

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

THE SMART DESTINATION CONCEPT IN TOURISM RESEARCH. A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE FOR ITS DEFINITION AND NORMALIZATION

Ainhoa Carballido

Universidad de Málaga
ainhoa.carballido@gmail.com
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1401-744X>

Antonio Guevara-Plaza

Universidad de Málaga
guevara@uma.es
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2400-0668>

1. INTRODUCTION

From the beginning of the 21st century, several concepts and terms arise to define new or changing territorial models, due to the human necessity of relocating as urban citizens, integrating the information and communication technologies (ICT) as part of their daily's life.

These concepts are focused on the meaning of the word "Smart", and its application to the territory, not just to define how the use of ICT impact in it, but trying to develop models of sustainable cities or towns, that also promote the accessibility, inclusiveness, transparency, people's participation, local development, and connectivity, as necessary elements for good governance.

Authors and experts as Nam, Pardo, Buhalis, Cohen, or Giffinger, among others, contribute to the scientific community with their owns perspectives and definitions, discussing the concepts of Smart City, Smart Destination, and Smart Tourism. It is at this point that the need to understand and define these concepts in a holistic and standardized way arises.

In that sense, this study aims to contribute with a normalization of the Smart Destination definition by analyzing the concept's context through a systematized literature review.

This analysis provides qualitative and quantitative data that allow understanding of the Smart term's evolution, as well as its background and applicability.

According to that aim, some objectives are proposed:

- To establish commonalities and differences between the concepts of Smart City and Smart Destination.
- To contextualize the Smart Destination as the scenario of the application of the practice of Smart Tourism.

- To identify the different models of Smart Destination that currently exist and establish links between them.

2. METHODOLOGY

Taking into consideration the proposed objectives, a battery of research questions are postulated as the starting point of the systematic literature review (what is a Smart City? what is a Smart Destination? what commonalities and differences present the definitions of Smart City and Smart Destination? what is the Smart Tourism? what occurs first the Smart Destination or the Smart Tourism' practice? how are Smart City and Smart Destination models composed of?). A framework is also designed to establish the process of the review considering four phases:

- Search: using inclusion and exclusion criteria (pragmatic -writing language, publication date, etc.-and quality criteria -geographical scope, study topic, used methodology, etc.-), keywords, and Booleans operators (AND, OR, etc.), in two databases: Web of Science and Scopus, both with a wide coverage of publications in social sciences, the field in which the area of study of tourism and territory is classified.
- Evaluation: through a filter system from the inclusion and exclusion criteria.
- Synthesis: comparing results using the software Atlas.ti (text analysis and semantics statistics).
- Analysis: developing a critical review linked to a narrative or graphic representation, using charts, tables, or explanatory cards.

3. RESULTS

The research strategy was executed in Scopus and Web of Science databases in August 2019, returning more than 19500 results. After applying the inclusion and exclusion criteria the sample was reduced to 103 publications including scientific papers, book chapters, complete books, and reviews, from the social science field, and published from 2005 to 2018.

From these results, some quantitative data is exported, giving relevant information about the scientific production in terms of the Smart concept evolution and its application to territory and tourism. The most significant data are shown below:

- Geographical scope: Europe is the continent with a higher volume of publications with a ranking headed by Italy (109 publications), Spain (71), and the United Kingdom (40). Asia is the second one with South-Corea (45), China (32), and India (31) in the top three of its ranking. America is in the third place, and highlights the low representativeness of Africa and Oceania.
- Authors production: the authors with more published titles are Chiara Garau, Simon Joss, Rodríguez- Bolívar, Chulmo Koo, Rob Kitchin, Rudolf Giffinger, Ulrike Gretzel, Taewoo Nam, y Theresa A. Pardo; with publications as: "Evaluating Urban Quality: Indicators and Assessment Tools for Smart Sustainable Cities" (Garau & Pavan, 2018), "The smart city and its publics: insights from across six UK cities"

(Cowley, Joss & Dayot, 2018), or “Smart Destinations: new strategies to manage tourism industry” (Rodríguez-Bolívar *et al.*, 2015), among others.

- Temporal scope: the evolution of scientific production is especially relevant in the last five years of the analyzed time framed, which is a growth of publications during the year 2013 matching the arise of the Smart Destinations project of SEGITTUR in Spain, and the publication of the second version of Smart Cities: ranking of European médium-sized cities, driven by Rudolf Giffinger and supported by the European Commission.

In terms of qualitative results, a concept evolution is also detected. Rudolf Giffinger started the discussion about the meaning of the Smart City concept with the idea of a city developed with a long-term view, supported by the combination of different factors that promote its auto-determination, independence, and citizens’ awareness, providing them the resources and activities they need (Giffinger, 2007). The author also draws the Smart City model over six dimensions (Economy, Governance, Environment, People, Mobility, and Living). This first approach was far from the idea of a technology-centered city provided by other authors as Harrison, Eckman, Hamilton, Kalagnanam, Paraszcak, and Williams, among others.

The Smart City concept evolution follows with the contribution of authors as Nam and Pardo who, after conducting a review of the origins of the Smart Cities, postulated that the definition of this concept should be approached from three different areas: the technological, the social, and the community (Nam & Pardo, 2011), followed in 2012 by the design of the Smart City Wheel, a managing model proposed by Boyd Cohen based on the Giffinger’s one.

Moving on to the results obtained about Smart Destination, it is worthy to say that the differences between it and the definitions of Smart City are not very significant. Indeed, the main difference is the fact that in a Smart Destination there is not a unique protagonist, the citizen, but the visitor is also relevant to the management of a sustainable territory. In that sense, the main objective of a Smart Destination is to increase the quality of the tourism experience without losing the quality of residents’ life.

Regarding the concept of Smart Tourism, authors as Hunter, Chung, Gretzel, Koo, Xiang, Tussydiah, or Buhalis, describe it as a progression or advance from the traditional tourism to a new social phenomenon that arises from the convergence of ICT with the experience tourism, and occurs in a destination with a technological infrastructure able to guarantee the proper sustainable development of the different tourism areas, promoting the accessibility, the integration, and the interaction of the visitors with the locals.

4. CONCLUSIONS

Throughout this study, an analysis of scientific production by systematized review has been developed, with different searches related to the Smart concept and its application to territory and tourism activity.

According to the obtained results, we can conclude that there are multiple perspectives about the studied concepts (Smart City, Smart Destination, and Smart Tourism), as well as a remarkable evolution of them.

The works published in the first decade of this century, point out that the Smart Cities were born to increase the quality of life of their inhabitants and promote the efficiency of the services provided by both public and private entities, but they focus on the use of technology as an essential element of their proposals for management models, without taking into account aspects related to tourism, nor integrating definitions of Smart Destinations or Smart Tourism. However, the last publications (from 2015 to 2018) talked about a progression of the traditional models to new ones in which is essential to integrate the ICT as a vehicle to be more competitive, efficient, accessible, inclusive, in short, more sustainable. All to increase the quality of citizens' life (Smart City), as well as improving the quality of tourism experiences, without jeopardizing or compromising the quality of life of local communities (Smart Destinations, and Smart Tourism).