

Journal Website:  
<https://theamericanjournals.com/index.php/tajmei>

Copyright: Original content from this work may be used under the terms of the creative commons attributes 4.0 licence.

## Research Article

# A "SMART" TOURIST AREA (DESTINATION) MODEL OF FORMING A CLUSTER OF PILGRIMAGE SITES

Submission Date: September 02, 2023, Accepted Date: September 07, 2023,

Published Date: September 12, 2023 |

Crossref doi: <https://doi.org/10.37547/tajmei/Volume05Issue09-03>

**Kahramon K. Khalilov**

Researcher, Department Of "Tourism And Marketing" Karshi State University, Uzbekistan

## ABSTRACT

The concept of a "SMART" tourist area model for forming a cluster of pilgrimage sites has gained significant attention in recent years. This abstract presents an overview of a comprehensive model that combines the principles of SMART (Sustainable, Manageable, Adaptable, Resilient, and Technology-driven) tourism with the unique characteristics of pilgrimage sites. The model aims to enhance the overall visitor experience, ensure the sustainable development of pilgrimage destinations, and foster economic growth in the surrounding regions.

The proposed model incorporates various elements, including infrastructure development, smart technology integration, community engagement, and environmental preservation. It emphasizes the importance of sustainable practices in pilgrimage site management, such as efficient waste management systems, renewable energy utilization, and the promotion of eco-friendly transportation options. Additionally, the model integrates advanced technologies, such as mobile applications, augmented reality, and data analytics, to enhance visitor services, provide real-time information, and optimize resource allocation.

Community engagement plays a vital role in the model, involving the local population in decision-making processes, cultural preservation, and tourism development. By actively involving the community, the model aims to create a sense of ownership and responsibility among local stakeholders, leading to the preservation of cultural heritage and the empowerment of local economies.

Furthermore, the model emphasizes the importance of resilience, considering the potential challenges posed by natural disasters, overcrowding, and changing visitor demands. It incorporates strategies for disaster preparedness, crowd management, and diversification of tourism offerings to mitigate risks and ensure the long-term sustainability of the pilgrimage sites.

The proposed "SMART" tourist area model of forming a cluster of pilgrimage sites presents a holistic approach to pilgrimage tourism development. By integrating sustainability, technology, community engagement, and resilience, the model aims to create a harmonious balance between visitor satisfaction, environmental conservation, and socio-economic benefits. It serves as a guide for policymakers, destination managers, and stakeholders involved in the development and management of pilgrimage sites, contributing to the establishment of thriving and future-ready tourist areas.

## KEYWORDS

"SMART" tourist area, model, pilgrimage sites.

## INTRODUCTION

As can be seen from Figure 4, the "smart" tourist area model of the formation of a pilgrimage tourist cluster consists of two relatively independent parts that reflect the territorial and network aspects of the cluster:

The first is the formation of a "smart" pilgrimage area due to the wide use of ICT and Internet opportunities in the tourist area. The essence of the "smart" pilgrimage area, the three-level smart model and the cluster-forming feature are explained in detail in paragraph 1.3 of the dissertation. As a result of the conversion of holy places into pilgrimage clusters, cluster-based "smart" pilgrimage areas are created and they serve as the basis for cluster formation.

## THE MAIN RESULTS AND FINDINGS

The second is to create added value chains within companies providing pilgrimage tourism services. According to M. Porter, "added value chain" is understood as "a set of various activities of the company aimed at creating, producing, marketing, delivering and providing services for its products"[22]. The added value chain makes it possible to increase the value of economic entities within the cluster. The higher the added value created in the process of providing pilgrimage tourism services, the more

effective the business activity in the cluster is. That's why pilgrimage, which is able to create added value chains, creates a cluster form of organization of pilgrimage tourism due to the merger of companies providing tourist services.

