

**SUSTAINABLE HERITAGE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT RESEARCH MODEL AT
HERITAGE RESOURCES
MEROS OBYEKTARIDA BARQAROR MEROS TURIZMINI RIVOJLANTIRISH
TADQIQOT MODELII**

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Abstract:

Introduction. *The number of international tourist arrivals reached 1.5 billion, an increase of 4% linked to 2018. This has put up tourism the fastest and most sustainable growing industry in the economy in the last decade (UNWTO, 2021). Nevertheless, the COVID-19 pandemic caused significant damage to tourism activities worldwide in 2020 and it is continuing nowadays. In the process, one of the main types of tourism, heritage tourism, which accounts for more than 40 percent of total tourism (UNWTO, 2018) has suffered greatly. The research aims to study ways to achieve sustainability in the development of heritage tourism.*

Research methods. *The study examines the research methods conducted by scientists on sustainable heritage tourism development, ways to analyze the data, the composition of the main elements of sustainable tourism. Research papers are taken from Scopus, Mendeley, ScienceDirect databases and placed as an open resource. As a result of the structural and content analysis, a research model for sustainable heritage tourism development has been proposed.*

Results and discussions. *At present, cultural heritage sites are an important source for the development of tourism. Due to the current focus on tourism, the use of heritage sites for tourism purposes is increasing worldwide. In turn, the transformation of a cultural heritage site into a tourist destination causes certain difficulties, such as the devaluation of the heritage, damage, harm, and several social and environmental problems. There are currently 8,208 heritages registered in Uzbekistan. Of these, the number of archaeological monuments is 4748, the number of architectural monuments is 2250, the number of monumental art monuments is 678, and the number of monuments is 532 (Cabinet of Minister of Uzbekistan, 2019). This number is growing day by day. From these figures, it can be concluded that research on heritage tourism is relevant.*

The study found that the concept of sustainable heritage tourism development is central to the study of heritage tourism. The close and different aspects of the research that led scientists to define and develop the concept were explored. As a result, a research model has been developed that consists of primary steps in the development of sustainable heritage tourism.

Conclusion. *It is expedient to consider the three main elements of sustainable development (economic, social, environmental) as an element of the development of all types of tourism. Based on these elements, sustainable heritage tourism can be developed through clear tourism management and a heritage development plan. Of course, it is significant to control and monitor the progress of the plan at the same time. Sustainable heritage tourism development requires constant communication between the local population, stakeholders, consumers and authorities in the decision-making process. The state of this communication can be studied and understood based on the proposed research model in the article.*

Keywords: *sustainable heritage tourism development, sustainable development, heritage resources, stakeholders, local community, consumers.*

INTRODUCTION

The tourism industry is very large and one of the main sectors of the economy in most countries of the world. The current Secretary-General of the World Tourism Organization Mr Zurab Pololikashvili commented on the tourism industry: *"Our sector gives them the chance to make a living. To earn not just a wage, but also dignity and equality. Tourism jobs also empower people and provide a chance to have a stake in their own societies – often for the first time"*. In 2019, the number of international tourists reached 1.5 billion, an increase of 4% compared to 2018. This has made tourism the fastest and most steadily growing industry in the economy in the last 10 years (UNWTO, 2021). The number of domestic trips also reached 8.8 billion. It exported a total of \$ 1.5 trillion worth of services, accounting for 7% of world trade, and everyone out of ten works in the tourism industry (UN, 2020). The above numbers show the importance of the industry. However, the COVID-19 pandemic caused significant damage to tourism activities worldwide in 2020. According to data published on the UNCTAD website on June 30, 2021, by the United Nations Secretariat global economy is expected to lose \$ 4 trillion from tourism in 2020 and 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. A total of \$ 2.4 trillion was lost to businesses, directly and indirectly, involved in tourism in 2020. The amount is estimated at \$ 1.7-2.4 trillion in 2021. Additional measures are being taken at the international and national levels to alleviate the problems associated with tourism.

A critical factor in the further development of tourism is the interest of humanity in the cultural heritage that exists in different parts of the world and the desire to see it. Furthermore, cultural heritage gives national pride to domestic tourists and builds respect, understanding for other cultures to international tourists (UNWTO, 2001).

