

Theoretic Issues on the Role of Tourism Clusters in Regional Development

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Abstract

The dynamically developing tourism sector can be the driving force of the region. Tourism at the regional level not only affects the local economy, but also local communities. In regional terms, tourism, depending on the tourist attractiveness of a given region, may be a polarizing, stimulating or neutral factor for the development of the region. Clustering has become a prerequisite for the survival of organisations, taking into account the economic, political, security and social situation currently observed at international level. The aim of the current paper is to present some of the current issues regarding the significance of tourism clusters in regional development performing an in-depth literature review on the research carried out in the field of tourism clustering and regional growth. The importance of cluster development is based on the need for partnerships between service providers as a source of increasing competitiveness. The findings present a broader perspective of the impact of tourism clusters in regional development. The development of the tourism cluster at regional level strengthens local society and social cohesion. All these determine the increase of the quality, the reduction of the costs, the better commercialization of the tourist products, therefore, the increase of the competitiveness of the destination.

Keywords: clusters, cooperation, destination competitiveness, regional development, tourism industry

JEL classification: L83, Z32

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1. Introduction

Through the vast human, material and natural potential that it entails in development, through the multiplicative effects on other sectors of the economy, tourism is characterized as a sector with the greatest potential for global expansion (Ferreira & Estevao, 2009; Scott, Hall & Gössling, 2019). A country that is developing in terms of tourism is becoming a prosperous nation (Sharpley, 2020). This means, implicitly, that all existing services are developed at regional level, which meet the needs of tourists. The tourist destination needs a form of organization in which the actors are put together, in other words, the private environment with the local administration and educational institutions, so that there is a continuous process of elaboration of local tourist products, of their promotion on the markets, generators of tourists at the destination (Mirčetić, Vukotić & Cvijanović, 2019). Tourism is responsible for the indirect economic benefits and can be seen as a catalyst for the

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development or expansion of other economic sectors: agriculture, construction, crafts, fishing, etc. (Ghosh, Siddique & Gabbay, 2017; Vellas, 2011). The tourism sector provides an economic incentive and financial support for the conservation of the local environment and natural resources, as well as for the conservation of cultural heritage.

Tourism is essential for stimulating territorial cohesion, in particular for encouraging the economic and social integration of urban and rural areas. The great diversity of forms of tourism demonstrates the comparative advantage of the sector (García-Villaverde, Elche & Martínez-Perez, 2020). In this context, the pursuit of competitiveness is one of the major concerns of companies around the world. Competitiveness and innovation in the field of hospitality are closely linked to the creation of a regional innovation system that can facilitate the absorption of knowledge (training, education and training) and their repatriation (technology transfer, entrepreneurship, etc.) (Asheim & Coenen, 2005; Doloreux, 2004), ie optimizing the value chain in the regional tourism industry.

The tourism cluster is one of the best ways to create attractive tourist destinations (Lascu et al., 2018), which include and capitalize on a broad partnership through logistics, facilities, information and knowledge shared between members. The cluster in a tourist destination can act as a cooperation platform (Havierníková, Lemańska-Majdzik & Mura, 2017) and can implement the objectives of specialization by using the tools to attract funds to integrated and sustainable tourism projects. Overall, the tourism cluster can play a key role as it is able to design customized products for specific markets and provide information and support for market access.

2. Literature Review

Tourism, in its modern sense, marks a strong upward dynamic (Albaladejo & González-Martínez, 2019), evolving from simple structures that provided poor accommodation and dining conditions, illustrated by the classic inns and taverns, to modern hotels and restaurants. The evolution was generated by the ever-growing needs of the traveling people (Ateljevic, 2020), whose numbers have steadily increased at a sustained pace in recent decades and whose diverse demands were growing. This is a growing demand for accommodation, food, leisure, treatment in a certain territorial distribution and with a higher density of specialised units. Therefore, the geographical criterion was decisive in the emergence and continuous development of a real network of tourism units (Jaelani, Igakr & Karjoko, 2020). The economic factor interferes with the geographical and social one, generating significant economic effects by harnessing the tourist and leisure potential of an area (de Andrés, Barragán & Sanabria, 2017), the development of trade, business, facilitating the emergence and progress of urban centers, seriously marking the economic, social, cultural activity, socio-professional structure of their population (Petrova et al., 2018). From this perspective, tourism has been enhanced by the

development of activities and industries in the national economy and in turn has favoured their evolution (Telfer, 2014).

