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DESTINATION MANAGEMENT FOR SMALL SCALE CITIES FOR SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT. THE CASE OF VIA EGNATIA CITIES

Summary of Doctoral Thesis

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Abstract

Effective destination management even for small scale cities is key factor for sustainable tourism development. The selected geographical area in south Eastern Europe, Balkans, is focused on three destinations with a great history and culture transformations related to the ancient Roman road of Via Egnatia. Tourism and travel, activating societies of the destinations, but they have a significant and wider, economic, social, cultural and environmental influence. Destination management is the driving force for destinations over cultural corridors well-known since older times. Pilgrims became modern tourists, new countries and boundaries affect the sustainability status of each destination separately. Model of destination management as sustainable tourism development tool implies small cities in a connectivity using tangible and intangible cultural heritage through the complementarity containing competitive advantage for their image, attributes, equity, personality, attractiveness in the direction of improving the citizens' quality of life and the visitors' quality of experiences. Research contains findings in 3 different countries, in 3 different small cities, 3 different systems but in one cultural heritage corridor of Via Egnatia over centuries as a strong connection bond providing an occasion challenge of co-development using an innovative model of destination management for sustainable tourism development. The related anticipated implications of such results on the advancement of the knowledge domain of the destination governance could add to the communities much more than only economic prosperity such as long-term education systems and connections with organizations with cultural, environmental or social background on the way to sustainability. The aim of this research project was to determine the impact of quality management systems on the operational performance of DMO's in the area. The results show how systems have impact on the internal functions of marketing, operations and human resources management in the local society and implication to the market as simple destinations or as parts of complementary thematic routes.

Keywords: Destination management, Sustainable tourism development, City Branding, Cultural heritage, Tourism governance

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Abstract in Macedonian

Ефективното управување со дестинациите, дури и за малите градови е клучно за одржлив развој на туризмот. Избраната географска област во Југоисточна Европа, Балканот, е фокусирана на три дестинации со голема трансформација на историјата и културата, поврзани со древниот римски пат Виа Игнација. Туризмот и патувањата, активирањето на општествата за дестинациите, имаат значително и пошироко, економско, социјално, културно и еколошко влијание. Управувањето со дестинациите е движечка сила за дестинациите покрај културните коридори, добро познати од постарите времиња. Аџиите станаа модерни туристи, новите земји и граници влијаат на статусот на одржливост на секоја дестинација посебно. Моделот на управување со дестинации како одржлив инструмент за развој на туризмот влијае на малите градови во поврзувањето, користејќи материјално и нематеријално културно наследство преку комплементарност што содржи конкурентна предност за нивниот имиц, атрибути, еднаквост, личност, атрактивност, во насока на подобрување на квалитетот на животот на граѓаните и квалитетот на искуствата на посетителите. Истражувањето содржи наоди во 3 различни земји, во 3 различни мали градови, 3 различни системи, но во еден коридор за културно наследство преку Виа Игнациа, низ вековите познат како силна врска што претставува причина за предизвик за заеднички развој со користење на иновативен модел на управување со дестинации за одржлив развој на туризмот. Поврзаните очекувани импликации на таквите резултати врз унапредувањето на знаењето во управувањето со дестинацијата, може да им додаде на заедниците многу повеќе работи отколку економски просперитет, како долгорочни образовни системи и врски со организации со културна, еколошка или социјална позадина на патот кон одржливост. Целта на овој истражувачки проект беше да се утврди влијанието на системите за управување со квалитет врз оперативните перформанси на ДМО (DMO, Организација за Менаџмент со Дестинации) во областа. Резултатите покажуваат како системите влијаат врз внатрешните функции на маркетингот, работењето и управувањето со човечките ресурси во локалното општество и импликацијата на пазарот како едноставни дестинации или како делови од дополнителни тематски правци.

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Клучни зборови: Управување со дестинации, Одржлив развој на туризмот, Брендирање на град, Културно наследство, Туристичко управување.

