

**APPLICATION OF THE FAS METHOD IN THE FUNCTION
OF IDENTIFICATION OF THE KOSOVO TOURIST POTENTIAL
(RUGOVA MOUNTAINS AND SHAR MOUNTAINS)¹**

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ABSTRACT

This article explains the model for assessing tourism destination potential, consisting of three elements: factors (sources), attractions (tourist offers) and service systems (or support systems). This model is known as the "FAS model" (from "F-factors, A-attractions, S-support systems"). This model analyses and optimizes the behavior of the parties involved in the tourist destination, both internal and external, as a way of understanding the dynamics of that tourist destination. The FAS model can be applied as a tool that contributes to the strategic positioning of the tourist destination and to the achievement of greater competitiveness and sustainability, which contributes to the development of tourism. This model was created in the context of a study by European "Eureka" as a project tested and implemented in several tourist destinations. The implementation of the FAS methodology, in order to identify the tourism potential of Kosovo, will contribute to the recognition, emphasis and exploitation of the most important potentials of this country in terms of tourism development in general or certain types of tourism separately. At the same time, all tourism resources should be identified as the basis for creating a tourist offer and such a bid will be more easily implemented with the help of services.

KEY WORDS: destination, FAS model, structures, management

¹ Review paper

INTRODUCTION

The FAS tourist destination model is a systematic model that helps in analyzing and making decisions in the management process of a particular tourist destination. At the same time, there is a methodological framework for conducting internal analysis of the structure and dynamics of tourist destinations. This model creates a structure that analyses, classifies and measures components of tourism destinations or groups. These structural components are grouped into groups and sub-notes, which show the comparative advantages of a particular tourist destination. On this basis tourist destinations can be classified into relatively homogeneous categories. On the other hand, the competition that exists in those destinations is relatively strong, because tourists have relatively similar expectations, demands, needs and desires.² However, the most important issue here is about the fact: how comparative advantages of a destination can be used for truly common competition. Creating comparative advantage is important for those tourist destinations that have similar characteristics of initial resources (factors), support services, and tourist attractions (ready-made products). However, tourist or group destinations may choose to reset in order to maintain the best competitive advantage or the higher position of the destination or the group may be privileged in the tourist market. To arrive this, the dynamics of the destination (outside the structural components) should be included and the internal and external environment should be explored.

The tourist destination model FAS

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² Peter L.R., Integrating Cultural heritage into a Tourist Destination, Illustrated by the Lofotr Viking Museum in Borg, Norway, A Master's Dissertation in the University of Lugano, Switzerland, Faculty of Economics and Communication, May 2009, p. 25-27.

destinations.³ On the other hand, this model also takes into account comparative advantages as a means of achieving a higher degree of competition in the strategic positioning of that destination, together with all the parties involved in the destination as a system. The FAS model allows and provides theoretical support at all stages of the creation of a destination management strategy. The model is now used in many programs and projects, such as the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), other programs supported by the Inter-American Development Bank or other projects funded by the Millennium Development Goals of the United Nations managed by UNDP⁴.

Such projects have been conducted in several tourist destinations such as Tabasco (Mexico), Ecuadorian Mediterranean Region, Armenia (Colombia), San Juan (Argentina), Maldonado, Lavalleja and Rocca in Uruguay, the city of Kars in Turkey. This methodology was also used for strategic tourism resettlement in Bali (Indonesia) and tourism development plans in Lesotho and Zambia. The results of these programs and projects have been quite encouraging, perhaps because the FAS model provides continuity at all stages of analysis, decision-making and destination management. Using this model can help the development of tourism and connect the gaps that exist between theoretical considerations and current practice. This can be done only if a methodology is used for addressing all issues related to strategic positioning, competitiveness and sustainability of tourism policies and destination management, and yet allow cultural and institutional.⁵

³ Crompton, J.L. & McKay, S.L. (1997): „Motives of visitors attending festival events”. In: *Annals of Tourism Research* 24 (2): p425 – p439
United Nations Foundation, Millennium Development Goals, 2017, p. 1
(заподелални информации проверена: <http://www.unfoundation.org/what-we-do/issues/mdgs.html?referrer=https://www.google.com/>)

⁴ Министерство за трговија и индустрија на Владата на Република Косово, Министерство за надворешни работи на Финска и УНДП, Проект под наслов “Помош за трговијата”, Профил на Секторот за туризам, 2004 година, стр. 7 – 8.