The sharing of resources between enterprises operating in the field of tourism remains a possibility of study for specialists of this sector at the level of a destination (Kim, & Shim, 2018). The exchange of knowledge, experience and information constitutes, if it is done within a legal framework and within an organised network structure, a competitive advantage for these undertakings, which will enable them to dominate the markets and strengthen their position in the sector. The cluster enables the company to access resources and knowledge different from its own, share resources with cluster members, develop its skills and be competitive (Gîrneală, 2013). The resources to which a member of the cluster has access must meet certain conditions, namely be valuable, inimitable and irreplaceable. Several empirical studies carried out on clusters have clearly shown that multiple interbusiness concentration movements are essentially aimed at reducing costs, developing competitiveness, dominating external markets and exchanging knowledge and knowledge generated by partner members (Buenstorf, & Costa, 2018; Gîrneală & Mascu, 2014; Rauch, van Doorn, & Hulsink, 2014; Lee, Jang, & Kim, 2020). Such objectives, which require effective commitment by all members, can only be achieved through a dynamic cluster-initiated policy based on trust, collaboration and partnership spirit.

Cooperation between undertakings concentrated in a single tourist entity enables them to exploit the knowledge, skills, experiences and complementarities generated by each individual member (Costa & Lima, 2018), which in turn enable the development of the own capacities of each member undertaking of the cluster and, therefore, its extension to the entire tourism network. In the new economy, competitiveness is the driver of sustainability and survival (Streimikiene et al., 2021), and it is mainly based on the intangible capacities of organisations (Marin, Martín & Rubio, 2017), namely a whole set of skills, i.e. knowledge, skills and life skills.

These intangible capabilities allow the product to vary with associated services and are usually expressed as innovations (Saunila & Ukko, 2014), which touch several elements of part or the entire value chain of the latter. Cooperation and complementarity between tourism stakeholders could contribute to the creation of innovation within the cluster and its sharing among all its members (Monteiro, Soares & Rua, 2017). Similarly, collaboration between tourism companies in a single cluster based on the logic of competences allows them to coordinate the external innovation process (Cunha & Cunha, 2005), which goes beyond the local framework in order to achieve a global and global dimension (Novelli, Schmitz & Spencer, 2006). A company does not become innovative anyway (Iglesias-Sánchez, Correia & Jambrino-Maldonado, 2019), and the environment in which it evolves, together with other territorial partners grouped within a cluster, has a decisive role in this respect (Hall & Williams, 2019). In the same vein, the innovative company does not appear anyway in local communities, it is the result of a certain context provided by this cluster (Expósito-Langa, Tomás-Miquel &

Molina-Morales, 2015). In their relations with the environment, together with their traditional relationships developed on the market, innovative companies within the tourist cluster also sway links outside the market (García-Villaverde, Elche & Martínez-Perez, 2020).

Relationships outside the market appear in a privileged manner at the local level, and are specific to local technological creative processes, as this type of relationship plays a decisive role in the learning process (Marasco et al., 2018). They bring together all forms of synergies-creating interdependence, i.e. direct relationships between companies and research centres, but also incubation phenomena, using professional experience and existing experiences in the technical culture of a region. Through these formal and informal relationships "outside the market" individual and collective learning are achieved and progressed. The concept of cluster emphasizes the relationships that develop within its socio-economic organisations (Dembovska & Silicka, 2012).

