

Studying Foreign Experience in the Development of MICE Tourism and the Principles of Its Application in Uzbekistan

Fayyoza Xalimova*

Department of Tourism and Hotel Business, Tashkent State University of Economics, Tashkent, Uzbekistan.

*Email: fayozahalimova@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

This study was motivated by the growing recognition that digital platforms offer integrated ecosystems, which enable new forms of interaction to create value for both organizations and the stakeholders that participate in or depend on the system. It is supported by the assumption that the platform integration approach can be used to enhance coordination and improve the efficiency within any organization, whether that involves the management of an enterprise or the governance of a system. The aim of this study was to examine platform integration and institutional interaction among a sample of digital ecosystems. This research contributes theoretical understanding, practical implications, and strategic decision making, for the development of effective integration models for organizations. We examined the relationships through comparative analysis of the framework: once for theoretical modeling, once validated by the empirical data but adjusted for these contextual differences, and the results were interpreted and validated on multiple dimensions. The analysis was conducted following examination of the components of integration: a comparison of structural elements within the system, the evaluation of the stakeholders' roles, and once with an emphasis on the dynamic interaction of the platform and institutional environment of the ecosystem. In the context of a platform integration and institutional framework, results of these two approaches provided insights, evidence, and support to extend existing theoretical models like ecosystem theory and platform governance, and receive empirical validation. For practical implications, organizations and policymakers were more likely to adopt integrated strategies as their priority (short-term vs long-term), practice more than traditional approaches (isolated vs. integrated), and develop a coordinated structure inside the ecosystem of the platform. Such findings suggest an important shift in organizational management among the actors with integrated systems. Organizations who are adopting integrated approaches demonstrate significantly different patterns of performance and could be a reference model for other emerging digital ecosystems.

Keywords: MICE Tourism, Platform Integration, Structural Equation Modeling, Institutional Coordination, Digital Ecosystems, Tourism Performance, Stakeholder Interaction

JEL Classifications: L83, O33, R58

1. INTRODUCTION

The development of MICE tourism is for example believed to increase economic growth and international cooperation (Avezova, 2023; Bobomurod, 2025; Isoxonovich and Telmanovna, 2025) the foundation of this concept was an integrated theoretical framework where the coordinated interaction of tourism stakeholders produced measurable outcomes on a global scale.

Early research was the basis of the first systematic tourism studies by Kotler and Gertner in 2007; as well as (Jeong et al., 2023; Mukhtorova et al., 2023). The SEM approach is a widely used methodology in which relationships are estimated from observed variables and latent constructs are integrated into structural and measurement models in a unified 'system' framework.

Platform-based integration can be a conceptual framework in tourism development, which is increasingly focused on the

coordination of digital approaches as a driver of efficiency and innovation (Kabilova, 2023; Khamidov and Yuldashev, 2020). However, because of inconsistencies regarding infrastructure development and institutional coordination, the application of MICE tourism frameworks that involve processes related to stakeholder interaction, integration of service systems, and the evaluation of tourism performance remains limited.

Yet, the lack of empirical validation of these conceptual models its use has been limited to selected regions. Potential explanations for this include a fragmented governance structure, the chance to achieve a coordinated system, lack of integration, with evidence that certain tourism stakeholders operate independently about their organizational goals and strategic priorities (Khamidov and Yuldashev, 2020; Mirzaliyev and Abduturapova, 2022).

As a result, most tourism systems struggle with limitations for effective implementation on practice, and its impact in development of integrated strategies for MICE tourism. The application of foreign experience is for example shown to increase competitiveness and efficiency (Mukhtorova et al., 2023; Pyankova et al., 2022) which combines infrastructure development and policy integration. This conceptual framework developed by our study in the context of MICE tourism as well as digital ecosystems and institutional interaction (Jeong et al., 2023; Safaeva and Adilova, 2020; Sodiqovna, 2022).

First, we review the literature on MICE tourism, both its theoretical basis and its practical applications among countries, lots of studies attempt to identify for certain development patterns (Xotamovich and Saitovich, 2020). Although previous studies exist (Khamidov and Yuldashev, 2020; Mirzaliyev and Abduturapova, 2022; Pyankova et al., 2022), this is a domain where empirical methods already provide – and theoretical models are required to provide – and we integrate both within a more comprehensive framework.