Abstract in Greek

Η αποτελεσματική διαχείριση προορισμού, ακόμη και για πόλεις μικρής κλίμακας είναι κλειδί για την βιώσιμη τουριστική ανάπτυξη. Η επιλογή της γεωγραφικής περιοχής της Νοτιοανατολικής Ευρώπης, στα Βαλκάνια, εστιάζει σε τρεις προορισμούς με μια μεγάλη ιστορία και πολιτισμικούς μετασχηματισμούς που σχετίζονται με τον αρχαίο ρωμαϊκό δρόμο της Εγνατίας οδού. Τουρισμός και ταξίδια, ενεργοποιούν τις κοινωνίες των προορισμών, αλλά έχουν σημαντική και ευρύτερη, οικονομική, κοινωνική, πολιτιστική και περιβαλλοντική επίδραση. Η διαχείριση προορισμών είναι η κινητήρια δύναμη πάνω σε πολιτιστικούς διαδρόμους γνωστούς από παλαιότερα χρόνια. Οι προσκυνητές έγιναν σύγχρονοι τουρίστες, νέες χώρες και όρια επηρεάζουν την κατάσταση βιωσιμότητας κάθε προορισμού. Το μοντέλο διαχείρισης προορισμού ως εργαλείο αειφόρου τουριστικής ανάπτυξης, συνδέει μικρές πόλεις χρησιμοποιών άυλη και απτή πολιτιστική κληρονομιά μέσω της συμπληρωματικότητας που περιέχει ανταγωνιστικό πλεονέκτημα για την εικόνα, τα χαρακτηριστικά, την ισότητα, την προσωπικότητα, την ελκυστικότητά τόσο προς την κατεύθυνση της βελτίωσης της ποιότητας ζωής των πολιτών όσο και την ποιότητα των εμπειριών των επισκεπτών. Τα ευρήματα σε 3 διαφορετικές χώρες, σε 3 μικρές πόλεις, σε 3 συστήματα, αλλά σε έναν διάδρομο πολιτιστικής κληρονομιάς της Via Egnatia ο οποίος εδώ και αιώνες αποτελεί έναν ισχυρό δεσμό σύνδεσης που παρέχει μια ευκαιρία πρόκλησης από κοινού ανάπτυξης χρησιμοποιώντας ένα καινοτόμο μοντέλο διαχείρισης προορισμού για βιώσιμη τουριστική ανάπτυξη. Οι σχετικές αναμενόμενες επιπτώσεις τέτοιων αποτελεσμάτων στην πρόοδο του τομέα της γνώσης για την διακυβέρνησης προορισμού θα μπορούσαν να προσθέσουν στις κοινότητες πολύ περισσότερα πράγματα από την οικονομική ευημερία, όπως μακροπρόθεσμα εκπαιδευτικά συστήματα και συνδέσεις με οργανισμούς με πολιτιστικό, περιβαλλοντικό ή κοινωνικό υπόβαθρο στο δρόμο προς την βιωσιμότητα. Στόχος αυτού του ερευνητικού έργου ήταν να προσδιορίσει τον αντίκτυπο των συστημάτων διαχείρισης ποιότητας στην επιχειρησιακή απόδοση των DMO στην περιοχή. Τα αποτελέσματα δείχνουν πώς τα συστήματα επηρεάζουν τις εσωτερικές λειτουργίες του μάρκετινγκ, των λειτουργιών και της διαχείρισης

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ανθρώπινων πόρων στην τοπική κοινωνία και τις επιπτώσεις στην αγορά ως προορισμών ή ως μέρη συμπληρωματικών θεματικών διαδρομών.

Λέξεις-κλειδιά: Διαχείριση προορισμών, Αειφόρος τουριστική ανάπτυξη, City Branding, Πολιτιστική κληρονομιά, Τουρισμός

Abstract in Albanian

Menaxhimi efektiv i destinacionit edhe për qytetet në shkallë të vogël është thelbësor për zhvillimin e turizmit të qëndrueshëm. Zona e përzgjedhur gjeografike në Evropën Juglindore, Ballkanin, është përqendruar në tre destinacione me një histori të madhe dhe transformime të kulturës në lidhje me rrugën antike Romake të Via Egnatia.

Turizmi dhe udhëtimet, duke aktivizuar shoqëritë e destinacioneve kanë një ndikim domethënës dhe më të gjerë, ekonomik, social, kulturor dhe mjedisor. Menaxhimi i destinacionit është forca lëvizëse për destinacionet mbi korridoret kulturore të mirënjohura nga kohërat më të vjetra. Pelegrinët u bënë turistë modernë, vendet e reja dhe kufijtë ndikojnë në statusin e qëndrueshmërisë së secilit destinacion veç e veç. Modeli i menaxhimit të destinacionit si mjet i zhvillimit të qëndrueshëm të turizmit nënkupton qytetet e vogla në një lidhje duke përdorur trashëgiminë kulturore të prekshme dhe jomateriale përmes plotësueshmërisë që përmban përparësi konkurruese për imazhin, atributet, barazinë, personalitetin, atraktivitetin e tyre në drejtim të përmirësimit të cilësisë së jetës së qytetarëve dhe cilësinë e përvojave të vizitorëve.

Hulumtimi përmban gjetje në 3 vende të ndryshme, në 3 qytete të vegjël të ndryshëm, 3 sisteme të ndryshme, por në një korridor të trashëgimisë kulturore të Via Egnatia gjatë shekujve si lidhje e fortë, lidhje që ofron një sfidë të rastit të bashkë-zhvillimit duke përdorur një model inovativ të menaxhimit të destinacionit për turizëm të qëndrueshëm.

Implikimet përkatëse të parashikuara të rezultateve të tilla në avancimin e fushës së njohurive të qeverisjes së destinacionit mund t'u shtojnë komuniteteve shumë më shumë gjëra sesa prosperiteti ekonomik, siç janë sistemet arsimore afatgjata dhe lidhjet me organizatat me sfond kulturor, mjedisor ose shoqëror në rrugën drejt qëndrueshmërisë.