The structure of the FAS model for tourist destinations

The FAS model explains the tourist destination as a complex of subsystem relationships that are structured in three areas (Figure 1)⁶:

- factors
- attractions
- support services



Figure no. 1. Tourist destination structure: FAS model

There are three areas in the context of inter-regional relations, and the institutional definition makes it so-called "raw material", which is the main strategic and managerial activity of the subconscious tourist (human capital). The Sustanian feature of the FAS model is that the tourist destination tourist can be based on the system and its elements and not on the second dimension of the tourist destination⁷.

Factors

Factors, as the first element of the FAS design of tourist destinations, are divided into three groups:

1. Natural Factors
2. Human Factors

⁴Fayos-Sola E., Moraleda L.F, Mazon A.I.M., Chapter Three: FAS Model-Destination Analysis and Governance, Tourism as an Instrument for Development: A Theoretical and Practical Study, Emerald Group Publishing Limited, Volume 5, First Edition, UK, 2014, p. 68

⁷Мартиновиќ, П., Туристички производ Црне Горе и стратегиски правци његовог развоја, Љублана 2003, година, стр. 3

3. Financial Factors

The group of natural factors includes water, soil (soil) and climate, while human factors include human capital, tangible and untouchable cultural factors, and working conditions. Finally, the group of financial factors includes existing financial capital, existing physical capital (airports and other infrastructure necessary for passenger and tourists' transportation) and capital withdrawal capacities.

Unlike the conventional forms of capital (physical and financial), the existence of natural and human capital is a very important aspect of the overall social capital. There are some assumptions about social capital, but it can be said that access to networks is one of the most important views in terms of the tourist destination system. The role of formal (informal) and informal relations today is presented as an essential value with major impacts on modern tourism policies.⁸

Attractions

In the FAS model, attractions refer to tourist expectations and motivation to travel to a specific tourist destination.⁹ This model classifies the attractions in three types or main groups that correspond to natural, cultural, and human resources. In this way, they are divided into:

1. natural attractions,
2. cultural attractions,
3. human attractions.

The group of natural attractions includes natural areas of a destination, beaches if they exist at destination and in nature, while in the group of cultural attractions belong cultural and historical heritage, events that mark the destination and lifestyle of natives in the destination. The group of human attractions includes the tourist offer for rest and recreation, organization of events and tourist activities, as well as shopping centers or shopping places which are interesting for tourist visits.

⁸ Richards G., *Cultural Tourism in Europe*, Atlas, 2005, стр.25

⁹ Popesku, J., „Menadmentturistickedestnacije“, Beograd, 2011, str. 10-12.

The FAS model facilitates understanding of the structure of tourist destination at deaggregation level due to research objectives in order to better manage management practices.¹⁰ The structure of a tourist destination can be summarized by at least 3 dimensions, or with 35 or more dimensions, if necessary.

Support Services

Finally, the service support system, consisting of catering, transportation and ancillary services, refers to the infrastructure system that responds to demand both by residents and tourists (tourists). Within this system, certain parts are intended solely for the service of tourists, and other parts have a general purpose. Service support is divided into three groups:

1. Hospitality (infrastructure and services related to accommodation, food and drink at destination);
2. Transport (infrastructure and support for air transport services, road and sea, facilitating the movement of tourists to and from the destination);
3. Auxiliary services.

The first group includes all types of hotels and other housing infrastructure as well as all types of food and beverage facilities,¹¹ while the second group includes the transport of tourists, first with air transport, then with the help of other types of transport (roads, sea), as well as transport to the destination. The third group now includes tourist information services, provision of health and safety services for tourists, and provision of services by tourism management organizations and / or destination management.

¹⁰ Cook J., Yale J., Marque J., *Tourism: The Business of Travel*, Prentice-Hall, London, 2005, стр.374.

¹¹ Cooper, C., Fletcher, J., Gilbert, D., Wanhill, S. (1993): "Tourism, Principles & a Practice", London: Pitman Publishing, p. 81.

IDENTIFICATION OF FACTORS, ATTRACTIONS AND SUPPORT OF KOSOVO REGIONAL TOURIST SERVICES

The FAS model explains the tourist destination as a complex of subsystem relationships that is structured in three areas: factors, attractions and support services. The analysis of tourism destination potential, which is done using the FAS model, means a systematic assessment of each element, particularly in the context of aggregate values that emerge from dimensions. On the other hand, such an analytical stage in the process of determining the tourism potential of a country means that the structural impacts of tourist demand motivation have been detected. It should be noted here that the FAS model can help detect and display strong and weak points as well as the potential and risks of all potential or existing touristic values of a tourist destination and thus can rank those elements in direction of creating effective and efficient measures for the development of a destination. All of this is a key factor in creating a stronger framework for tourism policies and programs, local and central authorities and all other organizations involved in the development and promotion of sustainable tourism.¹²

Below we will show the tourism regions of Kosovo according to the research topic of this paper, especially for each region according to elements of the FAS model. It should be noted that in questions from the questionnaire, it is a rule that tourist entities cannot answer questions or answer only a few questions. These subjects have the ability to change (alter or supplement) responses to the time reserved for a 90-day research.

DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS OF RESULTS FROM RESEARCH

To conduct this research and to obtain accurate results, an online questionnaire is used, consisting of 36 questions. The population that is the object of this research are hotel facilities (hotels, motels and campsites), travel agencies, municipalities, state bodies and associations or tourism associations as a whole,

¹² Иницијатива за развој на земјоделството на Косово (IADK), Факториза развој на туризмот, обуки и туристички услуги во руралниот туризам, Приштина, 2017, стр. 1 (за по детални информации проверете на следната интернет страница: <http://www.iadk.org>)

for all of Kosovo, in tourist regions. The survey was conducted by sending an online questionnaire to hotel managers, motels, travel agencies, municipal tourism managers, state bodies and tourism associations. In this research a random sampling (probabilistic) is used.

The geographic region of the country (the tourist region of Kosovo) is used as a criterion for dividing the population concerned. For this reason, the survey covers a total sample of 573 subjects, 293 of which are hotels, 237 are tourist agencies, 38 are municipalities, 4 are tourism associations and 1 is tourism sectors within the competent state ministry. For the determination of the sample for each tourist region, the mathematical formula for a randomized stratified sample is used separately:

- In the tourist region of the mountains of Nemuna (tourist region No. 1) there is a total of 128 tourist entities and the total sample for this tourist region is 102 entities. On this basis, it was determined how many subjects from the Pristina tourist region should be included in the survey: 81 subjects,
- In the tourist region of Sharr Mountain (tourist region No. 2) there is a total population of 164 tourist entities, and the total sample for this tourist region is 131 entities. Based on this, it was determined how many subjects from Prishtina's tourist region should be included in the survey: 105 subjects.

Results from factor research by region

- Natural factors (clean water, access to water, water habitats, natural parks, natural reserves, green areas, access to natural environments, protection and conservation, untouched nature, nature activities, nature miracles, nature, climate attraction , spring, summer ,autumn, winter):
- Rugova Mountain Tourist Region: The situation with the natural factors in this region is different, as about 25% of respondents have responded very well to the situation, but the biggest problems arise from the tourist activities of water as well as the protection and preservation of the natural environment. The most important benefits are pure water, natural parks and nature wonders, outdoor activities and the attractiveness of climatic conditions,
- Sharr Mountain Tourist Region: over 33.5% of respondents estimate the natural factors with the average score (grade 3) and according to the results,

the biggest problems are the protection and preservation of the natural environment, access to the natural and the green areas. Flora and fauna, natural parks and reserves, spring and winter as seasons are considered development potentials.

- Human factors (employees in tourism and hotels, the level of human capital education, investment in new employment, managers' skills, employee skills, business ethics at work, quality in entrepreneurship, recognition of the importance of tourism, existence of cooperation between different subjects, general working conditions, existence of training programs, use of annual leave):
- Rugova Mountains tourist area: 40% believe that the human resources situation in the region deserves an average mark, and the biggest difficulties are the inadequate number of employees in tourism and hospitality, substandard working conditions for those working in this sector, lack of business ethics in the operation of enterprises. Potential in this region in terms of human resources include the level of human capital education, the ability of employees, the existence of training programs and additional qualifications in tourism and the like.
- Sharr Mountain Tourist Region: over 39% estimate the human resources situation in this region with unsatisfactory estimate due to the fact that in this region the general conditions for tourism work are not good, there is not enough cooperation between different entities, no annual vacations are used by tourism workers and the lack of educated staff in the field of tourism and hospitality. The potentials of this region are the skills of managers and employees in this sector, the quality of entrepreneurship.
- Financial factors (private equity, banking capital, foreign capital, other types of financial capital, airports, railways, ports, bus stations, pipelines, access to financial capital, investment opportunities in tourism, capacity to attract capital, cooperation with financial institutions and organizations):
- The mountainous region of Rugova: Nearly 52% of the respondents consider that the financial situation in this region is unsatisfactory (level 1) as a result of insufficient private domestic capital, difficulties in securing bank capital or foreign capital, of investment opportunities in tourism, small capacity for capital withdrawal, poor cooperation with institutions and financial organizations. The potential for tourism development in this region is local private capital, which can be invested in the development or promotion of tourism in this part of Kosovo,