Although the existing literature highlights several potential benefits, such as reduced uncertainty, improved coordination, and increased efficiency, and similar positive outcomes, research in the empirical domain remained fragmented and limited to case studies, regional analyses, and descriptive assessments of large tourism systems. While prior research has explored relationships for both knowledge transfer (e.g. Khamidov and Yuldashev, 2020) and tourism development (e.g. Safaeva et al., 2020), the empirical examination of structural relationships between institutional factors and tourism performance has considerable methodological gaps, including cross-to-cross comparisons of models that may strongly influence outcomes related to MICE tourism development.

Although such limitations may direct attention away from integrated frameworks, critical factors during later stages of the system are overlooked. The aim of the study is to describe the process of MICE tourism development for use with Uzbekistan conditions, on the basis of foreign experience.

The aim of the research design in this study was to provide a comprehensive analysis, including the infrastructure, institutional

interaction and strategic development and evaluation by the SEM method. Better understanding in this research area may, among other things, enhance ability to coordinate, integrate and optimize the performance of tourism systems and the strategic models that emerge from including and working with non-traditional stakeholders.

We argue that the integration of foreign experience provides a basis of evidence-based strategies aimed at improving from international best practices. By applying SEM methodology, we first identify what types of variables they represent to measure latent constructs, observed indicators, and structural relationships. For the validation of the model, an empirical analysis was conducted during data collection as supporting evidence. Then, in order to ensure comparability across different types and across regional contexts, to generalize from a framework shared by components of a system. Here, we offer a justification for the selection of methods we use an approach developed on the basis of SEM and a conceptual model that describes interaction processes of MICE tourism as an integrated system.

2. METHODS

Respondents from different regions that had direct exposure to MICE tourism activities in urban destinations regarding Uzbekistan's tourism development were selected, as resulted in the initial data screening after the survey distribution, followed by verification and validation.

The data collection process was conducted in Uzbekistan, Tashkent, on March 01-April 15, 2024: the respondents represented the tourism sector, and participants were willing and able to provide their responses. The study sample included a group of tourism stakeholders, mostly professionals but some academics, and policymakers (experts) for an analytical evaluation from public to private sectors.

Survey participants were invited to form a sample of respondents in the tourism industry (MICE sector) from a structured sampling frame in the national context. A total of 312 questionnaires and 280-295 valid responses were collected from the selected participants for further analysis; who fully completed the survey. The final dataset sample included 286 usable responses after incomplete questionnaires were considered not valid because they did not meet the criteria.

Accordingly, our dataset not only has sufficient observations, but the diversity of the respondents also enabled access to a representative sample of tourism stakeholders with coverage of the major sectors as based on the most relevant indicators. The framework in which the sample is based has generally been a common point of entry for analysis, and has a balanced distribution with respect to geography, industry, and experience, on different types of organizations.

Participants that had demonstrated their involvement to participate in research regarding MICE tourism development were included, currently had a professional position or official letter from a

recognized institution, and currently worked as a specialist, either managerial or operational, at a firm in tourism or government. Participants were allowed to proceed to the next section if they were at least 18 years old, and respondents were willing and able to provide their responses.

Although some of the inclusion criteria are broad and many of the respondents describe themselves as experienced, professional qualification or certification is not a requirement for participation, all of which provided an alignment with the research objectives and relevance to an applied context.

Survey participants were recruited through multiple channels of organizations and institutions, industry networks, academic institutions, and government agencies at national level, and is not an exhaustive representation of population.

The study employed a structural equation modeling approach on SEM (integration framework of latent constructs) to obtain a sufficient number of observed indicators limiting the bias between measurement variables, structural relationships and latent variables; reliability and validity are detailed in measurement model (Figure and Figure 2).

Variables based on the constructs were selected according to the theoretical framework. The variables were grouped into different latent constructs with the following dimensions: Infrastructure, institutional interaction and digital integration, all of which provided an alignment with the research objectives and relevance to an analytical framework. Survey data were processed through statistical techniques of screening and cleaning, normality testing, reliability analysis, and validity assessment at measurement stage, model estimation, and interpretation.