The effective combination of inputs is not the only source of innovation for the tourist enterprise, as it is the day-to-day activity and routine that emerges from its core mission, while true innovation pushes the organisation to seek and integrate into clusters (Ji & Gunasekaran, 2014), through which it can highlight its own know-how, the technologies and experiences it has. Currently, in a world where there is fierce competition between organisations, tourism companies are required to innovate in order to survive (Montañés-Del-Río & Medina-Garrido, 2020). To overcome this impasse, they strive to create and develop a capacity for innovation in a sustainable process by adopting organisational strategies based on cluster concentrations.

3. Research Methodology and Objectives

Aiming to analyze the theoretic aspects related to the significance of tourism clusters in regional development, this paper uses a systematic literature review of previous research conducted in the field of tourism clustering and regional growth. Therefore, the investigation method of the current study represents a documentary analysis of various books, research articles and reports which tackle the mention topic.

The main proposed objectives of the present study are the following:

- To investigate the development of the tourism industry addressing the aspect regarding the contribution of this sector of activities on the regional development;
- To analyze the importance of clusters in the tourism industry, identifying the premises for the development of clusters;
- To examine the benefits of tourism clusters in the process of regional development, highlighting the advantages of operating the tourism cluster.

The findings present a broader perspective of the impact of tourism clusters in regional development.

4. The Development of Tourism Industry

Tourism development is based on the cooperation of various stakeholders to provide attractive tourism products. Separately, the travel services offered by many destination providers can be successfully developed, but they need much more effort and investment to become more visible to customers and cooperation creates the opportunity to increase the efficiency of each stage of the life cycle of the tourist offer. New economic phenomena have emerged, with implications for consumer well-being (Dobrin & Girneata, 2015). Today, the development of products or services requires good market visibility, cohesion and accessibility. Tourism today is dominated by short visits to cities / historic towns (city-breaks). In order to be a part of the tourism industry and to obtain revenues from tourist services at regional level, it is essential to offer complex tourist products and offers under a single brand. This can happen when several different travel service providers come together in a tourist destination, to act together permanently, organized in the cluster.

Tourism at the regional level not only affects the local economy, but also local communities. In regional terms, tourism, depending on the tourist attractiveness of a given region, may be a polarizing, stimulating or neutral factor for the development of the region. The polarizing influence is characteristic of regions that have high tourist attractiveness (Jeuring & Haartsen, 2017), in which, apart from high tourist values and infrastructure, there are favourable economic conditions for the development of other sectors of the economy. The increasing tourist traffic and the sphere of its service created suitable conditions for the development of economic area other than tourism, the functioning of which depends (directly or indirectly) on tourism (Koval et al., 2019). This state of affairs created conditions for the comprehensive specialization of the region, which means that the development of all economic area in the region is determined by tourism. On the other hand, the impact stimulating the socio-economic development is typical for regions where tourism has only an indirect impact on the economy of the area, because other sectors of the economy that are of dominant importance function there. Then, tourism plays the role of an additional factor stimulating the development of the area.

The phenomenon in the complexity of cause-and-effect relationships, directions of action, their intensity and duration of action is constantly moving. We are witnessing a permanent change in these relationships, their increased mobility, as well as the directions of action, the intensity of the senses, which tend towards a perpetual balance between the ever-increasing needs and the real possibilities to balance them continuously, permanently by offering new tourist products that satisfy the demand of consumers of tourist services.

The upward trend in the volume of demand for tourist services, as well as the complexity and permanent diversification of its structure, have generated a complex, dynamic approach on the part of service providers, which tend towards a full satisfaction of consumer requirements. The assortment of the tourist product, in continuous diversification and restructuring, according to market requirements, is in the attention of the service provider from the design, design phase and is monitored during

implementation, market launch and impact assessment with a view to promoting and increasing sales volume.