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Qëllimi i këtij projekti kërkimor ishte të përcaktonte ndikimin e sistemeve të menaxhimit të cilësisë në performancën operacionale të OMD-ve (Organizatat e Menaxhimit të Destinacionit) në zonë. Rezultatet tregojnë se si sistemet ndikojnë në funksionet e brendshme të marketingut, operacioneve dhe menaxhimit të burimeve njerëzore në shoqërinë lokale dhe implikimet në treg si destinacione të thjeshta ose si pjesë të rrugëve plotësuese tematike.

Fjalët kyçe: Menaxhimi i destinacionit, Zhvillimi i qëndrueshëm i turizmit, Shënjë Identifikuese e Qytetit, Trashëgimia Kulturore, Qeverisja e Turizmit.

Chapter 1: Introduction

is introduction; Chapter 1 introduces an overview to this research study. It presents the study issues, and its structure. Also it explains the logic plan for this work. The research questions are outlined and the methods are also presented.

The study aims to investigate destination management at the level of small cities as destinations of the same cultural corridor of Via Egnatia throughout centuries and the impact on the surrounding areas according to sustainable tourism development principles.

The research study aims to identify a destination management model with application possibilities on all three countries and the specific Via Egnatia cities using networking perspectives activating the balance between social, cultural, natural and economy ecosystem.

The main research question follows as "Is there any model of destination management for sustainable tourism development as application to the small-scale cities even if they are in different countries and regions?" using the examples from the Ancient Via Egnatia physical and cultural networking.

RQ1: Is there a statistically significant relationship between tourism governance and destination competitiveness and attractiveness

RQ2: Is there a statistically significant relationship between cultural policy and behavioral intention?

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RQ3: Is there a statistically significant relationship between cultural policy and destination attachment?

RQ4: Is there a statistically significant relationship between destination resources and destination competitiveness and attractiveness?

RQ5: Are there differences in country level and in terms of destination resources?

RQ6: Are there differences in country level and in terms of destination management?

RQ7: Are there differences in country level and in terms of destination competitiveness and attractiveness?

RQ8: Is there a statistically significant relationship between destination resources and the socioeconomic development of the Via Egnatia area?

RQ9: Is there a statistically significant relationship between destination management and the socioeconomic development of the Via Egnatia area?

RQ10: Is there a statistically significant relationship between destination competitiveness and attractiveness and the socioeconomic development of the Via Egnatia area?

Therefore, this study explores stakeholders' from three different cities from three different countries for their perspectives and considers the multiple influences on effectiveness under an intangible today cultural corridor of Via Egnatia. However, it is important here to clarify that this study tries to develop a holistic model for understanding of small-scale cities behavioral intention to the selected "Destination Management for Small Scale Cities for sustainable tourism development" as the topic of the research which was made based on a number of reasons.

Chapter 2: Theory and evidence on destination growth

This chapter is comprised by the most relevant theories related to destination management and sustainable tourism development. Firstly, the destination

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environment, is captured which is a complex of factors between cultural, social, natural and economy ecosystem followed by the destination management theory and human recourses. Different theories of the destination management related to small scale cities and innovation that are reviewed in this section include sustainability view, and innovative theories, in order to find out the determinants of destination development performance with particular emphasis on the culture-based and innovative perspective of the destinations over the corridor of ancient Via Egnatia which was in use for a centuries. Theory and evidence on destination growth Tourism, in its current form, is an economic and social phenomenon focused on tangible and intangible cultural heritage built through thousand years of mobility using stone roads and bridges, like Via Egnatia, used as a modern type corridor in the direction of the destinations sustainability through the idea of sustainable civilization. The background is analyzed and Agenda 2030 for sustainability is presented. Destination Development and Destination Management approaches also presented with Destination Management role and Destination Management Systems.

Factors that affect the sustainability of a tourism destination analyzed. The main factors that are related to the sustainability of an area are the following: a) The efforts made by businesses and local authorities to support the competitiveness of the local tourism product, b) The EU policy c) Governmental / Regional / City tourism policy, d) Certain parameters of tour-operators policy, e) Changes in the incentives of tourists, f) Local socio-professional groups and organizations.

Sustainability is a compound word: sustain + ability. Thus, it may seem rather incongruous and difficult to describe sustainability as anything other than ability (Hay, et al, 2014). Conway (1986) remarks that the measurement of sustainability is difficult and can often only be done retrospectively like our case study with the cities along the way Via Egnatia.

Conceptualizing Destination in any phase of travel and tourism process from pre-travel to post-travel, from the destination of origin to destination of transition and then travel back again, from anticipation phase to recollection phase, the center of the travel and tourism is the final destination within its experiences in any part of destination life cycle.

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Destination Attributes: Destinations are comprised of various attributes that significantly affect visitors at different stages. According to Buhalis (2020) the tourism system is based on three regions, namely: the place of origin where travelers come from, the transit region which represent the transportation space, and the destination region, where travelers finally go.