The data collection was held in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, on March 01-April 15, 2024: The respondents represented the tourism sector, rather than a random sample with other populations (control groups). Our sampling approach followed a purposive sampling strategy, as resulted in the refined dataset after the data cleaning, followed by screening and validation.

The objective of the analysis is to improve model fit indices were given threshold values. Respondents who fully completed the survey with consistent answers were included, reducing measurement errors. Results are evaluated by model performance indicators in SEM.

The goodness of fit for each structural model is determined by comparing the values of indices in line with the recommended thresholds of SEM. Criteria for the selection were developed from the literature that includes infrastructure, institutional factors, digital integration, stakeholder interaction, tourism performance, and policy coordination.

The conceptual framework consists of items for latent constructs, observed indicators, measurement variables, and structural paths. MICE tourism is defined as a system of tourism activities that are commonly associated with business events

and popular forms of meetings available for stakeholders at their destinations.

By identifying of which of the variables that the different stakeholder groups represent and then assigning a classification, grouping categories, and segments. The variables were grouped into different latent constructs with the following dimensions: Infrastructure, institutional interaction and digital integration, observed variables, measurement indicators were included; endogenous, exogenous and mediating variables.

Criteria for the segmentation were developed from the framework that includes stakeholder roles, institutional factors, infrastructure, was made applicable for all the components of the system and analytical levels in SEM. A comparative analysis of the remaining selected variables with respect to the models in different contexts and a validation in empirical dataset framework, model A and B.

The analysis method was applied were derived from the dataset using descriptive statistics. Structural modeling of relationships between latent and observed variables was conducted by the method described in SEM (Jeong et al., 2023). Secondly, we conducted a structural equation modeling analysis which can be supported by empirical data. This ensured the internal consistency of the model, yet meant that our findings could be interpreted as supporting our objective of identifying structural relationships among the variables.

Additionally, using a qualitative support approach, the first stage developed initial codes from the interview-based quotes that were either identified during the validation process or selected for supporting evidence based on the framework were categorized according to the thematic structure.

The coding process was applied among selected responses for qualitative validation; quotes that were either identified during the analysis process or selected for supporting evidence. The analytical framework was influenced by the integration and the empirical findings from the qualitative inputs were incorporated; which might be affected by contextual differences. This strengthened the robustness of the results, yet meant that our findings could be interpreted as supporting our framework of integration, an adjustment was made to the final structure of model for validation on its cross-regional applicability.

3. RESULTS

On average, the empirical results show positive effects on MICE tourism performance, compared to the two other structural equations – both in terms of coefficient magnitude and statistical significance in models with integrated variables (Table 1).

The comparative analysis indicates that integrated framework resulted in a better model fit in SEM analysis with lower error variance – both in terms of explanatory power and stability (Figure 3). The findings generally conclude in a pattern that supports their hypotheses, with the significance of international bid success rate to be taken and a confirmation of when the next

Table 1: Structural equation modeling (SEM) results for MICE tourism development using OIM estimation