The tourist offer is the concept that encompasses all the products and services offered, the idea of tourist services to be provided or executed within the tourist setting. Each country has different tools (laws, agreements, authorisations, licences) that set the conditions for organising and selling travel. Involved actors such as travel agencies, hotels, passenger transport operators and real estate agents can offer tourism activities in accordance with these tools. Within these legal provisions, local tourism organisations are also involved in the tourist offer. The offer is now very diverse and evolving with the requirements of demand. The attractiveness of a destination that enriches the tourist offer is offered by several specific elements (Iatu & Bulai, 2011; Lee, 2016; Marczak, M., & Borzyszkowski, 2020):

- cultural, historical, natural and scientific heritage: each country has a history and culture that attracts tourists;
- facilities that can make a country attractive, such as hotels, museums, restaurants, but also sporting and cultural events;
- access facilities, either at the destination level or in terms of economic accessibility, are very important.
- the information that the tourist has on the country.

The dynamically developing tourism sector can be the driving force of the region. The fast development of tourism results in numerous economic and social consequences that manifest themselves in regions related to the service of tourist traffic. The economic and social effects result in particular from the fact that tourism plays an important role in the economy. The nature of tourism activity results in the emergence of numerous mutual relations with many other sectors used in the tourist service process. Appropriate use of the positive effects of tourism development, while minimizing its negative effects, is the main determinant of the development of tourist destination area, especially those who function is under the pressure of the tourist function. It also has a significant impact on the economy of the tourist and transit regions.

5. Tourism Industry and Business Clusters

The cluster is a form of concentration whose main purpose is to group together companies that have agreed to share their resources, to work together to have a market leadership position, to continuously exchange knowledge, know-how and skills and to put aside past conflicts. This way of organisation, so coveted by competing undertakings, comes in different forms, depending on the nature of the undertakings' activities, their market sizes, their market shares, their competitive capacities.

In the cost-minimisation approach, the cluster consists of partners who are known on the market (local, regional, national or international), who have a relationship, *inter alia*, of the type of client/supplier (accommodation organisations/tourists or airlines/tour operators) or who are part of the same value chain (tour operators, hotels, airlines, attendants (guides), tourist transport, etc.). Membership

in the cluster allows travel companies, following the example of other companies operating in other fields of activity, to benefit from several advantages, mainly due to vertical integration, reduced trading costs between cluster companies and other companies, price negotiations, the establishment of contracts guaranteeing the interests of the members and without making any further financial investments that can raise their expenses.

In this form of integration it is desirable or even essential to have a pivotal undertaking, order donor, cluster leader (tour operator), because it will be given the role of managing and regulating the cluster, choosing assets, exercising strict control over all members, selecting those with whom it wants to work and collaborating and may even exclude them, if their powers prove insufficient or weak. It should be noted that the power of the pivotal undertaking is not an autocratic one, it is subject to certain conditions and its choice remains a strategic element in the tourist production process. The most interesting advantage of the cluster is that it promotes the collective learning of all partners, benefiting from the exchange of knowledge. Unlike the cost minimisation cluster, in the absence of a pivotal enterprise, the relationship of members within the learning-based cluster is not contractual and is based on trust, reciprocity and mutual exchange.

The companies that form the tourism clusters rely in their mutual relations on the tacit and sometimes informal form. These practices contribute to increasing the tourism activity of the cluster, strengthening the climate of trust and developing learning, knowledge and skills within the structure. Competences result 'from collective learning within the organisation, in particular from the way different production skills are coordinated and multiple technological currents are integrated'.

The phenomenon of regional clustering is considered a phenomenon derived from the complex processes of the evolution of local companies and entrepreneurial activities. The economic phenomenon of clustering is generated by the effort of public authorities to ensure their regional competitiveness by maintaining the local base of companies, the skilled workforce, as well as by attracting foreign investment. Clustering means a new mechanism for managing and stimulating economic and social growth in the region, the key words being the following ((Asheim, Cooke & Martin, 2006; Fundeanu & Badele, 2014; Isaksen, 2017):

- sectoral and geographical concentration of interconnected companies and institutions;
- strategic management and marketing;
- competition, cooperation, specialization, related value chain;
- entrepreneurial infrastructure and social development of the region;
- the investment attractiveness of the region and competitive human resources;
- public-private partnership;
- partnership between the business environment, the academic one and the public administration;
- export of goods and services and brand of the region, etc.