Cultural tourism is a crucial motivation to international tourism, with a share of more than 40%, according to UNWTO (2018). Moreover, cultural tourism is one of the suitable types of tourism, where visitors intend to support the preservation of the local cultural heritage and the economy with high spending (Richards, 2001) and has also been a driving force in protecting natural and cultural heritage, preserving them for future generations to enjoy (Zurab Pololikashvili, 2021). In this direction, cultural heritage sites worldwide that estimated four out of ten tourists choose these destinations based on their cultural offering (UNWTO 2018). Nowadays, 1154 sites are included in the World Heritage List, of which 897 are cultural sites (UNESCO, 2021).

Regarding world heritage sites and tourism there are two-way links between them to be explored (UNWTO, 2013):

- World Heritage properties are significant attractions for the tourism sector;
- Tourism offers World heritage stakeholders the ability to meet the requirement of the Convention to "present" (or communicate) world heritage properties to the public, to generate funds for conservation, while also realizing community and economic benefits through sustainable use.

Uzbekistan, in particular, the areas located in the ancient cities of the Silk Road, such as the Bukhara, Samarkand, Khiva regions which most of their heritages is included in the UNESCO World Heritage List, are the leading destinations for many visits. Indeed, an interest in history and a desire to see man-made historical treasures encourage tourists to travel around the Silk Road and World Heritage Sites, which have contributed to human development. It is also the first issue to do this through sustainable local development. Therefore, this topic is important for the Bukhara region, which has a rich cultural heritage.

However, cultural tourism suffered greatly during the pandemic. According to the UNWTO (2021), more than 90 per cent of UNESCO-listed cultural heritage sites have been closed, and cultural tourism professionals' activities have been jeopardized. Nearly 85,000 museums around the world have temporarily closed (UN, 2021).

According to the resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan dated October 4, 2019 No 846, the total number of real estate objects of tangible cultural heritage in the Republic is 8208. Of these, the number of archaeological monuments is 4748, the number of architectural monuments is 2250, the number of monumental art monuments is 678, and the

number of monuments is 532. In particular, there are 829 archaeological and architectural monuments, ancient objects that testify to history and ancient culture in the Bukhara region. The above numbers prove that heritage tourism is significant in the Uzbekistan hospitality industry. This existing heritage can be used wisely through sustainable tourism development (STD), which is an important issue in the world today (OWHC, 15th World Congress, 2019).

The development of cultural tourism sometimes has negative consequences, such as a negative impact on the environment and socio-cultural life. As a result, existing resources may be damaged or completely lost, the population may form an insensitive view of heritage, and the available potential economic benefits may be lost (Aas Ladkin, Fletcher, 2005; Nasser, 2003). UNWTO and UNESCO also say that sustainable heritage tourism development (SHTD) can help to avoid the above-mentioned negative consequences, but also to ensure the economic benefits of the local population, the preservation of heritage and the protection of the environment (Ghanem, M. M., & Saad, S. K. 2015).

Therefore, SHTD is very imperative and essential. As a result, long-term economic, social and environmental benefits can be achieved through the rational use of cultural resources. This raises the main problem of research, the question of how to achieve, analyze the state of SHTD in destination.

MATERIALS

The concept of sustainability is important in every field. One of the main goals of every business, activity is to achieve sustainability (Huang, R.Y., et al. 2019). The concept of sustainable development was first defined more broadly and more clearly by the 1987 Brundtland Commission (Amarilla B., Conti A. 2012; Fonseca, et al., 2020) states that *development must answer to the current needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs*. The main, strengthening elements of sustainable development are environmental, economic, social sustainability (UN, 1997). These elements also represent the state of sustainable tourism development (STD) and can also be seen as key variables in assessing the success or failure of sustainable tourism projects (Kumar, Dr. A., 2017). Sustainable tourism has been described by Hunter (2002) and Swarbroke (1999) as follows: *the development of tourism must provide economic benefits to all partners (stakeholders), provided they do not adversely affect resources available for future generations*. The explanation given by Liu (2003) is as follows – sustainable tourism as *"all forms of tourism (conventional or alternative) that are compatible with and contribute to sustainable development"*. In general, the development of all types of tourism is based on the compatibility of implementation elements (economic, social, environmental) of sustainable development.