Destination Image: The image of a destination is a key concept to understand people's destination selection process as well as behavioral intentions. An organic image is created from non-commercial sources and is formed by the cultural inputs, that is, by general knowledge and by word-of-mouth information.

Destination Attachment: Attachment is a psychological concept that refers to the special and positive bonding or relationship between individuals and a specific object.

Destination Personality: In investigations of destination brand, it is suggested that brand should reflect the emotional experience or emotional connection of tourists to the destination. Considerable empirical evidence supports that the emotional side of brand is seen as brand personality, which reflects self-expression.

Destination branding: City branding itself is the process of distinguishing and diversification, where local organizations, cultural and facilities, groups join and construct a place images, helping in producing tourist sites with the common aim to attract visitors and investors to a particular local area. Destination branding can be defined as a way to communicate this destination unique identity (Campelo et al., 2014).

Destination Management Approaches: Conceptualizing Destination Management. UNWTO (2007) Destination management is the co-ordinated management of all the elements that make up a destination recourses. Destination management takes a strategic approach to link these recourses, sometimes very separate or opposite entities, for the better management of the destination.

Destination Management Role: The role of Tourism Destination Management is to manage and support the integration of different resources, activities and stakeholders through appropriate policies and actions. Who is behind Destination Management Local authorities, private stakeholders or both?

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Destination Management Systems: Destination Management Systems nowadays related to the digital management of tourism destinations.

Destination Management Benefits and Challenges : Small-scale cities are in front of challenges to use these systems as connection hubs between the local society information offer and the rest of the world. Human capital and human resources needed to support this information flow.

Chapter 2 remarks the literature for the study. It provided the introduction of the study and the background also followed by detailed justification for this study. The next chapter proceeds with a detailed description of the appropriate theoretical foundations related to small-scale cities as destinations over Via Egnatia corridor.

Chapter 3: The conceptual framework of sustainable tourism development and hypothesis

In this chapter there is analyzed the conceptual framework of sustainable tourism development and the background of destination management for small scale cities focused in the city and the cities of Via Egnatia. Cultural heritage tourism and sustainable development, Cultural Destination Management and Cultural Heritage Management are presented while described how Via Egnatia work as a destination network for small scale cities with more information for the three examined cities as Edessa/GR, Ohrid/NMK, and Korce/AL.

Chapter 3 of the thesis presents a systematic review of literature to be familiar with the topic based on the main contributors in this field. The discussion of the existing literature led to defining research hypothesis, which are tested to answer the main research question. This chapter generates a research framework developed by the researcher based on the derived hypothesis. It identifies and examined the shortcomings in the existing literature review and establishes a foundation for developing research hypothesis and conceptual model upon which this study is based for further investigation. It consists of background of destination growth, description

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and analysis of the destination management process, the relation between the cities and the destination management and the networking as well as sustainability activities and subsidies for destination development. Driving and hampering factors toward introduction of sustainable tourism development are also included. Finally, the chapter is summarized.

Background of destination management for small scale cities: In the literature, cities have to do with the number of residents which is generally estimated over 100.000 inhabitants. Small scale cities have lower population (10.000-100.000) but they behave as integrated systems because they could support all needed functional as a typical city has.

Cultural Destination Management: Cultural Heritage Management is defined as "the comprehensive protection, in a systematic and interdisciplinary manner, and through participatory processes, of cultural heritage material and of the values that this heritage expresses as a result of its connection to the wider community".

Cultural heritage tourism and sustainable development: It is generally recognized that tourism has become an international economic, social and cultural activity, contributing to globalization. Many people want tourism, some for enjoyment, relaxation, adventure or even education - and some for the benefits they expect to derive from it. Tourism contributes to a better intercultural understanding among nations, and these actions are also thought to reduce political tensions and contribute to peace. But many communities that accept tourists are scared and doubtful of tourism as it can damage their social habits, affect their natural environment, and harm their cultures, beliefs and idioms. Destination management actions are the only way to involve their communities to the way of sustainability.

Via Egnatia a destination network for small scale cities: The humans started traveling for climate and survival reasons using the landscape and the nature signs. In the literature, according to classics (Pausanias), "Periegesis" is a set of travels using paths, roads and walkers with their dogs and their donkeys. Using their sticks to help their walking, explored the world visiting cities and villages. These first travelers created their own paths, driving new routes to the Mediterranean world, according each area geomorphology (Casson, 1994).

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This chapter provided a summary of the literature for the study. It provided the introduction of the appropriate theoretical foundations related to small-scale cities as destinations over via Egnatia corridor. The next chapter, Chapter 4, presents the research process

Chapter 4: The Research Process

Chapter 4 of the thesis presents the research methodologies that can be applied to this research study and the foundation of the developed research hypotheses and conceptual model that can be tested empirically. The selection and justification of methodologies are summarized, which is followed by justification of using mixed methods research, including both quantitative and qualitative research in order to answer the research questions.