In addition to the main factors influencing regional clustering decisions (natural resources, human resources, location of production capacities and others), an important role is played by the initiative of economic agents in the region, considered the basic engine in the operation of the cluster. Along with local entrepreneurship, clustering can be initiated by the state, usually in the fields of innovation and transfer of advanced technologies, and by large regional companies, which concentrate around them supplier companies of various sizes by creating a new internal market. The cluster can be defined as a working system that ensures a maximum possible level of competitiveness in the existing conditions of access to local resources in a certain region and / or field of activity. At the same time, clusters have the property to go beyond the borders of an economic field of activity and to penetrate adjacent and related fields, having the role of centers for growth of internal markets and start-up platforms for external expansion of the economy.

According to M. Porter, the cluster represents a geographical agglomeration of companies, suppliers, service providers and associated institutions in a certain field, interconnected by external and complementary factors of various types. The cluster can be located in any type of territorial communities, from small ones, such as a group of localities, cities or communes, to regions, states or border areas between states.

The tourism cluster is functional if there is a set of tourist attractions concentrated in a limited geographical area, with quality facilities and services, and the cluster members are involved in a value chain producing innovative tourism products and services. For a cluster to become functional, useful and practical, its members must develop a coherent policy from the moment the idea emerges until the introduction of the tourist destination on the national and international market. Figure 1 presents a model of tourism clusters and illustrates the relationships between its members.

Clustering generates the formation of a functional network and can help identify new connections, harmonize the interests of entrepreneurs, research institutions, local authorities and all other members. The team can develop tourism destination management strategies, look for new solutions to achieve professional standards, in order to ensure a high level of quality and promotion of tourism products and services on the national and international market.