The study examines research works that have provided an analysis of the state of sustainability in heritage tourism or suggestions for its implementation. What research methods and techniques were used to analyze the SHTD, ways to advance development measures, proposals were studied. Ren-Yi Huang, et.al. (2019) analyzed 641 research papers, articles on STD. The articles used mainly five methodologies: These are quantitative research, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), case studies, content analysis, cluster analysis and qualitative research, structural equation modelling (SEM). The complexity of the research questions in many studies on sustainable development tourism requires the simultaneous use and combination of several methods (Liao, S.H, 2003).

The Global Sustainable Tourism Council has developed its specific Global Sustainable Tourism Criteria-Destination Criteria, which is essential for sustainable development in tourism destinations. The guideline was updated on December 6, 2019, which is the second updated guideline for evaluation. The guideline consists of 4 parts, which explain that sustainability is achieved by working in 4 important areas. These are Sustainable Management, Socio-Economic Sustainability, Cultural Sustainability, Environmental Sustainability. Each section consists of sub-sections, and the defined tasks are listed as the minimum requirements for sustainable tourism development. Amarilla B., Conti A. (2012) stated that the connection between heritage and tourism

ensure sustainability when managing tourism is in a two-way approach based on the state of the heritage, the purpose of use, and the environment. A positive link between built heritage and sustainable tourism can be achieved by combining cultural heritage products, human resources and proper planning.

METHODS

The research process is based on the study, analysis of the results and discussions of more than 40 research papers on sustainable tourism, heritage tourism, SHTD. The research works were found by entering keywords to the Scopus, Mendeley, ScienceDirect databases. Articles published by UNWTO that integrates international activities in the field of tourism and UNESCO were also used that directly related to the tourism industry. Methods of researching SHTD in various tourist destinations with Silk Road resources, sites designated in the UNESCO World Heritage List have been studied. As a result of the analysis of methods of research, a guide model for the research of SHTD has been developed.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Methods used in research on SHTD.

To study the experience and ongoing work on STD in historic cities the OWHC (2019) surveyed 25 questions on sustainable tourism from different cities. Ghanem M. M., Saad S. K. (2015) specified that the goal of SHT is to reduce the negative impact on the local population and the environment, while at the same time making a maximum contribution to the local economy and preserving the heritage. This can only be achieved through sustainable tourism management. These scientists conducted a case study research in Esna, Egypt. A qualitative approach was used throughout the study. The first 3 unstructured forms of questionnaires were interviewed. The snowball technique was used in the interviews. Second, empirical data were collected using data collection techniques (data triangles) to cover the perspectives of several stakeholders and increase the reliability of the study. Third, the analysis of the reports of the Egyptian government and UNESCO on sustainable heritage management of World Heritage sites has been critically examined. An article by Susan Darlow, et.al. (2012) analyzed the application of sustainability practices at 416 heritage sites in Cornwall and Devon, UK. Inventory work was carried out on heritage sites, historic houses, museums, churches which are open to visitors. Then, an expanded survey of managers was also conducted. There were also semi-structured, face-to-face interviews with a small number of selected, more active heritage managers in the field. Iliopoulou-Georgudaki, et.al. (2017) examined the sustainable tourism development in the western Greek city of Nafpaktos. Two separate approaches used during the research: qualitative SWOT analysis and a quantitative framework that combines the concepts of LAC (Limited acceptable change) and TCC (Tourism carrying capacity).