- Sharr Mountain Tourist Region: The situation with the financial factors in this tourist region is rated with rank 1 (unsatisfactory) and 55.5% of the respondents responded to this and such a situation is because there are no initiatives from capital domestic private or equity capital, has inadequate foreign investment or other types of financial capital, poor access to financial capital, investment opportunities in tourism are scarce, has small capacity to attract capital, cooperation with financial and organizational institutions is at a low level. The greatest benefit is the possibility of road connections with other regions of Kosovo.

The results of the research areas attractions by regionAttractions

Natural attractions (mountains, forests, rivers, lakes, other unspecified areas, beach arrangements, beach access, complementary facilities, recreational activities, organized tours, independent tours)

- The tourist region of the mountains of Rugova: Nearly 42% of respondents consider that the status of natural attractions in this region is excellent (grade 5) and if responses are increased by 4 (22%) then it can be concluded that the situation in this region has relatively high potential for tourism development, and 2/3 of the total number of respondents are determined. This is due to the fact that the mountainous region of the Mountains of Nemuna is a mountainous region and has mountains, forests, rivers and lakes, has a sufficient number of complimentary facilities and many types of recreational activities, especially in winter and difficulties arise only in organization of tourist tourism,
- Sharr Mountains Tourist Region: Nearly 60% of respondents consider the status of natural attractions as very good and excellent because this region has a mountain character (high mountain peaks, rivers and lakes) suitable for tourism development, wintery region has mobile facilities and various recreational activities. As a weak side, it is considered the organization of independent tourism in this region.
- Cultural attractions (archaeological sites, architecture, museums and galleries, traditional crafts, religious traditions, folk songs and dance, traditional cuisine, intangible treasures, festivals of the interior character, international festivals, congresses and conferences, fairs of character different, hospitality, meetings with tourists, way of communication, lifestyle).

- Mountains of the Rugova region: the situation with cultural factors in this region is different, because the answers of all five classes are given almost equally, but what is noticed is the fact that the biggest problems arise at local and international festivals, then in museums and galleries, archaeological sites and architecture. Potential for the development of tourism in this region are religious customs, folklore, hospitality, traditional cuisine, contacts with tourists and the like.
- The Sharr Mountains Tourist Region: The similar situation exists in this tourist region, but as major problems that occur in this region are festivals of local and international character, difficulties with old crafts, museums and galleries, archaeological sites and architecture. The tourist potentials of this region are considered as traditional cuisine, hospitality, contact with tourists, untouchable property and the like.
- Human attractions (tourist arrangements, tourist agencies, tour operators, travel arrangements, concerts, art events, anniversaries, picnics, lunches, dinners in nature, other types of events, shopping venues, shopping centers, amusement parks, entertainment and recreation.
- The Mountain Region of Rugova: The situation is similar to this region, because it has difficulties and problems in creating private tourist arrangements, lack of sufficient number of entertaining parks, little picnics, lunches and dinners in the air, there is no important shopping centre and fun parks. On the other hand, the potentials of this region are artistic and similar events,
- Sharr Mountains Tourist Region: About 60% of respondents believe that the situation with the attractions of the people in this region is not at the expected level because there are no fun parks and shopping centers, there are not enough concerts, organized events of different nature and more. And the potential ones that exist in this region are in average frames, ie they are rated with grade 3.

Results of regional service support researchSupport Services

- Hotels (infrastructure and services related to accommodation, food and beverage at the destination: hotels, motels, tourist villages, auto camps, boarding houses, tourist complexes, restaurants, other food and beverage facilities.)
- The mountainous region of Nemuna: the situation with hotel facilities in this region is estimated to be almost equal to all grades from 1 to 5 but what can

be noticed is that there are bigger problems with boarding houses and tourist complexes. On the other hand, the situation is good for hotels and auto camps, and very good for restaurants and food.

