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THE IMPACT OF SMART TOURISM ON TRAVELER PERCEPTION AND BEHAVIOR: A REVIEW OF LITERATURE

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Abstract

This paper explores how smart tourism has changed people's perception and behavior in the tourism industry. Smart tourism refers to the integration of technology into tourism activities, providing personalized and seamless experiences for travelers. The study examines the impact of smart tourism on customers' perception and behavior, including their decision-making process, travel patterns, and overall satisfaction. The paper begins by defining smart tourism and its underlying technologies, followed by a discussion of the factors that have contributed to its growth and adoption. It then examines the various ways in which smart tourism has transformed the tourism experience for travelers, including personalized recommendations, real-time information, and interactive communication. Overall, the findings suggest that smart tourism has transformed people's perception and behavior towards tourism, leading to a more personalized and enjoyable experience for travelers.

Key words

smart tourism, perception, behaviour, tourism industry

Introduction

Smart tourism is a new paradigm in the tourism industry that leverages advanced technologies such as mobile apps, artificial intelligence, and big data analytics to offer travelers a personalized and enjoyable experience. In particular, the evolution of digital technologies (ICTs) and cloud computing technologies pushes tourism destination governments to utilise smart technologies to optimise business planning decisions and enhance the tourism industry. Smart tourism is a rising phenomenon in which tourism destinations, practitioners, and travellers rely increasingly on new ICTs that allow massive data. transformation. By service-dominant logic and the predominance of Internet of Things (IoT), mobile applications (apps), location-based services, geo-tag services, Virtual Reality (VR), Augmented Reality (AR), social media, and smart gadgets, smart tourism is implemented into the concept of service co-creation. Tourist experience development, destination competitiveness, and sustainability improvement are indicators of this utilisation (Ye & Ye, 2020). As a benefit of managing tourism locations, smart tourism combines sustainability principles with technological innovation. One of the main concepts of the topics is whether technology-enhanced tourism experiences can improve visitor happiness and propensity to return. Because travel experience is a

crucial antecedent of satisfaction and behaviour intention, it is vital to understand the relationship between visitors' usage of smart tourism technology at tourism venues and their entire trip experience. Smart tourism promotion in digital marketing contributed to digital marketing diffusion by providing substantial assistance to both customers and enterprises (Baltes, 2015). According to Ku, & Chen (2015), Kiráová, & Pavleka (2015), all of the research stated above is from the viewpoint of developed countries such as the United States, Australia, and New Zealand (Cited in Abumandil, 2020, p1937). The concept of smart tourism, which is required for theory development, appears to have failed to grasp consensus, much less even theoretical foundations built expressly for the topic. Since digital transformation in smart tourism is a novel idea in Uzbekistan that needs to be studied its breadth. Because smart technologies and their applications are rapidly evolving, it is vital to implement an up-to-date analysis of the existing literature in order to give a firm foundation and direction for future research. A systematic review of the literature on this topic reveals several key findings.

Literature Review

The term "smartness" was coined in the 1990s by Holland (2008) and has gotten a lot of attention since then. The integration of ICTs determines a city's smartness. A smart city is one that uses ICTs such as artificial intelligence, cloud computing, IoTs, and mobile communications to integrate the city's sources. As cities implement various technologies to improve the quality of life for people, tourism destinations continue to embrace technology to improve not just visitors' travel. experiences but also destination competitiveness, resulting in the notion of smart tourism destinations. In essence, smart cities or smart tourist destinations seek to improve a location's competitiveness and attract more visitors (Cited in Jeong and Shin, 2020). Smart tourism concept has been developed as an intelligent travel management platform, the use of tourist, with the assistance of cloud computing and networking technology, tourism intensive, intelligent, unified management, enhance national decentralised decision-making power of tourism resource management, and increase service sector involvement in the tourism industry (Wang, 2014). According to some research which has been done by Gretzel, Sigala, Xiang, and Koo (2015), smart tourism is a new tendency that consists of three levels and components: smart destination, smart business environment, and smart experience (Cited in Pai et al., 2020, p2). The idea of Smart Tourism (ST) is introduced by Buhalis (2013) and Amaranggana (2015), which derives from the growth of Smart Cities. Destinations may improve their competitiveness by employing smart strategies to meet the demands of visitors before, during, and after their trip (Cited in Corte et al., 2017, p12).

The introduction of smart technology in the tourist sector encourages the usage of social media channels and online booking as a result, the tour industry is changing due to the adoption of smart tourism. Touring information services may now track needs and other marketing data in terms of tourist marketing. The development of smart phone software accomplishes publicity and marketing of tourist items and places (Li et al., 2017). According to Berthon, Pitt, and Watson (1996), visitors' level of engagement enables ST to deliver more relevant and suitable information, which helps users find travel information more quickly. As a result, higher levels of involvement result in more favourable attitudes toward information technology. Buonincontri and Micera (2016) noted that in light of the importance of the tourist experience and the demands for information technology,

tourism and hospitality industry businesses in smart tourism locations are becoming more responsive in delivering STTs in conjunction with visitors to provide more productive travel destinations.

Methodology

A systematic review was undertaken in this study to gather more pertinent articles about smart tourism and the way how smart tourism has shaped people's perception and behaviour. All relevant publications were initially searched in three databases, including Scopus, EBSCOhost, and Web of Science. To extract the collected findings, the researchers decided on the search criteria. A comprehensive search strategy will be developed using relevant keywords and phrases such as "smart tourism," "technology," "perception," "behavior," "traveler," and "tourism." Electronic databases such as PubMed, Scopus, and Web of Science will be searched along with reference lists of relevant studies and gray literature sources. Studies were selected based on pre-defined inclusion criteria such as being published in English, focusing on smart tourism, and reporting on changes in traveler perception and behavior. The findings of the review will be interpreted in light of the research question and conclusions will be drawn about the overall impact of smart tourism on traveler perception and behavior.

Findings

Numerous definitions and elements of the ST concept have been examined in detail, which illustrates the role and importance of ST and people's experience and whether it can meet tourists' expectations. In order to assess analytically, synthesis, critical thinking, and generalisation techniques that were adopted, several conference materials, Internet publications, and journals were explored in terms of this issue and existing literature on the subject and predicted data sources. Several publications focused on technology and visitor behavior, perception, and experience, followed by technology adoption, demonstrating that studying how smart tourism affects humans is still a high priority. As a result, it is critical to understand how people assess and accept ST value propositions, including their perceptions of benefits and experiences.

Based on the findings firstly, smart tourism has transformed the tourism experience for travelers by providing personalized recommendations, real-time information, and interactive communication. This has led to increased satisfaction, loyalty, and engagement among travelers. Secondly, smart tourism has also impacted traveler behavior by changing their travel patterns, preferences, and decision-making processes. For example, travelers are more likely to use online platforms to plan their trips and book accommodations, and they are more likely to choose destinations based on the availability of smart tourism services. Furthermore, smart tourism has the potential to promote sustainable tourism practices by providing travelers with information about eco-friendly activities and encouraging them to engage in responsible tourism behaviors.

However, there are also challenges associated with the implementation of smart tourism initiatives, including issues related to privacy, security, and data protection. To fully understand the implications of smart tourism for the tourism industry and its stakeholders, further research is needed. In conclusion, the systematic review highlights the transformative impact of smart tourism on traveler perception and behavior, as well as its potential to promote sustainable tourism practices. Overall, this paper provides a comprehensive review of the literature on smart tourism and its impact on

traveler perception and behavior. It highlights the need for further research to fully understand the implications of this emerging trend for the tourism industry and its stakeholders.

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