in fourth grade, W3 in fifth grade, W5 in sixth grade, W7 in seventh grade, W8 in eighth grade, W9 in

ninth grade and W10 is in tenth grade and total weaknesses` coefficients is 3.092.

According to weaknesses` valuation on the basis of primary coefficients, the results show that T5 is in first grade, T4 In second grade, T7 in third grade, T1, T3 and T8 are in fourth grade, T6 in fifth grade, T2 in sixth grade, T9 in seventh grade and T10 is in eighth grade and after calculating the final coefficients and identifying the threats grades, the results show that T2 is in the first grade, T5 in second grade, T1 in the third grade, T6 in fourth grade, T4 in fifth grade, T7 in sixth grade, T3 and T8 in seventh grade, T9 in eighth grade and T10 is in ninth grade and the total threats coefficients is achieved 1.512.

Strategy (minimum- minimum) threats and weaknesses (WT strategies)	
$T_2 W_1$	1
$T_5 W_4$	2
$T_1 W_2$	3
$T_6 W_6$	4
$T_4 W_3$	5
$T_7 W_5$	6
$T_4 W_7$	7
$T_8 W_8$	8
$T_9 W_9$	9
$T_{10} W_{10}$	10
3.092 و1.512	

Therefore by the use of existing threats, the weaknesses should be deleted. The above table shows the combination of different strategies finely. Variety of factors in any

strategy, are put together and with combining them, we define a strategy that includes both combined aspects. It means that in case of defining a strategy on the basis of threats and

weaknesses (minimum strategy- minimum), we should define a strategy which refers to one aspect of threats so we are able to improve one of defined weaknesses to harness the threats.

CONCLUSION

According to the first hypothesis, this combination identifies the region strengths and opportunities. The economic special zone of Asalouyeh- Pars, should try hard to change its weaknesses to abilities by using opportunities. As it was mentioned before, this strategy is the most desirable situation and movement from any position in SWOT matrix is this ideal position which by relying on that all positive points, advantages and merits can be used for maximizing the spontaneous, solicitations and opportunities.

According to the second hypothesis results, this strategy aims to use the maximum of strengths and inter sectional advantages in order to deal with the threat, bottlenecks, and external damagers (environmental) and minimizing them. According to the third hypothesis of the research, this strategy aim, is minimizing and decreasing the weaknesses and vulnerable aspects and maximizing the opportunities, situations and applications. In the fourth theory, this strategy aims to maximizing weaknesses and vulnerable aspects, also external threats and bottlenecks.

In this case, which is the most alarming situation; there is an urgent need for re-evaluation, structure correction and improvement, performance, goals and strategic policies.

With regard to the above topics and this research results, it is suggested that: according to the determination of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of special zone organization: strengths: 2.866 weaknesses: 3.092 opportunities: 3.276 threats: 1.512, the results show that Pars –Asalouyeh special zone organization strategies, are close to competitive strategies and authorities should try to use the opportunities and delete weaknesses and go through competitive strategies.

According to the previous hypotheses and organization strategy that is toward competitive and aggressive, the Organization strengthens the opportunities for the creation of investment opportunities and formulating marketing strategies to attract foreign investment. And in second procedure, by adopting an aggressive strategy; the Organization must correct internal weaknesses and make an optimal use of opportunities.

As the increasing investors attraction is considered as opportunities, competitors and threats, therefore according to the achieved

indexes it can be said that Pars- Asalouyeh economic special zone, by planning a competitive coherent strategy should achieve this goal, and this case the organization should overcome its environmental threats using its strengths and take advantage of existing opportunities best way and use the best of the process such as: advertising, investor safety, entering the market and shareholding, correct its weaknesses and blocks external threats.

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