The research process including the Mixed Methods Research, the Research Questions, the Research Philosophy, the Research Design Type, the Quantitative research approach with Data Collection, Data Sampling, Model specification and its justification, Data analysis and Qualitative research approach with Sampling and data collection, Finding the Participants, Interviewing Pre-process, Documentary Materials, Content and process of interviewing, Thematic analysis and coding process. Also chapter has the Generalisability, Reliability and Validity and the methods for Quantitative Research and Qualitative Research.

Mixed Methods Research: As identified in the literature review, research into destination management for small-scale cities and achieving sustainable tourism growth in these cities is still at an early stage, and there is much field for exploration studies in this area

Research Philosophy: The research on destination management for sustainable tourism development of small-scale cities of Via Egnatia has been undertaken mostly from positivist perspective. These cities are already destinations for centuries and it's proved by their existence. The cultural and socio-philosophical background of the small-scale city life supports positivism? Positivism argues that social world exists externally to the researcher and that its properties can be measured through

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observation. In other words, positivist research seeks to explain social phenomena based on the approach used in natural sciences (Creswell J. 2009)

Research Design Type: There is a distinction between the choice of research design and the adoption of research method. Research design is a framework for data collection and analysis, which may include experimental design, a cross-sectional design, a longitudinal design, a case study design or a comparative design. On the other hand, research method is a technique for data collection, such as self-completion questionnaire or a structured interview schedule, or participant observation (Bryman, 2008). This research study adopts cross sectional research design, collecting quantitative and qualitative data at one point in time. So a combination of quantitative and qualitative research techniques will be used. The choice has been made in order to make the comparison between the perceptions of the different audiences easier and more reliable (Shah & Corley, 2006). Additionally, mix research methods characterized by higher validity and reliability measures than a single type study (Morse, 2003; Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004; Creswell, 2009)

Quantitative research approach: A quantitative methodology was designed to address all the Research Questions. Question 1,2,3,4 investigates the relations of tourism governance, the cultural policy and destination resources with the behavioral intention the destination attachment and the destination competitiveness and attractiveness on behalf of the small-scale cities which are examined to the study. Question 5,6,7 asks the consideration of the destination management, recourses, competitiveness and attractiveness on a country level of its small-scale city-destination belong while. Question 8,9,10 covers the destination resources, management, competitiveness and attractiveness consider in relation with the socio-economic environment and driving factors of Via Egnatia as cultural network corridor of the small-scale cities for centuries.

Data Collection: A quantitative research approach has been chosen to investigate the research questions and be able to statistically test hypotheses.

Data Sampling: The sample of the research is primarily designed to be consisted of 300 individuals from the local community (100 from each location) and 9 interviews

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with local tourism authorities (3 from each location). Because of COVID-19 the research.

Data analysis: Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) served as basis for the statistical analysis of the data, because it is most recommended to use in the study of correlations and logistic regression. The analysis of the data made with the statistical software for data analysis SPSS.

Qualitative research approach: Qualitative research approach will also be used in this study to better answer the research question and to enable more in depth analysis. The networking and collaboration is highlighted as a term if it is used within the destination management attitude, but primarily associated to sustainable development. Moreover, there are questions on cultural and natural environment management as well as a result of sustainable development. The internal factors, related to organizational change due to the management status and human resources development are considerable as well.

Therefore, the aim is to get in depth analysis through semi-structured interviews and make distinction between destination experiences and resources, marketing and organizational status, sustainable tourism development challenges that were encountered and the correlation with cultural corridor of Via Egnatia.

Sampling and data collection: The parameters of the sample and sample size are outlined. The parameters of the sample include participants who have been in their position for at least five years, have a relation with city destination management even as local authorities representative even as participant to the destination management process.

Finding the Participants: There is an easy way to identify participants that they have involved with tourism destination management which were in the field in the last five years, from which a random sample could be drawn (Lewis, Ritchie, 2003).

Interviewing Pre-process: Interviewing can use focused open ended questions to examine broader issues, as well as more structured questioning for destination management, sustainable development and applied policy information or human

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resources management. Nevertheless, large amount of data can be generated by interviews, which puts the research at difficulty handing material generated.

Documentary Materials: In order to conduct the interviews efficiently, the researcher looked at documentary materials, the social media published data as well as their websites. More over the interview questions had an non- formal educational approoach of destination management because they refered to sustainable tourist development as part of Agenda 2030.

Content and process of interviewing: Interviewees were emailed a short summary of the research and the key topics a week before the interview time in order to remind the meeting. Clifton and Handy (2003) emphasize that crafting questions carefully as trust relationship should be established within a short period of time. The questioning and discussed covered the following topic areas: -Demographic information and characteristics -Management status and destination management perceptions -Natural Environment management and organization involvement -Cultural Environment management and organization involvement -Socio-Economic Environment management and organization involvement -Sustainable management, management structure and framework, Stakeholder engagement, Management of pressure and change -Socio-economic sustainability, Delivering local economic benefits, Social wellbeing and impacts -Cultural sustainability, protecting cultural heritage, Visiting cultural sites -Environmental sustainability, Conservation of natural heritage, Resource management, Management of waste and emissions -Destination Networking, Internal destination background, External Networking. Cultural corridor of Via Egnatia as long-standing historical and cultural connection among regions, in a future EU environment perspective.

