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ABSTRACT

Tourism, one of the sectors that is largest and fastest improving in the world. For many countries and regions, tourism has an important role to provide employment chance, to improvement infrastructure and superstructure, to grow economy, maintain environment. Canakkale is a city which has historical and cultural heritage and natural sources. City includes the battlefields and memorials of Gallipoli, the legendary ancient city Troy, the mystical and fascinating ancient city Assos, the popular historical resort island Bozcaada, the impressive nature of Ida and so on. This study intended to determine tourism potential of Canakkale with SWOT analysis. With this analysis, strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of tourism potential (ex. the economy and human resources, quality of life, quality of environment, transport, technical infrastructure etc.) and necessary requirements to improve the tourism in Canakkale are determined.

Keywords: Tourism, tourism destination, SWOT Analysis, Canakkale.

INTRODUCTION

With the technological innovations, globalization, competition and increasing touristic demand, the importance of destination marketing has been increased in last decade. To gain competitive advantage in destination, basic characteristics of destinations should be determined and evaluated. To reach this aims, effective techniques as SWOT analysis can be used.

This paper tries to determine the strengths and weaknesses of Çanakkale as a tourism destination by utilizing SWOT Analysis, and nevertheless to expose the factors that create opportunities and threats in the region. For this purpose, in this paper, at first, SWOT analysis and using aim of SWOT analysis were explained; afterwards some assessments were made about Çanakkale region through this analysis.

1. DEFINITION OF SWOT ANALYSIS AND USAGE IN TOURIST DESTINATIONS

Term of SWOT comes from the first letters of four English words; Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Treats. SWOT Analysis is a strategic planning tool used to evaluate the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats involved in a project or in a business venture. Strengths and weaknesses are internal to an

organization. Opportunities and threats originate from outside the organization. A SWOT analysis, usually performed early in the project development process, helps organizations evaluate the environmental factors and internal situation facing a project (Wikipedia 2007). SWOT analysis is one of the most productive and memorable planning tools (Dwyer and Tanner 2002).

As it can be used for several industrial and commercial sectors. At the same time SWOT analysis is a tool to be profited in order to determine internal (strengths and weaknesses) and external (opportunities and threats) factors of tourism potential of a country or a region and in order to make clear alternative tourism politics of a country (Avcıkurt and others 2003). These strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats can be analyzed to provide support rationale for developing marketing action plans. (Nykiel 1997)

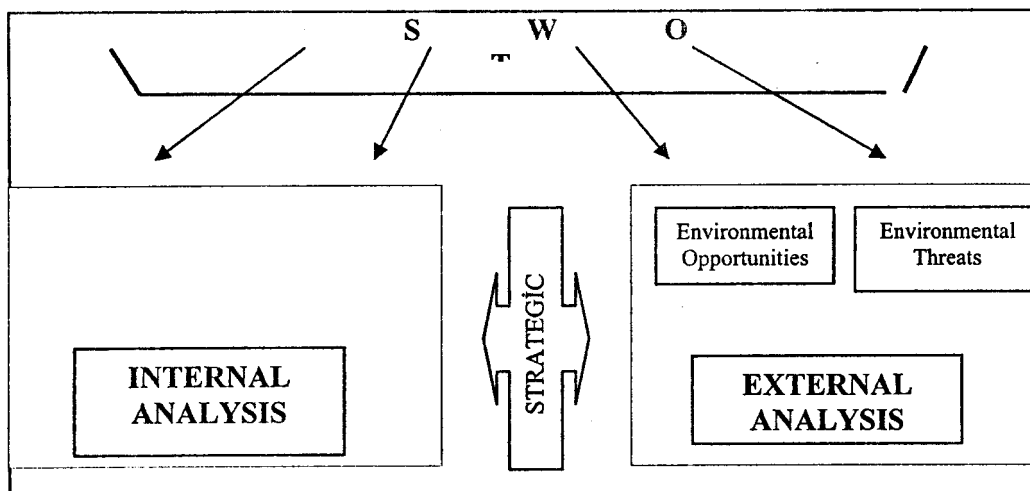
To evaluate environmental conditions of tourism businesses, SWOT analysis is one of the most usable methods. To be able to analyze marketing problems of businesses and to be able to make right decisions, we need information about these four groups (Tekeli 2001). Tourism businesses are easily affected by internal conditions and particularly positive or negative changes that occur in external environmental conditions. Because of the fragile structure of tourism sector it is necessary to apply this analysis. For example, tourism destinations are easily affected by environmental deterioration, over capacity, changes in touristic tastes and preferences, appearance of new tourist destinations and new tourism types, wars and terrorism attacks and in a short period come into face with lack of demand. Lack of demand will cause increasing of inactive capacity or closure of touristic establishments in the region.