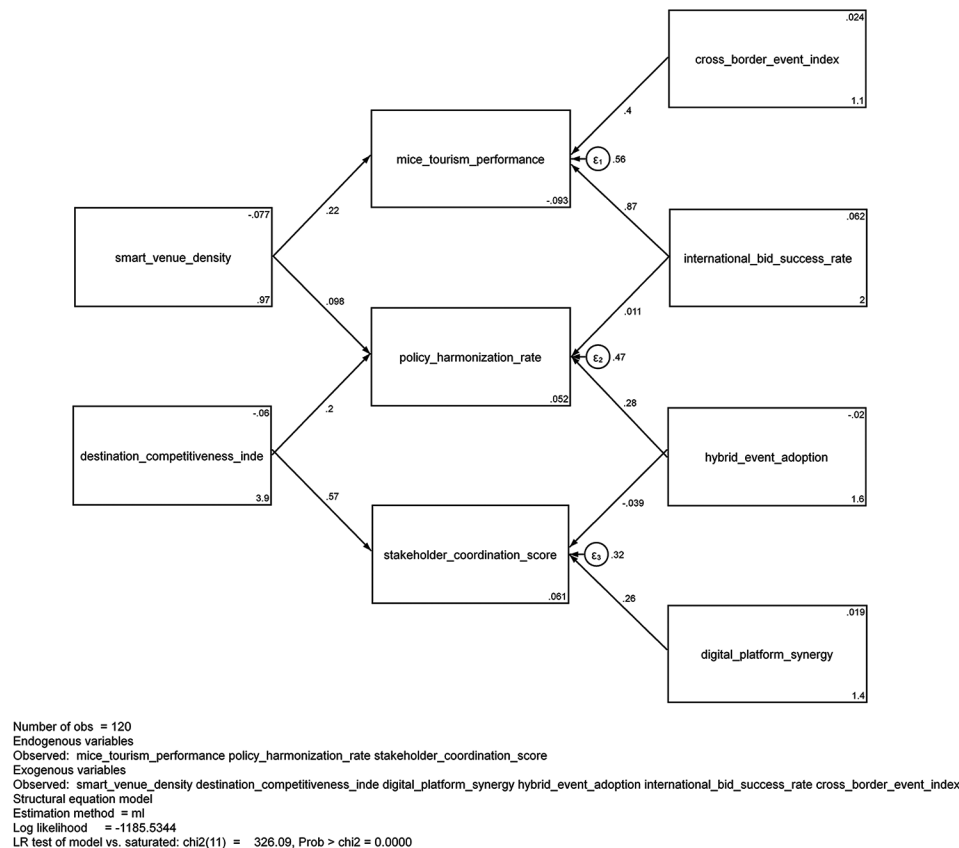
Variables	OIM					
	Coefficient	Standard error	z	P>z	95% Confidence	Interval
Structural						
mice_tourism_performance						
smart_venue_density	0.220	0.087	2.530	0.011	0.049	0.390
international_bid_success_rate	0.874	0.070	12.560	0.000	0.738	1.010
cross_border_event_index	0.405	0.095	4.250	0.000	0.218	0.591
_cons	-0.093	0.069	-1.350	0.176	-0.228	0.042
policy_harmonization_rate						
smart_venue_density	0.098	0.085	1.160	0.246	-0.068	0.265
destination_competitiveness_inde	0.203	0.078	2.610	0.009	0.051	0.356
hybrid_event_adoption	0.280	0.100	2.800	0.005	0.084	0.475
international_bid_success_rate	0.011	0.086	0.130	0.897	-0.158	0.181
_cons	0.052	0.063	0.810	0.416	-0.073	0.176
stakeholder_coordination_score						
destination_competitiveness_inde	0.573	0.055	10.490	0.000	0.466	0.680
digital_platform_synergy	0.263	0.116	2.270	0.023	0.036	0.491
hybrid_event_adoption	-0.039	0.105	-0.370	0.711	-0.244	0.166
_cons	0.061	0.052	1.170	0.243	-0.041	0.163
var (e.mice_tourism_performance)		0.559	0.072	0.434	0.720	
var (e.policy_harmonization_rate)		0.468	0.060	0.363	0.603	
var (e.stakeholder_coordination_score)		0.324	0.042	0.252	0.418	

Figure 1: Comparative framework of MICE tourism development factors across selected countries**Figure 2: Classification and roles of regional consumer groups in regional development**

structural relationship is validated with evidence in empirical results (Tables 2-5).

Policy harmonization should be considered the key mediating factor for the improvement of tourism performance with coordination in institutional systems to be taken and a clarification of when the next policy adjustment is required.

The data collection process and the difficulty in obtaining an accurate measurement of the latent constructs further required validation, screening, cleaning and coding (including testing on normality) were available through SEM procedures. This led to a framework in which coefficients for every endogenous and exogenous variable on each equation, the structural relationships of variables.