Tourist satisfaction and the SHTD are likened to two sides of the same coin (Bernini et al., 2015; Kozak and Rimmington, 2000; Rajesh, 2013). Tourist satisfaction is recognized as a key indicator of long-term sustainable tourism (Gidey and Sharma, 2017). Asmelash, A. G., Kumar, S. (2019) is stated that SHTD cannot be achieved without satisfying the visitor. During their research surveyed 392 foreign and local tourists by using the convenience sampling method. The data were carefully examined for compliance with the Structural Equations Modeling (SEM). An article written by Zheng, D, et.al.(2020) emphasizes that sustainable heritage tourism cannot be achieved without the help and support of the local population. As soon as it becomes a world cultural heritage, the region will have opportunities for economic development and improved living standards. The study was conducted in two phases, in the first phase, surveys were conducted in which 8 of the social sentiments were selected and approved by experts. Respondents' feelings and attitudes towards the SHTD were studied. In the main second stage, the heterogeneous purposive sampling method was used. That is 21 people were interviewed. The research was conducted in Kaiping, a town in Guangdong Province, China, which was inscribed on the

UNESCO World Heritage List in 2007. Economic, social, environmental, and cultural concepts or perspectives serve as the basis for STD (WCED, 1987). Scientists Aziz, N., Ngah, A. H. (2018) examined the impact of tourism benefits (economic, cultural, social, environmental) on local people's satisfaction. Questionnaires were collected from 250 residents living around the heritage sites using the targeted sampling method. Non-probability sampling was used, in which the respondents were selected using a purposive sampling method. The selection was made based on many years of experience living around the heritage. Kim S., et.al. (2019) analyzed intangible cultural heritage as a sustainable tourism resource. Twenty-five practitioners were interviewed during the study. During the research interview was conducted on a purposive sampling basis. Firstly, invitations were sent to practitioners. However, due to the difficulty of getting an answer, the interview schedule was agreed upon by the call. The data management program QSR NVivo was used for data analysis. Scientific and practical research carried out by Parga Dans E, Alonso González P. (2019) focused on identifying factors that affect the social value of cultural heritage in relation to sustainable tourism. It is studied on the example of the Altamira cave (WHS) in Spain. The research was conducted based on qualitative and quantitative approaches in 2012, a survey was conducted on 2,095 of the nearly 240,000 visitors. The questionnaire consisted of 6 thematic blocks, namely, motivation to visit, expectations, level of satisfaction, travel information, travel expenses, visitor area (profile). Many closed-ended questions were asked, while Likert-type questions allowed a score of 1-7. There is also room for open-ended questions and additional comments. The survey was conducted over weeks, during the tourist season.

One of the main goals of the above researches is to achieve sustainable tourism development in heritage sites and resources. The research was carried out using close, similar, identical methods based on different situations and specific knowledge. Social, economic, and environmental variables can be seen in all studies. Based on the research, the author developed the "SHTD research model" to study the state of sustainable heritage tourism and draw clear conclusions (Figure 1). The research model serves as an important guide for researching all heritage resources.

CONCLUSION

According to Ren, W., Han, F. (2018), the transform from a state of heritage to a state of attraction is one of the main directions of today's tourism industry. Because the implementation of this process will lead to job creation, socio-economic development, the formation of an alternative economic base for the preservation of heritage. The sustainability of this process will depend on the SHTD in the destination.

In the process of studying various studies conducted by scientists, the SHTD research model was formed. The model is divided into two parts: theoretical and practical analysis. The theoretical part describes the variables that are necessary for the achievement of SHTD. The three main pillars of sustainability — economic, social, and environmental sustainability — were considered relevant to all types of tourism (Kumar A., 2017; UN., 1997). Therefore, it plays a vital role in the model. Management plays a key responsibility in ensuring and coordinating these pillars of stability. The main decision-maker in the management of tourist destinations, heritage sites is the local population, the regional responsible organization or stakeholders (Amarilla, B., Conti, A. 2012; Ghanem M. M., Saad S. K. 2015). Systematic development will require the implementation of a tourism management plan, the SHTD plan and their progress, as well as clear monitoring. Otherwise, the set goal may be deviated from.