It should be noted that a pilgrimage cluster is formed as a result of the interrelationship and interaction of the processes of formation of tourism craft regions and creation of added value within firms. It is necessary to clarify the organizational and economic levers, tools and methods that will help to create a unified local organization that provides touristic services, capable of creating a chain of added value on the basis of specific destinations. In our opinion, the organic connection of the two leading components placed on opposite sides of the proposed conceptual model can be implemented through four organizational and economic mechanisms. These mechanisms are placed in the middle of the two cluster-forming leading parts in Figure 4. We recommend the following as part of the organizational and economic mechanisms of the formation of the Kadamjo cluster: clustering of the Kadamjo regions; establishing vertical and horizontal connections; development of domestic competition; use of destination marketing tools.

We will consider each of these organizational and economic mechanisms of the pilgrimage cluster formation model step by step.

By advanced pilgrimage clustering, we mean the process of dividing holy places into different quality levels according to the criteria for determining pilgrimage clustering. We developed the methodology and criteria for determining the level of pilgrimage clustering of holy places, and based on them, we divided the pilgrimage clustering of holy places into four categories: 1) "holy place"; 2) "holy place worthy of attention"; 3) "attractive pilgrimage area"; 4) "clusterbop shrine" is divided into quality levels. This classification of holy places serves to create the foundation of the pilgrimage cluster and define its boundaries. An important condition for the creation of a regional tourist cluster is the availability of tourist and infrastructure facilities. A tourist cluster is characterized by the level of concentration of interconnected enterprises and organizations providing tourist services within one limited area. The territorial proximity of the pilgrimage tourism cluster is related to holy places. So, the pilgrim first forms his "pilgrimage area" based on the purpose of the trip, and then travels directly to the selected pilgrimage area. N. V. Rubsova rightly states that "changes in borders and the role of tourist destinations determine the geographical concentration of the tourist cluster"[37]. It is the clusterbop shrine that, in our opinion, serves as the foundation from which the cluster core forms.

Establishing vertical and horizontal connections. The organization of advanced pilgrimage tourism in a cluster method requires the creation of a technological chain of a complex of pilgrimage tourism services. For this, it is necessary to unite all participants of the service process. Such a cluster merger is carried out within the framework of vertical integration. "Vertical

integration is an economic, financial and organizational merger of previously independent business entities participating in the stages of production, sale and marketing of products in order to gain additional competitive advantages in the market" [38]. In such an integration, single technological processes within the framework of the Pilgrimage cluster are gradually integrated, and ultimately all chain links of the Pilgrimage cluster service complex will be under the control of the cluster. The cluster no longer cooperates with intermediaries who deliver services, making the supplier firms an integral part of the cluster. As a result of vertical integration, the cost of services decreases due to the reduction of transaction costs and acceleration of the entire service delivery process.

Within the framework of the cluster, in the process of horizontal integration, the merger of enterprises that are not related to a single technological chain is carried out. Horizontal relations are based on cooperative relations between business partners. Such relations are manifested in the tourism cluster in the merger of banks, hotels, tour operators, catering establishments, consulting firms and other organizations and institutions related to tourism. Horizontal integration is based on cooperative relations between business partners within the cluster. Horizontal integration is a type of integration of enterprises within one or more industries. Such integration occurs when one firm takes over or takes over another firm in the same service industry and at the same level of service. Those who operate and compete in the same market segment in the same stages of production, in the same link of the trade chain, in the same industry sector, and specialize in the production of the same or similar products or provide similar services or similar services is a type of integration of firms. The positive consequences of horizontal integration include: reducing the number of

producers; obtaining synergistic effect; reduce market influence of suppliers and consumers; to have competitive advantages; in order to protect the production process and to ensure the stability of the position, to reduce the risk of a competitive conflict.

Development of internal competition. In contrast to the firm, company, corporation and other forms of economic management, the cluster has a favorable opportunity for internal competition between its constituent units. According to experts, "the synergistic effect of clustering is ensured by pre-competitive mergers". A cluster formation tool called "Competitive Benchmarking" plays an important role in ensuring competition within the cluster. Benchmarking (from the English language "bench" - "level", "mark" - "sign") means studying in order to obtain knowledge and information from other companies in order to improve one's business. Benchmarking is the process of finding and studying the best available management and business practices. In other words, benchmarking means using the best practices of leading companies, gaining best practices, and benchmarking. The most common types of benchmarking practices include: internal, functional, global, general and organizational benchmarking, competitive benchmarking and process benchmarking[4]. The process of competitive benchmarking consists of the following stages of sequential actions[6]: identification of business processes and tasks that require improvement; determining the indicators to be analyzed; bringing together the best economic subjects inside and outside the field of study; evaluation of indicators collected in the selected direction; preparing information about measurements; comparison and analysis of leadership and own indicators; work on errors based on research; development, implementation and completion.