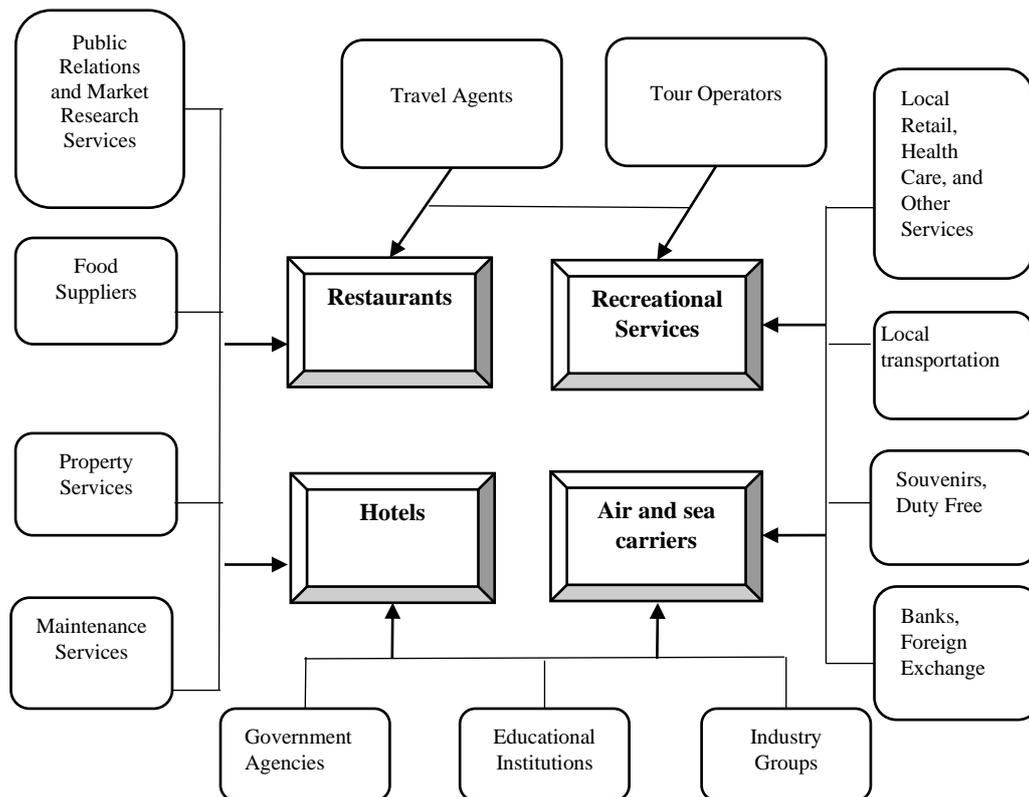


Figure 1. Tourism Cluster Model

Source: Adapted from The Global Competitiveness Report (2006), p. 55

Cluster members have the opportunity to share their common experiences in technology and organization, have opportunities for qualification, initiation and specialization in the field of activity of the company and, last but not least, can share costs and risk, of course with joint capitalization of researchers' results.

6. The Benefits of Tourism Clusters in the Process of Regional Development

For tourism, the importance of cluster development is based on the need for partnerships between service providers as a source of increasing competitiveness. The competitiveness of regional tourism destinations is based on a mix of specific actions aimed at bringing efficiency, innovation and competence to the members of the cluster and obtaining benefits, including: The benefits of operating the tourism cluster are various ((Benner, 2019; Kachniewska, 2013; Kibicho, 2008):

- increasing the entrepreneurial and innovative spirit within a joint action;
- promoting the locality and the region by creating a local / regional brand;
- attracting capital and increasing investments around the cluster;

- increasing market bargaining power and lower operating costs;
- exchange of experience and implementation of joint research programs;
- channeling political influence on cluster actions;
- improving the competitiveness of companies in the area.

Clusters often have the ability to remove barriers and difficulties characteristic of unassociated companies. At the same time, the barriers vary depending on the region of the location. The main difficulties and constraints in the operation of enterprises are the following ((Kornilaki, Thomas & Font, 2019; Żemła, 2016):

- lack of skilled labor;
- reduced capacity of the local market;
- lack of sufficient financial and material resources;
- lack of flexibility etc.

Tourism clusters can play an important role in activating local communities and transforming localities into tourist destinations, as well as increasing their competitiveness in the tourism market. Initiatives related to the development of tourism clusters can serve as specific objectives in local development strategies. In this sense, it becomes necessary to support the local authorities in overcoming the various obstacles faced by the community to create an adequate environment for tourism development, capitalize on the community's heritage, improve access to attractions, promote the positive image of cluster localities, engage the population in various actions. increasing the perception of hospitality of hosts, etc. An important element in the development of clusters is the establishment of a cooperation with the authorities from the component localities of the rural tourist destination, partners who, through their financial resources and expertise can contribute to support the activity of agritourism households and local related tourism service providers. local etc.).

The tourism cluster offers the tourist destination an identity that distinguishes it from other destinations, and the members of the cluster are responsible for its maintenance and sustainable development. The premises for the development of clusters in tourism are illustrated in Figure 2.

The members of a tourist cluster can be: tour operators, travel agencies, accommodation structures, food structures, catering, transport companies, service and consulting companies, national and local authorities, educational and research institutions, professional associations and NGOs, leisure units, crafts, car rentals, event agencies, etc.

There are three key dimensions of individual learning, namely knowledge (knowledge), practice (experience) and attitudes (behaviour), which members of the tourism cluster must share in order to gain competitiveness.