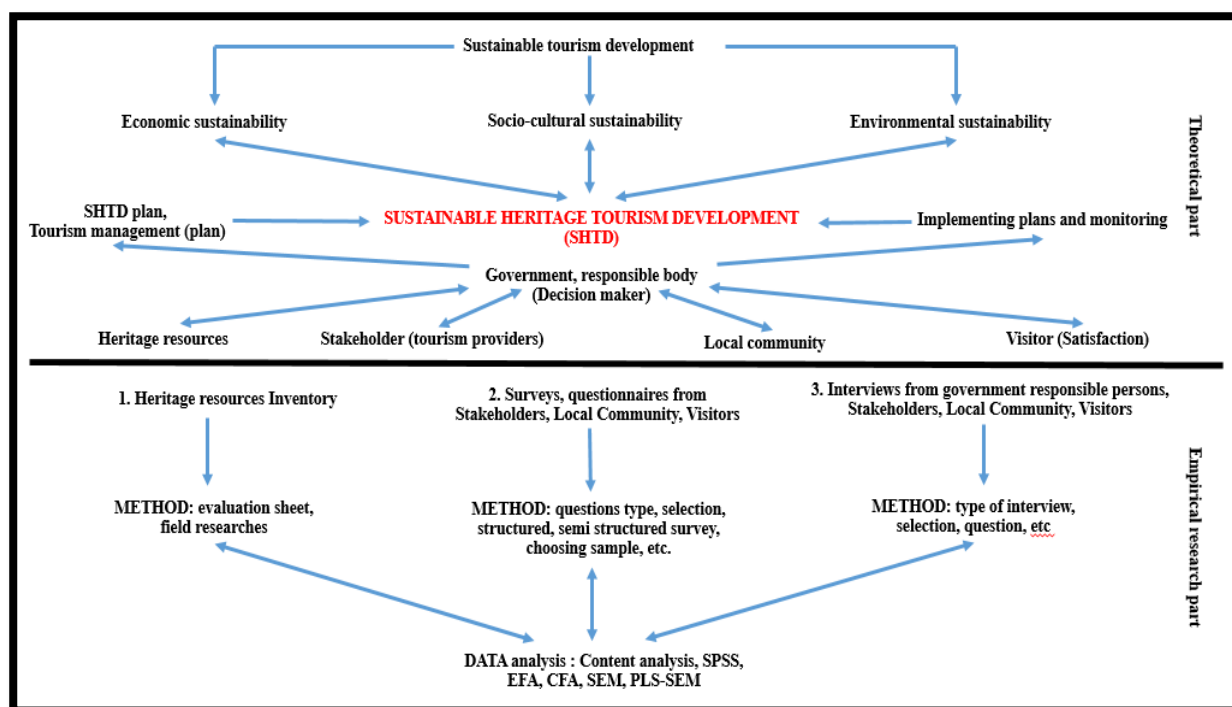


Figure 1

The SHTD research model

Source: Authors

The Silk Road heritage and UNESCO designated heritage can be considered a source of economic benefit for any society. That is why everyone - the local population, stakeholders, consumers, the public sector - is responsible for its protection, preservation and transmission to future generations. For this reason, the author suggests that one of the key requirements for sustainable development is that the management plan is prepared based on the state of the heritage, the views of stakeholders, local people and consumers (tourists). For this reason, in the theoretical part, all participants were taken into account.

The practical part can be considered as a way to the theoretical part, as a set of methods. The practical part is formed based on conclusions from the analysis of research on sustainable tourism. The current state of cultural heritage can be fully understood through inventory and field research. It is advisable to study the opinions, suggestions and wishes of tourism service providers, locals and tourists through surveys, interviews and questionnaires. Surveys or questionnaires are easier, cheaper, and less time consuming to study (survey participants were selected primarily through purposive sampling, convenience sampling methods). Many scholars analyzed the views of tourism officials in the form of interviews. Because the officials have more information and knowledge about the legislation in this area, the available opportunities. The interview format increases the reliability and accuracy of the analysis.

The next step is to analyze the data. In the work of scientists researching sustainable tourism are mostly used Content analysis method, Descriptive analysis method, Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA), Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA), SEM (structural equation modelling), Partial Least Square (SEM-PLS) approach, Delphi method, SWOT analytical methods. The data were analyzed using data management programs such as QSR NVivo, Smart PLS 2.0 (M3), SPSS-Software Packages for Social Sciences, AMOS version 23 etc.

In general, the SHTD research model can be used for the development or to identify the current conditions of heritage tourism. The model shows the possible and necessary concepts and their interrelationships. The model is flexible and combines additional variables, research methods, and data analysis methods. This model provided by the authors serves as a guide for future research on heritage tourism development.

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