- Sharr Mountains tourist region: the catering situation in this region is best rated with the 3rd grade, which can be observed in hotels, motels and inns, while the situation with tourist villages, camping sites, dormitories and tourist complexes is bad and problematic. The most favorable is the situation with the restaurants.
- Transport (infrastructure and system for support of air, road and sea transport, facilitating the mobility of tourists to and from the destination: national airports, international airports, rail transport, bus transportation, other type of transport, city transport;
- Tourist region of the Mountains of Nemuna: very similar situation is in this tourist region, with the only difference that in this part of Kosovo there is no airport. As a positive side in this region is seen in inter-city transport;
- Sharr Mountain Tourist Region: and in this region, around 60% of respondents consider that transport is not sufficiently developed and the biggest problems arise in rail and bus transport. There are developmental potentials for city transport.
- Auxiliary services (tourist information centers, tour guides and other information services, health services for tourists, first aid to hotels and other facilities for tourist accommodation, security measures at arrival, stay and departure of tourists, general security in the country, destination management organizations);
- Mountain Tourist Region: The situation of this region with the Pristina region is quite similar, with the only difference that there are many unhappy entities in this region that are in the category of rank 1,
- Sharr Mountains Tourist Region: a major problem in this region is the lack of and insufficient engagement of tour guides and tourists, the lack of health facilities for tourists, the lack of first aid in hotels and other accommodation facilities for tourists, as well as the lack of organizations that are dealing with destination management. The overall safety and security for tourists in the country is high.

CONCLUSIONS

Applying the FAS model has helped to find the situation with the factors, attractions and support of tourism services for this tourist region, but on the other hand the importance of these factors, attractions and service support is taught, the research itself can be seen more detailing exactly the situation and the importance. Tourism is one of the most essential elements in the overall goals of a particular country, such as promoting the interests of its citizens, economic development and employment, regional development, managing cultural and natural heritage and strengthening the state identity of all citizens .

Quality in tourism can contribute to sustainable development by improving the competitiveness of the business sphere, meeting the needs of society and preserving the environment in which we live and act. Improving the quality of tourist destinations is an essential necessity for tourists, which would contribute to increasing competition in the tourism industry and ensuring the development of tourism in a balanced and sustainable way.

- Based on field research, we have drawn some conclusions, with the help of a questionnaire sent to hotel facilities (hotels, motels and camping), tourist agencies, municipalities, state bodies and tourist associations or associations in Kosovo, by region tourist. The mountainous region of Rugova, compared to the natural factors, varies from the previous region because it is abundant with larger natural resources such as water resources, natural parks, climate conditions conducive to the development of many types of tourism, but still the problem is the protection of the environment and the lack of tourist activities. The situation with financial factors in this region is not satisfactory because of insufficient capital, there are problems in the field of bank loans, there is insufficient and strong cooperation with different types of institutions or financial organizations, although there are certain initiatives for attracting families and / or foreign capital. From the research we conclude that the situation with natural attractions in this tourist region is excellent, because the entire region has a mountain character (mountains, forests, rivers and lakes), in this region there are many entities that provide accommodation and recreation services, especially during winter season.
- As for the cultural factors in the mountainous area of the Mountains of Nemuna, it should be said that the situation is considered excellent, but in this region there are problems in the area of cultural and historical heritage

(festivals, galleries, museums, localities, etc.). However, this region differs from habits, way of life, folklore, popular cuisine and more. There are no fun parks in the mountainous region of the Mountains of Rugova, there are no events organized out of nature, there are no shopping centers and the cultural aspect of life is not at the right level. In this tourist region there are not enough hotel facilities to accommodate guests, but existing hotels or similar facilities are in good condition and restaurant service and restaurants are in sufficient numbers and provide great food and service. It should be noted that there is no airport or railway developed in this region, there are not enough tourist guides and information centers, but the positive side in this region is intercity transport.

- The tourist area of Sharr Mountain, in relation to the situation with natural factors, is a less developed region in relation to the previous region, but potentials are considered natural factors and reserves, as well as endemic flora and fauna, but the problem is the protection of the natural environment. It should be noted that the situation with human factors is not at the right level, the conditions for tourism work do not meet the standards and the real problem is either the lack of educated staff in the field of tourism and hotels. The situation with financial factors is assessed with lower estimate because there is not enough capital, the lack of domestic and / or foreign investment, capital withdrawal capacities are quite small and similar. Natural attractions in this tourist region are diverse and are valued with the highest rating, while the positive side in using these elements is filled with the majority of accommodation capacities and various recreational activities, especially in winter. This region is famous for cultural and historical heritage, but there are real problems in the field of handicrafts, museums, architecture and the strong side is traditional cuisine and untouchable cultural treasure. As in the former tourist region, there is a lack of entertaining parks and shopping centers in this region, there are no organized events that will attract local and foreign tourists. Sharr Mountain Resort is not developed from the aspect of shipping (there is no developed railway, no airport, bus transport is difficult). There are no first-aid hotels in this region, while the security situation is assessed with the highest rating.

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