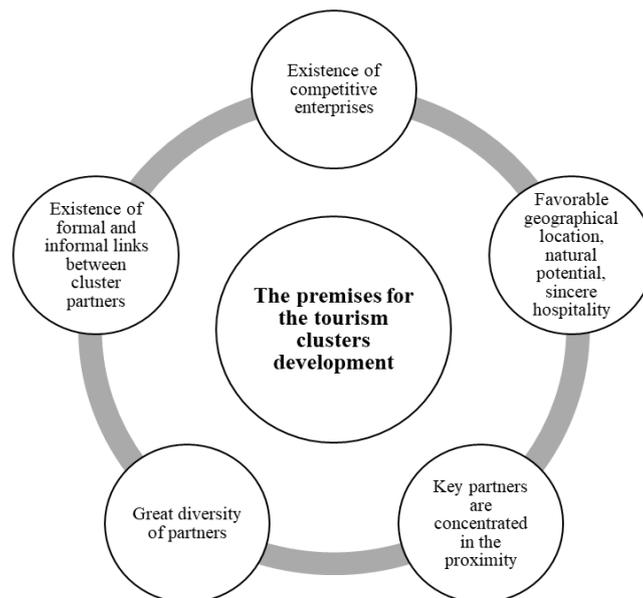


Figure 2. The premises for the development of clusters in tourism
Source: Adapted after Iordache, Ciochină & Asandei (2010)

The choice of the cluster is the result of many studies have concluded that the concentration operation of companies with identical or complementary activity could be beneficial both for them and for their overall structure. The cluster is, by excellence, the place of communication and learning offered to its actors and is also the expression of the conventions established between companies. It thus enables all its members to generate knowledge and knowledge and to support the innovation behind the success and continuity of the whole structure. Innovation clusters and cooperation agreements become the strategic tools that local communities can use to avoid the danger of entropic death, which threatens systems that are too closed, and to continue to exploit, at the same time, the advantages of their own synergies, their industrial memory and their atmosphere.

In their relations with the environment, together with their traditional relationships developed on the market, innovative companies within the tourist cluster also sway links outside the market. Relationships outside the market appear in a privileged manner at the local level, and are specific to local technological creative processes, as this type of relationship plays a decisive role in the learning process. They bring together all forms of synergies-creating interdependence, i.e. direct relationships between companies and research centres, but also incubation phenomena, using professional experience and existing experiences in the technical culture of a region. Through these formal and informal relationships "outside the market" individual and collective learning are achieved and progressed.

The effective combination of inputs is not the only source of innovation for the tourist enterprise, as it is the day-to-day activity and routine that emerges from its core mission, while true innovation pushes the organisation to seek and integrate into

clusters, through which it can highlight its own know-how , the technologies and experiences it has. Currently, in a world where there is fierce competition between organisations, tourism companies are required to innovate in order to survive. To overcome this impasse, they strive to create and develop a capacity for innovation in a sustainable process by adopting organisational strategies based on cluster concentrations. The concentration of clustered tourism companies allows to instill in its members an effective learning logic, thanks to the spirit of cooperation and culture based on trust. This connection enables the entire structure with competitive capabilities to enable it to be competitive compared to other competitors. Effectively, this learning logic is considered "a dynamic process of interaction, which aims to produce existing technologies. Activities, resources and actors are a coordinated whole to reduce risks and ensure the development of all.

Conceived as an organisational process, the cluster will allow diversity to be included in a common partnership framework. This can connect companies beyond the local business context. These undertakings may have a national, regional or international dimension, making this connection difficult. The efforts of all partner companies must be combined to achieve this. Ambiguous, complex and difficult to identify, the cluster questions its interpretation, understanding and the possibility of its application to certain complex activities. Bringing together key tourism players and regrouping them into a single tourism cluster is an adventure for economists, sociologists, geographers and industry professionals, who must also be followed by all stakeholders and researchers.

As regards air transport, synergy effects relate mainly to airlines, travel organisations and travel agencies specialising only in flights. Tour operators can easily buy airfares for their customers from cluster member companies, book seats for the days they want. These very slim relationships between travel agencies and airlines allow for reducing negotiation costs, eliminating delays and flight cancellations, and saving time.

The effects of the technology are other advantages that members of a collaborative cluster can enjoy. Members of the same cluster can benefit from a technology transfer from leading companies, especially in the field of information and communication technology, necessary for the better functioning of tourist enterprises (intranet, extranet, reservation system, charging system, etc.). This technological transfer enables the development of enterprises' capacities, the shortening of time and waste in the processing of commercial transactions, the facilitation and standardisation of communication between members and the modernisation of their telecommunication and information infrastructure.