Use of destination marketing tools. In order to effectively organize pilgrimage tourism activities in the cluster approach, it is necessary to apply the concept of "destination marketing" in this area. Destination marketing is a regional method and forms of touristic demand management. He is engaged in forming the level and structure of the demand for tourist services in the tourist area and determining the time of emergence of this tourist demand. As a result of the integration of destination demand and territorial supply, tourist-attractive places become tourist destinations. In the process of creating pilgrimage clusters, in our opinion, it is appropriate to use destination marketing tools related to the tourist services market in four areas: creating a specialized pilgrimage tourism product of clusters; setting prices for specialized cluster products that are acceptable to visitors; organization of visits of farmers on a commercial basis to pilgrimage areas; to create a brand of pilgrimage clusters, to organize advertising and to take measures to encourage pilgrimages.

In exchange for the application of the destination concept of marketing in the formation of a pilgrimage cluster, there are opportunities for rapid development of entrepreneurship in this field and stabilization of tourist flows.

Under the influence of the organizational and economic mechanisms described above, a pilgrimage cluster is formed in the interpretation of "a unified local organization providing pilgrimage tourism services capable of creating a value added chain" in the "smart" tourist area (destination) model of pilgrimage cluster formation.

Finally, in our proposed cluster model, the interrelationship and interaction of the processes of formation of pilgrimage regions and the creation of added value within the firms providing pilgrimage

tourism services are clustered, vertical and horizontal integration, development of intra-cluster competition through benchmarking, and destination the synergetic effect of the new quality pilgrimage cluster formed by the use of marketing tools is manifested in increasing the competitiveness of the specialized pilgrimage tourism product. This effect of clustering is shown in the lower part of Figure 4.

In general, according to the structure of the recommended "smart tourist area (destination) model of forming a pilgrimage cluster": resource part that takes the form of holy places as an economic resource related to "smart" tourist areas; a part of the goods that has the appearance of a specialized pilgrimage tourist product; pilgrimage is a functional part that provides tourist services; the capital part that increases the value of the cluster; It is a model in the form of an integral tourist cluster, which consists of the entrepreneurial form of pilgrimage tourism organization and the institutional parts of the form of management of pilgrimage tourism activity.

The difference between the proposed author visit cluster model and other models is as follows:

1) If in all existing models the tourist destination is considered as a component of the cluster, we considered the tourist destination as the foundation of the cluster and the cluster as the superstructure of the tourist destination. That is, we studied the tourist area as the foundation of the cluster and the cluster as the structure of the tourist destination.

2) In all existing models, a traditional tourist destination is considered as a cluster element, we recommended forming a cluster on the basis of a "smart tourist area". In tourist clusters formed on the basis of a tourist destination, if the tourist destination

was considered from a geographical or marketing point of view, we used its smart model.

3) In our proposed model, we justified the formation of a pilgrimage tourism cluster based on holy places, approaching the destination from the point of view of pilgrimage. In other models, the destination is approached from the point of view of travel, and attractions are considered as an element forming a cluster.

4) Another difference of our proposed model from other existing cluster models is the introduction of new organizational and economic mechanisms of formation of pilgrimage cluster - "competition benchmarking" and "destination marketing".

The analysis of the problems of the tourism sector shows that currently tourism in Kashkadarya region is not competitive, in our opinion, its development is very weak and unsystematic. The purpose of this study is to develop a strategy for the development of tourism and handicrafts in the region, and to develop the prospects for the development of tourism handicrafts using the opportunities provided in the republic.

Crafts and tourism development strategy, as the main direction of state regulation of crafts in tourism activities.