Thematic analysis and coding process: According to Bryman (2008), thematic analysis enables researchers to identify, analyze and report patterns within data. It is important to highlight that intimate knowledge of data is required for thematic analysis; thus, the data collected personally by the researcher. Then the data is transcribed and following the major themes in the interviews are identified from participants through interviews. The analyze was manual because of limit numbers of participants.

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Generalisability, Reliability and Validity: The following part discusses the validity, reliability, and generalization issues in research methods used in the thesis, including quantitative and qualitative research methods.

This chapter provided a summary research methodologies used for this study. It described sample and data collection for quantitative and qualitative methods. This study adopted a mixed methods research. It adopted positivist paradigm to test the research hypotheses and conceptual model and as a result selected a quantitative research approach for further data collection and analysis. Moreover, it adopted qualitative approach by using interpretative epistemology, in order to explore "destination managers" detailed explanations of organizational changes as a result of sustainable tourism development process. The next chapter, Chapter 5, presents the results and analysis

Chapter 5: Destination Management Systems & Sustainable Development – Via Egnatia Small-Scale Cities Quantitative Analysis and Results

In this chapter the statistical analysis of the research related data that were collected from over 296 people with the method of the questionnaire will be carried out. This study aims to investigate the destination management at the level of small cities as destinations of the same cultural corridor of Via Egnatia and the impact to the surrounding areas according to sustainable tourism development principles. The research study aims to identify a destination management model with application possibilities on all three countries and the specific Via Egnatia cities using networking perspectives activating the balance between social, cultural, natural and economy ecosystem. Analysis and Results (Quantitative Research) Research Hypothesis, Demographic characteristics, Reliability Analysis and Hypotheses testing for Research hypothesis 1-10 included. Destination Management Systems & Sustainable Development – Via Egnatia Small-Scale Cities Quantitative Analysis and Results.

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The data of the questionnaires were tabulated to shape a database and encoded with the statistical package SPSS V.26, with which the statistical analysis was performed. The presentation and description of the numerical data was performed through the methods of descriptive statistics, while the statistical inference was performed by methods of inductive statistics, e.g. ANOVA, Chi-square, Pearson Correlation Coefficient etc. Finally, in all the hypothesis testing carried out, a significance level of 95% was set.

Research Hypothesis: Taking into careful consideration the findings discussed in the literature review and in accordance with the objectives of our study, the following research questions have been formed.

Focus on Visitors: H1: The most important factors of travel / holiday for tourists are: accessibility, value for money and the experience choice from the culture and natural characteristics of attractions. H2: Tourists in the Region are most satisfied with accessibility, value for money and choice & characteristics of culture & nature attractions. H3: Availability of supporting infrastructure for tourism such as information services, health service, telecommunication, and public safety is considered as less important than infrastructure of tourism itself including the range, quality, food & gastronomy services and cultural & environmental recreational facilities of the visited cities in the corridor of Via Egnatia.

Focus on Local people: H4: According to the local people the economic effects of tourism contribute in greater proportions to improving the quality of their life than the social, cultural and physical impacts of tourism. H5: People living in the Via Egnatia corridor think that the economic effects of tourism contribute in greater proportions to improving the quality of their life than the social, cultural and physical impacts of tourism. H6: The longer people live in the Via Egnatia corridor in question (the stronger the bond is), the less satisfied they are with the effects of tourism on the quality of their life. And thus, they see their living environment (less attractive) and less competitive.

Local Authorities Representatives and Professionals involved in the region in question: H7: Tourists consider the defining supply factors of travel / holiday more important than those working around the tourism sector. H8: Tourists visiting the

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Region rank these factors lower than the tourism experts themselves. H9: Local people consider the positive effects of tourism on the quality of their life more significant than those working in the tourism industry. H10: Locals in the Via Egnatia SE Europe Region feel the positive effects in greater proportions than those working in tourism.

Demographic characteristics: This section presents the analysis of the demographic data of the research in the form of frequency tables, pies and bar graphs.

Reliability Analysis: The following section contains the assessment of the reliability of the measurement scales used through the application of Cronbach's Alpha index.

Hypotheses testing: This section contains the statistical inference carried out aiming to validate or reject the research hypothesis, as these were presented at this chapter, through suitable hypothesis tests.

Perspectives over the tourism impact per origin: The following part contains the analysis of the answers to Q21 to Q42 of the questionnaire, aiming to identify variations between participants from different origins of Via Egnatia Corridor.

This chapter provided a summary the results and discussions from empirical data from qualitative research study. The findings of the research study were discussed in detail in order to investigate the conceptual model, as well as research hypotheses of this study. New insights and policy implications for academics and practitioners, as well as limitations of the study and suggestions for future research are presented in the next chapter. The next chapter, Chapter 6, offers qualitative analysis and results for this study.