At the level of air transport, the technological conquests available to certain airlines in relation to others, concerning in particular the use of new models of aircraft, equipped with cutting-edge technology, constitute an advantage for all members of the cluster and they can be exploited by travel organisations and travel agencies with the marketing of tourist products. This competitive advantage may make a difference in the perception of customers in accepting one or other of the destinations (Deac, Dobrin & Gîrneală, 2016). In addition to the price, period and hotel, customers also take into

account other elements related to the security and quality of the means of transport used. These new elements may influence the decisions made by customers in choosing a destination.

Integration into an organised cluster enables tour operators, mainly tour operators, to control the distribution of their services internationally and to manage their own stocks in an effective and optimal manner, so as to guide their sales and segment the markets of promoters and transmitters. The members of the cluster must first form in the stock management sciences in order to coordinate this process. The distribution of the products of tourism organisations worldwide remains very expensive, due to the large number of real and virtual travel agencies dealing with this mission and which depend on it, as well as the additional expenses that arise throughout the process. Integration into a cluster thus becomes a necessity, which allows the tour operator to reduce its distribution costs and remain competitive in the market of tour operators.

In addition to stock management, integration into the business cluster will allow tourism organisations to use for their own tourist products offered all distribution agencies throughout the cluster, which will considerably reduce their costs and, consequently, their sales prices. This method will thus allow customers to access the best rates offered in relation to competition. What is currently striking in the tourism system is the large number and diversity of partners that arise from both the public and private sectors, which are often found in conflicting relationships, which makes the analysis of this area of activity difficult and partial and poses serious problems to the researcher.

The concentration of tourism clusters allows to instill in its members an effective learning logic, thanks to the spirit of cooperation and culture based on trust. This connection enables the entire structure with competitive capabilities to enable it to be competitive compared to other competitors. Effectively, this learning logic is considered a dynamic process of interaction, which aims to produce cooperation between undertakings concentrated in a single tourist entity enables them to exploit the knowledge, skills, experiences and complementarities generated by each member, which in turn enable the development of the own capacities of each of the member undertakings of the cluster and, therefore, its extension to the entire tourism industry. In the new economy, competitiveness is the driver of sustainability and survival, and it is mainly based on the intangible capacities of organisations, namely a whole set of skills, i.e. knowledge, skills and lifeskills.

These intangible capabilities allow the product to vary with associated services and are usually expressed as innovations, which touch several elements of part or the entire value chain of the latter. Cooperation and complementarity between tourism stakeholders could contribute to the creation of innovation within the cluster and its sharing among all its members. Similarly, collaboration between tourism companies in a single organised cluster based on the logic of competences allows them to coordinate the external innovation process, which goes beyond the local framework in order to achieve a global and global dimension. A company does not become innovative anyway, and the environment in which it evolves, together with other territorial

partners grouped within the cluster, has a decisive role in this respect. In the same vein, the innovative company does not appear anyway in local communities, it is the result of a certain context provided by this cluster.

7. Conclusions

The current conditions require tourism to be organised in the form of a cluster. Clustering has become a prerequisite for the survival of organisations, taking into account the economic, political, security and social situation currently observed at international level. This concentration may lead undertakings, in particular those in tourism, to benefit from several advantages, which concern the effects of synergy, technology and management. These advantages may enable cluster members to gain a favourable position regarding their competitors and, consequently, to strengthen the cluster's place at international level.

The concentration of tourism partners in organised clusters can have beneficial consequences for all members, at the level of their sub-domain, and of the cluster, as a global institution. These synergy effects essentially relate to accommodation, food, transport, etc. At the accommodation level, the cluster creates synergy effects between reception establishments, travel organisations and travel agencies. The latter may make it easier and directly to call on the reception facilities of cluster members to accommodate their customers at no additional cost. Otherwise, they are obliged to request the services of other hotels for this purpose, which may lead to the occurrence for tourists of additional costs with fax, telephones, transport and negotiation efforts.

The development of the tourism cluster at regional level strengthens local society and social cohesion. All these determine the increase of the quality, the reduction of the costs, the better commercialization of the tourist products, therefore, the increase of the competitiveness of the destination.

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