If this kind of lack of demand happens in one another industrial sector, that establishment could move to another region or could change type of production or business. But, this is not a solution for tourism establishments, particularly accommodation establishments. Because it is not possible to move accommodation establishments to another region or there is a little chance to change the type of business. Because of this reason, in choosing establishment place of a hotel, holiday village, it is necessary to make SWOT analysis to determine existent business potential as well as future business potential (Oral 2005).

Knowledge and analyzing of strengths and weaknesses of a region or country will help to chose suitable strategies for country or region. Additionally, continuously evaluating alternative possibilities of the country or region will help to be aware of possible mistakes and will create a chance to make necessary revision (Avcıkurt and others 2003)

SWOT analysis, is formed from internal and external environments, and exposes an entire process (Kotler 2001). In figure 1, it is seen usage of internal and external environmental analysis for a tourist destination. According to figure 1, when this process is thought for a tourist destination, at first, it is necessary to determine internal environment of destination (strengths and weaknesses of tourist destination) and to external environment of destination (opportunities and threats for tourist destination). The process is put into practice after determination of objectives, and afterwards controls and feedback are made. During this process, it is necessary to take into consideration strategic harmony.

Figure 1 : A SWOT Analysis for Tourist Destination



Reference: Geoff Lancaster, Lester Massingham & Ruth Ashford, *Essentials of Marketing*, McGraw-Hill, 1998, compiled from p. 72

The information that is obtained through SWOT analysis is very important in realizing strategic marketing plans of tourist destinations as well as tourism establishments. In this way, tourism destinations will be able to estimate future more trustworthy by benefiting from past and present datum. By being put into practice of strategic marketing plan, tourism destinations will be in a strong position against rival destinations. (Tunc and Uygur 2002). If the strategic plan is applicable, it is thought that destination is attractive and, in a powerful position as a tourism destination. In a contrary situation, it is not worthy to develop tourism in that destination (Gokce 2006).

In studying of SWOT analysis for a tourist destination, answers can be searched to the following questions (Schartz 2006);

1. What are actual products and services in the tourist destination?
2. What can be future products and services in the tourist destination?
3. How is the image of tourist destination in national and international platform?
4. What is the level of prices of products and services in the tourist destination?
5. What are competitive advantages and disadvantages of the tourist destination compared to other tourist destinations?
6. What is the level of education and professional experiences of staff working at touristic establishments in the destination?
7. What is the share of the tourist destination in country's tourism revenues?
8. Are there education possibilities for local people and staff working in the destination?

In addition to above questions, for a SWOT analysis much more detailed subjects must take into consideration in order to determine strengths and weaknesses of the region and threats and opportunities that would be occurred in the future. For example; monetary policy, attitudes of local people against tourists, possibilities of tourism investments in micro level to the region and in macro level to the country, development level of other industries except for tourism, physical and service quality level of accommodation and business-tourism facilities, ecological situation, political stability, security, health risk and problems, adequate of infrastructure and

superstructure, environmental pollution condition, weather conditions, geopolitics situation, cultural heritage, festivals and entertainment possibilities, niche markets, already available tourism types and development possibilities of other tourism types create opportunities to make SWOT analysis multi dimensional.

A SWOT analysis can be done for Canakkale as follows, by taking into consideration these and similar factors.