Chapter 6: Destination Management Systems and Sustainable Development – Via Egnatia Small-Scale Cities Qualitative Analysis and Results

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Analysis and Results (Qualitative Research) Demographic Profile, Destination Management Pillars, Sustainable Management, Socio-Economic sustainability, Cultural Sustainability, Environmental Sustainability, Networking are analyzed. Destination Management Systems and Sustainable Development – Via Egnatia Small-Scale Cities Qualitative Analysis and Results. In this chapter out the statistical analysis of the research related data that were collected will be carried. Chapter 6 offers data analysis and interpretations of findings corresponding to the research questions from in-depth interviews, which were conducted by the researcher. This is followed by discussion in order to contribute to better understanding to the context of city destination management and sustainable tourism develoment culture. Spreadsheet software was used to analyze the empirical data. Finally, the chapter is summarized. By using the spreadsheet qualitative data analysis software, using rainbow method received one   framework in one single place to analyzing qualitative data in an concrete, binary and visual way according Tomer Sharon rainbow spreadsheet (Kimm, 2013)

Qualitative analysis leads to the structure of a report which starts immediately with empirical observations and then moves on to the identified research problem. In this thesis, the indicators construction for natural, cultural, and socio-economic environment and management of human resources and therefore, the qualitative method is appropriate and used in the similar studies (Dwyer and Kim, 2003) and it could be useful for small-scale cities as destination level. Therefore, qualitative studies are also required to increase the accuracy and comprehensive framework. The regions for the multiple case studies in this thesis were selected based on the literature review and the understanding of the indicators and factors (Živanović, 2020).

This research is a study that shows the sustainable development using destination management techniques from the supply side and how different perceptions of the influent decision makers disrupt or support this process. The findings of the study are investigated through the models of Ritchie and Crouch (2000) and Dwyer (2010 for the destination competitiveness and destination sustainability as well.

As an exploratory study, it was important to discover the attitudes and practical experiences of the opinion leaders and decision makers in the local government and

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the destination affiliation members from the supply side of tourism, destination managers, stake holders and the tourism strategy makers.

The methodology chapter contains different sections: restatement of the study objectives, role of the researcher, respondents, research design and method, instrument, population, sampling technique, data collection method and analysis, limitations and ethical considerations. Qualitative research requires contact with personalities at different levels and ethical dilemmas need to be considered prior and during the research process. So participants had the choice of their voluntary participation and the right to withdraw, the protection as research participants with anonymity and they had the assessment of potential benefits and risks during the obtaining informed consent.

9 respondents were interviewed from 3 destinations. Demographic information as Demographic Profile, Gender, Age, Education, Work Experience, and Qs for Destination Management Pillars, Sustainable Management, Socio-Economic sustainability, Cultural Sustainability, Environmental Sustainability, Networking are analyzed.

This chapter provided a summary the results and discussions from empirical data from qualitative research study. The findings of the research study were discussed in detail in order to investigate the conceptual model, as well as research hypotheses of this study. New insights and policy implications for academics and practitioners, as well as limitations of the study and suggestions for future research are presented in the next chapter. The next chapter, Chapter 7, offers conclusions of the findings and policy implications for this study.

Chapter 7: Conclusions and Policy Implications, Sustainable Tourism System Development – The Multi-Dimension, City-Sustainable Destination Management Model

Chapter 7 provides conclusions and analysis of this research investigation, which are in accordance with the overall aim, and objectives of this study. The overall aim of

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this research study was: "To empirically investigate destination management at the level of small cities as destinations of the same cultural corridor of Via Egnatia among centuries and the impact to the surrounding areas according sustainable tourism development principles". The research study aimed to identify a destination management model with application possibilities on all three countries and the specific Via Egnatia cities using networking perspectives activating the balance between social, cultural, natural and economy ecosystem which is presented.

The ten research questions, which are directly related to the objectives of this research study, are considered with the research findings, to give the final conclusion. This is followed by policy implications, in terms of DMO management, local tourism governance, cultural policy and sustainable heritage destination. Furthermore, the limitations of this research study and the identification of potential future areas for further research in the field of destination management of small scale cities are presented. Finally, the main areas of knowledge contribution were reviewed for this research investigation.

Conclusions and policy implications, containing sustainable tourism system development – and a multi-dimension, city-sustainable destination management model including contributions arising from the Research Questions 1-10, the Research Methodology, the Limitations of the study and the Contributions and Implications for Destination Management, At the end presented the Application of the Model and there are practical implications and management policy proposals and avenues of Future Research. At the Appendix presented the Questionnaires etc and at the end is the model which supports self evaluation for destination management which runs also electronically

Contributions Arising from the Research Questions. The following section includes conclusions related to the main research question. The main research question follows as: Is there any model of destination management for sustainable tourism development as application to the small-scale cities even if they are in different countries and regions? The using examples are from the Ancient via Egnatia physical and cultural networking. Each research question is presented followed by overall conclusions drawn from the questionnaire and the interviews conducted for the

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investigation. Considerations of previous studies are also used to develop the conclusions.