Taking into account the importance of the problem, in the republic in 2018-2022. Wide opportunities were created for the development of the region, development of tourism and folk crafts. In this directive, it is emphasized that the role of the tourism industry in the national development strategy is even more important, and the prospects for the effective formation and development of tourism and handicraft activities in the entire country, in particular in the Kashkadarya region, are defined. And this, in turn,

encourages solving important socio-economic tasks, such as improving the well-being and quality of life of the citizens of this region, preserving natural resources for future generations, and transitioning the republic to a new, innovative life. In addition, we considered it appropriate to develop the strategic development of tourism in the republic, and in particular, to develop a special craft environment in the region, and to develop an important and promising task.

All this is the basis for the formation and strategy of the tourism industry, and for the development of the theory and practice of studying the ecological and economic basis of tourism and craft activities in the Kashkadar region. Globalization processes of economic activity that meet the modern needs of the region's population.

Touristic and craft resources of Kashkadarya region allow development of various types of tourism capable of satisfying a wide range of tourist needs in the region. However, in order to eliminate the problems that hinder the development of tourism in the region, it is necessary to start scientific-research activities related to the study of the combined effects of natural, socio-economic and ecological factors. It is these aspects that served as the basis for this research and determine the relevance, content and direction of this dissertation. This industry, as can be seen from the world experience, not only through its activities, but also to almost all other sectors of the economy: economy, is able to make a significant contribution to the economy of the region, having a strong stimulating effect on industry and construction. Transport, agriculture, household services and other sectors.

Development of tourism craft activities based on the law of demand and supply, increasing its change in the volume of gross domestic product and services per capita, providing residents with new jobs in the

regions, and organizational and economic mechanisms of management in industry enterprises. scientific research on improvement is being carried out. In this regard, expansion of horizontal and vertical management structures in craft enterprises, global and local use of digital booking systems, improvement of management models and mechanisms that ensure operational efficiency by filling them with the necessary elements (participants of the structure, management methods, resource components), as well as , creating a multiplier effect at the regional (meso, macro) level, carrying out scientific research on improving the management methodology of tourism handicrafts in countries with a resource base of handicrafts is one of the priorities.

Tourism has entered the 21st century as a socio-economic field that has a great positive impact on the world economy. According to the World Tourism Organization, tourism accounts for 10% of the production and service turnover in the world. In the next 20 years, the development of international tourism is observed, the strong export of goods and services in the world market. The activity of tourism crafts of the countries of the world is directly related to the level of their culture, the development of art and science. The traditional way of developing regional tourism crafts is based on the tourist destination approach, and it is related to the transformation of the tourist resources of the regions from a potential state to a state of use. This approach is aimed at the formation of the tourism craft system of the region.

Due to the fact that a new - destination approach based on a harmonious unity of tourist demand and supply has emerged as an alternative way in the development of craft tourism in the region and is widely used in tourism practice, they are achieving high economic and financial results in the field of tourism.

