Chapter 17

Smart Tourism, Smart Cities, and Smart Destinations as Knowledge Management Tools

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ABSTRACT

The rapid increase in the population has caused problems in the correct use and management of resources in cities. Solutions to these problems have been sought based on knowledge management. In today’s digital age, the concept of smartness of cities has been put forward together with the web-based applications. It has changed the expectations and needs of tourists and residents, especially in the tourism sector in the service sector. Smart tourism destinations, which are seen as a solution to the expectations and needs of the changing tourists and local people, bring holistic innovations covering all the stakeholders in the tourism ecosystem. In this direction, it is thought that knowledge management makes the right use of resources obligatory and contributes to sustainable tourism understanding. For this purpose, in the chapter, suggestions were made to provide maximum benefit from web-based projects that are carried out in qualitative direction of knowledge management and smart tourism destinations.

INTRODUCTION

Rapid population growth in metropolitan cities has caused problems with the correct use and management of resources. For this reason, especially in large cities, programs are needed to provide conveniences for the increasing number of people and their needs. In the digital world we live in, web-based solution proposals have been sought for these problems. With the widespread use of computers and the internet, the concept of smart city emerged when knowledge about cities was transformed into web-based and artificial intelligence formats in order to increase the efficiency of cities and facilitate human needs.

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In the ongoing process, such practices have led to the rapid spread of smart cities and even radical changes in various sectors. This situation has changed the expectations and needs of tourists and residents in tourism, especially in the service sector. Smart tourism destinations that are expected as a solution to the changing expectations and needs of tourists and residents introduce holistic innovations that cover all stakeholders within the tourism ecosystem. In addition, it has made it imperative to adopt a protective approach to the use of environmental and socio-cultural resources, which is the capital of tourism. It contributes to sustainable tourism understanding by necessitating the correct use of resources. Therefore, the concept of smart destination has enabled the establishment of an integrated structure in which all stakeholders are involved. For this purpose, in the study, a qualitative assessment of the smart tourism destinations that have been examined in the international literature in the 1990s, but which have recently been discussed in Turkey, has been made.

It is seen that enterprises, which are an indispensable member of the social environment, use the knowledge obtained with the increasing speed of technology and the use of computers for the purpose of sustainable competitive advantage in the market through projects such as web design and software. Especially in the service sector, knowledge management applications have gained significant advantages against their competitors.

Tourism destinations showed great interest in the concept of smart city. In this context, tourism destination enterprises are trying to establish superiority in competition by increasing the satisfaction of tourists and increase market share as well as regional destination managers adopt the concept of smart tourism destination in order to provide their citizens with a better quality of life. In line with this knowledge, it is aimed in this study to conduct an extensive examination in the smart tourism destinations (Çelik and Topsakal, 2017:164) which are a new subject in Turkey in a qualitative way. Initially, it was aimed to examine knowledge management and to reveal the sectoral and regional importance of knowledge. Then, the concept of smartness was examined in qualitative terms and a judgment on what smart cities are like was made. Afterward, the compilation obtained was scrutinized with the concept of smart destination in a holistic way. Finally, an evaluation of the smart tourism destination for the tourism economy and the stakeholders in the ecosystem has been made.

BACKGROUND

Concept of Knowledge Management

For centuries, human beings have been able to guide the events they have lived with the experiences they gained and their innate abilities. Because they maintained their lives by establishing a causative relationship with the knowledge they have obtained from these experiences and abilities. Therefore, the use of knowledge in human life has become an indispensable actor. According to TDK (Turkish Language Association) (2018), the concept of knowledge or its components are defined as “the product of thought resulting from the study of human intelligence”. It is possible to say that knowledge is a belief that is accepted by the person. It doesn’t matter for a person whether knowledge is the absolute right. The person evaluates knowledge with internal consistency rather than objective reality (Lang, 2001: 45). Thanks to its existence and use, the knowledge has enabled the emergence of today’s technology. In this context, knowledge, which enters every area of human life, is seen as an indispensable element (Tokcan, 2015:7).