2. A SWOT ANALYSIS FOR CANAKKALE

2.1. STRENGTHS

- Attractive seashores
- Availability of unspoiled environs such as Gelibolu peninsula
- Nationally and Internationally well known and attractive historical heritage, such as Troy, Gallipoli and Assos (Behramkale)
- Richness of the region about historical and archeological sites
- Saroz gulf which is one of the cleanest and unspoiled gulf of Turkey, is located in the region
- Mount Ida that is one of the most oxygenious and healthy region, is located between Canakkale and Balikesir provinces
- Richness of the region about various fauna and flora
- Newly opened accommodation facilities
- Possibility of over construction is low because of becoming SIT site of the region
- Because of continuous wind, region is highly attractive of surfers
- Availability of educated and experienced employment force because of four tourism schools located in the region
- Crime level is low in the region which is an important factor in tourism industry

2.2. WEAKNESSES

- Limited transportation facilities, particularly weak public air transport links.
- Because of geopolitics location, military areas has spreaded widely in the region
- Because of strategic structure, estate prices are highly expensive. This prevents attractive investment opportunities in tourism.
- Inconsistent implementation of Planning regulations causes disorganized constructions
- Infrastructure is inadequate in quality and capacity and cannot to the need of tourism investments
- Lack of regional development plans
- Underdevelopment of highways restricts rapid and safely transportation. Existing road are highly spoiled and bended
- Unexistence of a bridge over the channel causes problems in transpassing of the channel
- Tourism season is very short in the region
- Existence of intense winds throughout the year

2.3. OPPORTUNITIES

- Because of the natural and geographical possibilities of the region, Alternative types of tourism such as scuba diving and wind surfing can be developed.
- With the special interest tours such as wine tourism, cruising, diving overnight staying of visitors can be increased
- Diverse tourism resources within the region range from nature to culture, history, sports, health and wellness
- Develop the meetings, incentives, conventions and exhibitions market
- Work jointly with public – and private – sector partners in order to concentrate maximum resources for promotion tourism and building positive image.
- Well-established tourism marketing efforts can be organized by sector stakeholders in cooperation
- New investors can be promoted by improving long term tourism development plans and projects
- Cooperation in marketing activities with neighbor provinces can increase arrivals of foreign visitors
- Improving rural tourism products, promoting organic agriculture such as viniculture, olive grove. Environmental improvements in villages, archaeological sites and natural parks
- Transportation facilities can be improved by constructing new motorways and airway companies can increase their flights
- Community based tourism can be improved particularly in rural areas and in islands. By this way local products and local ownership can be promoted

2.4. THREATS

- Intense interest and immigration to the region can cause some problems such as increasing noise, traffic, housing, pollution, violence, robbery problems
- Social, cultural structure of local habitants can be affected negatively by developing of tourism
- Resentment from communities due to lack of benefits or due to impact on key community values
- Rising cost of living for local residents
- Uncontrolled influx of more tourists or tourists seeking inappropriate experiences damage to ecosystem from misuse
- Competition nationally and internationally

CONCLUSION

In recent years, the tourism industry continued to develop despite small growth in the world economy and a recession in some industries. As world globalization takes place, it is predicted that the tourism industry, will continue to develop and renew itself. However, the tourism sector will develop at a gradual pace to maintain stable development. It is necessary to create specific tourism policies for developing a long term plan for tourism industry and to avoid the long term problems associated with faulty tourism development.

In order to eliminate the disadvantages of this type, it is essential to develop long term plans and policies relating to the development of types of alternate, sustainable tourism. Adhere to these plans and policies, but remain flexible to change

in response to tourist demands. Sustainability is an essential principle of all future tourism development. The future management of natural, man-made and human assets is critically important for the long-term sustainability of any tourism industry. Developments which adversely impact the environment, which are short-term, high volume and opportunistic in nature should be avoided. Within this vision, it is necessary to determine appropriate and inappropriate factors and try to eliminate inappropriate factors. On the contrary, it must be struggled to improve appropriate ones. In order to reach this objective SWOT analysis is an important and useful guide.

As mentioned above, Canakkale has various properties to become a new and important tourism destination. However, it is understood that particularly insufficient infrastructure and superfractuure is an obstacle in development of tourism sector. Cooperation between public and private stakeholders to improve image of the region and try to market the region as a whole Implementing tourism master plan, providing sustainable tourism development, developing alternative types of tourism to produce year around tourism throughout the whole region and developing policies specifically aimed at developing type of alternate tourism based on the culture, historical, and natural richness of the region which very few other provinces in the world possess.

In future studies, a survey can be made and opinions of local habitants, private and public stakeholders can be obtained. SWOT analysis that is presented above can be improved. By this method, not only theoretically but practically as well, it can be determined strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and treats of Canakkale province.

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