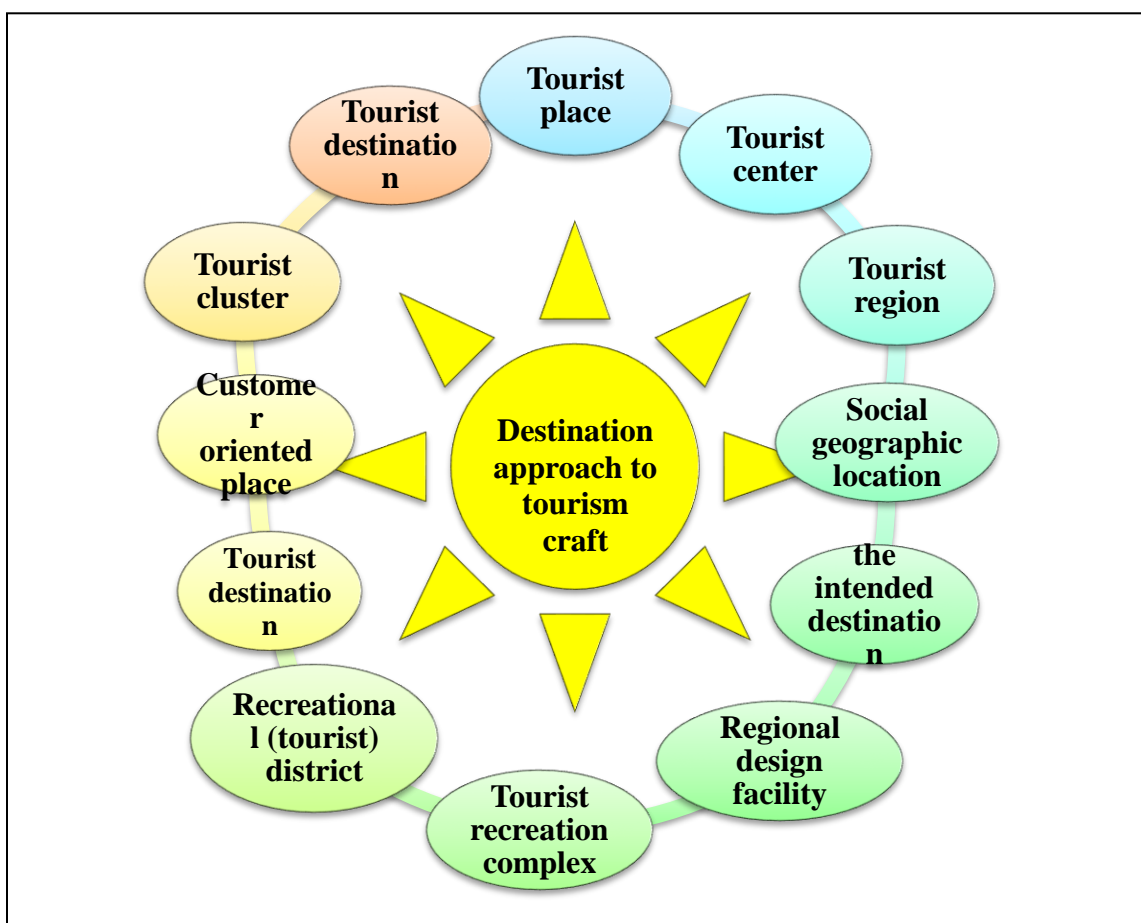
1. Attractions - places of interest;
  2. Accessibility - availability (availability of the entire transport system consisting of routes, terminals and means of transport);
  3. Amenities - services (accommodation and food, retail network, other tourist services);
  4. Available packages - available packages (pre-existing travel packages through intermediaries);
  5. Activities - activities (all types of activities in designated places of visit and work performed by consumers during the visit);
  6. Ancillary services - additional services (services that tourists use in banking, telecommunications, post office, hospitals, etc.).
5. Offer model of the tourist area. Within the country, tourism is based on the supply system, the processes that occur between consumers and producers in the following three areas:
1. The space that creates the tourist - includes tourism intermediaries and goods and services consumed before the trip.

2. Information space - includes information sources and marketing tools that create a tourist and harmonize the places where the trip takes place, reflect the attractiveness of the country.

3. The place where travel takes place - reflects the set of products and services provided by all organizations participating in the process of meeting travel needs [18].

SMART model of tourist area. The term "Smart" was introduced into scientific exchange by Peter F. Druckerton in his "Management Practice" (1954). The abbreviation "SMART" is defined to determine the characteristics of the set goal and means: Specific - clear; Measurable - measurable; Achievable - achievable; Realistic - realistic; Time is specified by time [18]. Thus, the scientist believed that if the goal is "smart", that is, it can meet the set criteria, then it will be achieved.

We made a monographic analysis of the opinions of scientists on the theory of tourist destination and determined the regional trends of craft tourism according to the sign of "forms of representation of tourist destination" (Fig. 1).



Ye.A. Mashkovich, a graduate student of the Baikal State University of Economics and Law, improves the ideas of I.S. Ivanov and divides the economic aspect of the tourist destination into two parts [20]: 1) as an object of market relations (the destination due to the criterion of "existence of tourist demand" treated as goods); 2) as an economic space (the criterion of "the presence of many objects and the connections between them" allows considering the destination as an economic space).