Limitations of the study. As for any research, there are some limitations that should be taken into account within all research investigation. First, although, the sample is composed of an acceptable amount of data, it came from three small-scale cities and three different countries. This has an impact on the representativeness of our sample. Thus, the generalization of our findings to destination management attitudes is still limited, and should be interpreted with caution. Nevertheless, the sample does represent small scale cities from Turkey. Second, the data used in this study were gathered from single informants, which were close to educational units such as students and tourism enterprises owners or managers.

Contributions and Implications for Destination Management. The human resources from academic environment from each area of Via Egnatia could be useful via more surveys and studies in the direction of improving the universality of Via Egnatia. The unique long-term history along the centuries and in parallel to the creation of new generation knowledge could support the efforts for high added value destination management for sustainable tourism development of the small-scale Via Egnatia cities.

This knowledge use the "Phryctoria" (fire-aspects) an ancient signal system which was based on transmitting messages. The proposed model contains these four pillars, (management "ecosystem", natural-culture-socioeconomic environment, and one as networking, internally and externally), necessary for the community of the destination to remain sustainable according to UN Agenda 2030 and EU Directives for sustainable tourism development. The model symbolically called "Phryctoria" and designed to follow international criteria (GSTC, 2020)

Application of the Model. The destination management for sustainable tourism development needs a quality multi-dimension evaluation model and a tool behind this model as Sustainable Tourism Destination Management and Development System.

Avenues of Future Research. The results from this research study opens up ways for future research. A lot more research is necessary, in coexisting and cultural heritage

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of Ancient via Egnatia Cities because this road and related cultural corridor was closed for several periods of time in the last century.

Management policy and practical implications. The objectives of this study had both management and academic components. It is important to provide recommendations, based on the research of the concerned authorities, organizations as parts of the destination management system. The data has been systematically collected and compared to the literature in order to analyze and interpret better address and solve destination management issues and challenges. The balance of this thesis has to do with the merge of these objectives to present both aspects of the doctoral concept. Specific findings and recommendations

Summary. This chapter provided a summary of research questions, research methodology used, and contribution and implications of the study. The personal reflections of researcher on this study provided concluding remarks of this investigation.

Ten research questions answered showing the relationship between tourism governance and destination competitiveness and attractiveness, behavioral intention and destination attachment according to the cultural policy. Also the research questions looked for differences in country level and specific in the Via Egnatia area by examined three cities, in terms of destination recourses, management and destination competitiveness and attractiveness using questionnaire and interview investigation and the methodology of the explanatory sequential model.

The limitations of the study related to small scale cities from Turkey and also, even though different dimensions of destination management and sustainable development for small scale cities have been covered, this research study cannot claim the cover of all relevant dimensions because sustainability process is not a target but a way to ensure that destination management process is proper for the sustainable development along time.

The unique long-term history along the centuries and in parallel to the creation of new generation knowledge could support the efforts for high added value destination management for sustainable tourism development of the small-scale Via Egnatia cities. This knowledge could use the "Phryctoria" ancient signal system which was

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based on transmitting messages as the same name proposed model which contains these pillars, management "ecosystem" natural-culture-socioeconomic environment, and networking, internally and externally in order to reinforce the destination attractiveness using the residents' quality of life as part of the visitors emotional experiences at all travel stages of dreaming, planning, booking, experiencing and sharing and presented as application model from the supply side.

The sustainable tourism destination management and development system covers with 100 educational questions using self-evaluation process for the destination management practices need to be taken while destination management recognizes not only residents votes but also visitors reviews. The system help local governance to receive proper information for the best outstanding and networking for small-scale cities destination management focus on a future perspective of Via Egnatia theme trail as a part of Silk Routes. Future research could include also eastern part of Via Egnatia cities. Ancient via Egnatia recognized as a networking and complementarity system for all destinations and less as a tool of competitiveness of each area. Ancient Via Egnatia, today more as a cultural corridor, helps these small cities to understand more effectively, the co-existence for a long term period using each other as complementarity tool while their tourism governance face the challenge to encourage scientific staff high capacity and education to be involved.

Finally as the management policy and practical implications, the destination management must connect the unconnected, using Via Egnatia as co-existence network, involving local society explaining the sustainability in practical way, accept ending of the term "change", especially on crisis periods, using history as a continuous school, acknowledging the intangible heritage of each group while adopting the human scale of each destination. Via Egnatia trail could drive the destinations to the sustainable tourism development respecting the natural, the cultural, and the socio-economic environment using intelligent art of management, respecting each other as a general relations philosophy. The destination management is the art of tourism science.

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References

Appendix B – Questionnaire II – Interview

Appendixes

Appendix A – Questionnaire I

Appendix B – Questionnaire II – Interview

Appendix C – The Model Phryctoria v.1.00

Sustainable Tourism Destination Management and Development System, Phryctoria v.1.00

The Model (Click to Open and ready to use) or https://forms.gle/BWqLQE6EWEsGfzVc9