## CONCLUSION

In our opinion, the institutional aspects of the tourism industry were not taken into account in the classification of the aspects of tourist destinations by

YE.A.Mashkovich and I.S.Ivanov. Since tourist destinations become an important source of income for regions in the current period, we think that it is important to distinguish the financial aspect of craft tourism, which explains the quality of its capital. Also, taking into account the existence of organizational forms of tourist destinations such as tourist center, tourist region, recreational district, tourist-recreational complex, socio-geographical place, tourist destination, it is appropriate to separate its institutional aspect. By introducing additional marketing, financial and institutional aspects to the existing aspects of the tourist destination, conducting a comparative analysis of the concept of "tourist destination" on the basis of their qualitative details, initially "7-dimensional" [21] and then by introducing innovative, informational and

ecological aspects into them, Table 1, which developed the "10-dimensional" tool.

## REFERENCES

1. Геращенко Э.А. Формирование механизма управления инвестиционной привлекательностью в рекреационной сфере. Автореферат дисс.....канд.экон.наук. Сочи.2011.С.10.
2. Новиков В.С. Инновации в туризме. Учебное пособие. С.133. [http://www.srinest.com/book\\_970\\_chapter\\_1\\_Annota%D1%81ija.html](http://www.srinest.com/book_970_chapter_1_Annota%D1%81ija.html).
3. Морозов М.А. Экономика и предпринимательство в социально-культурном сервисе и туризме. М.: Издательский центр Академия, 2004.
4. Львова Т.В. Влияние качества туристских услуг на экономику дестинации (на примере города-курорта Сочи). Автореферат дисс.....канд.экон.наук. Сочи.2011.
5. Ибрагимов Н.С. Ўзбекистонда халқаро туризмни ривожлантиришда дестинацион менежмент концепциясини қўллаш. Автореферат дисс.... иқт.фан.номз. Самарқанд. 2008. 9-бет.
6. Иванов И. С. Повышение качества туристского продукта в условиях персонализации систем дистрибуции. Автореферат дисс...к.э.н. Москва. 2011.7 стр. <http://www.dissercat.com/content/povysheni-e-kachestva-turistskogo-produkta-v-usloviyakh-personalizatsii-sistem-distributsii>
7. Машкович Е. А. Оценка понятия «туристская дестинация» в контексте современной туристики. // Известия Иркутской государственной экономической академии. 2007.- №6 - с.89-92.
8. Туристик худудрақобатбардошлиги [Матн]: Монография\ и.ф.д., проф. Б.Н. Навруз-Зодатахрири остида. Муаллифлар: Навруз-Зода Б.Н., Ибрагимов Н.С., Навруз-Зода З.Б., Навруз-Зода Ш.Б. 2017– 27- 34-бб.
9. Портер М. Конкурентное преимущество: Как достичь высокого результата и обеспечить его устойчивость. М.: Альпина Паблишер, 2016. 716 с. С.73.
10. Павлова Э.Н. Дестинация как концепт развития региональной системы непрерывного профессионального туристского образования. Автореферат дисс...докт.пед.наук. Москва. 2010.- Режим доступа: <http://www.dissercat.com/content/destinatsiya-kak-kontsept-razvitiya-regionalnoi-sistemy-nepreryvnogo-professionalnogo-turist>.
11. Leiper N. The framework of tourism: Towards a definition of tourism, tourist, and the tourist industry // Annals of Tourism Research, № 6(4), 1979. P. 390-407.
12. Leiper N. Tourism system: an interdisciplinary perspective. Palmerston North, New Zealand: Department of Management Systems, Business Studies Faculty, Massey University, 1990, 289 p
13. Медведев А. В. Сакральное как причастность к абсолютному. Екатеринбург, 1999. С. 40.
14. Морозов М.А. Дестинация – важнейший элемент туризма / М.А. Морозов, О. Коль. Туризм: практика, проблемы, перспективы. – 1998. – № 1. – С. 9.