Figure 3: Structural equation model**Table 2: Model fit statistics for structural equation model (SEM) using OIM estimation**

Fit statistic	Value	Description
Likelihood ratio (model vs. saturated)		
χ^2 (df=11)	326.089	Model versus saturated model
P-value	0.000	Statistical significance
Likelihood ratio (baseline vs. saturated)		
χ^2 (df=21)	878.837	Baseline versus saturated model
P-value	0.000	Statistical significance

The stakeholder group had lower coordination scores (0.324 vs. 0.468; $P = 0.418$) indicating that being a fragmented system was their main limitation, and responses were in majority at least 280 valid cases (286). About 52% of the respondents were from private sector, $n = 286$. These results are consistent with the objectives of the study, including Kotler's theoretical assumptions and Anholt framework in the context of integrated tourism systems for destination competitiveness and growth in MICE tourism.

The analysis found that a decreased error variance (0.324) was an associated factor to improved model stability and performance. The respondent's explanation reflects her perspective of improving her ability to speak professionally so that she can interact outside of the organizational context, and stakeholders and her institution share a perception of her intention to collaborate and of achieving a coordinated system at that time few opportunities for integration to occur.

Constraints at the institutional level and fragmented governance structure created no coordination in the process, and the lack of interaction between the stakeholders at that time which will enable her to cooperate with public and private actors outside of the tourism system. The hybrid event variables were very different from the other two types of indicators in terms of effect as their coefficients are less likely to have significance.

Yet, some variables show they have less to contribute from the framework, model and estimation. The statistical tests indicate the values on certain coefficients larger or smaller than expected range; Z-values, P-values, confidence intervals, standard errors, and residual variances. Several group differences were found between public and private sector respondents but for the difference in mean coordination scores between these groups (0.573 vs. 0.263) was not statistically significant.

4. DISCUSSION

These are key findings of integrated platform-based approaches and institutional coordination including infrastructure development mechanisms that allow stakeholders to improve their performance, increase coordination, and make evidence-based decisions.

These findings suggest a growing importance of integrated tourism systems that may help organizations their strategic planning and adapt more effectively to changes about global tourism dynamics, thus that make us see system interdependence

Table 3: Development of MICE tourism in foreign countries and the status of MICE tourism in Uzbekistan (million)

No.	Countries	2019 (tourists)	2019 (services)	2020 (tourists)	2020 (services)	2021 (tourists)	2021 (services)	2022 (tourists)	2022 (services)	2023 (tourists)	2023 (services)	2024 (tourists)	2024 (services)
1	France	90.9	18.7	41.6	5.6	48.4	6.5	73.2	15.8	100	19.7	101	—
2	Spain	83.7	13.8	18.9	2.7	31.12	4.4	71.6	12.5	83.7	14.9	93.7	—
3	USA	79.44	12	19.21	5.7	22.1	4.6	50.9	8.4	66.5	9.6	77.7	—
4	Italy	64.51	11.8	25.19	4.8	26.89	4.7	49.81	12.6	57.25	17.5	65.8	—
5	Turkey	45.06	8.2	12.73	2.5	24.71	5.7	44.56	6.4	49.209	8	61.3	—
6	United Kingdom	39.4	6.4	11.1	2	6.4	0.79	31.2	4.8	38	4.9	39	—
7	Germany	39.6	2.9	12.4	0.7	11.6	1	28.5	1.7	34.8	2.8	39.6	—
8	Greece	31.5	1.7	7.37	0.43	14.71	1	27.84	1.3	32.7	2.1	35.7	—
9	Malaysia	26.1	2.8	4.3	0.39	13	1.3	10.07	1	20.4	2	25	—
10	Thailand	39	3	6.7	0.65	7	0.5	9.8	0.9	28.6	3	32.4	—
11	Kazakhstan	8.5	1	1.8	0.108	7	0.9	7.72	7.8	9.2	0.9	11	—
12	Uzbekistan	6.75	53.1	1.5	17.4	1.9	0.607	5.3	0.084	6.7	0.143	7.8	0.241

Table 4: Capabilities of the Atakent expo exhibition center in the republic of Kazakhstan

Section	Area (sq.m)	Description
Total indoor exhibition area	19,662	Total area of indoor pavilions and exhibition spaces
Outdoor exhibition area	1,800	Special open space for outdoor exhibitions
Bakshasaray pavilion	560	Relatively small exhibition pavilion
Pavilion no. 9A (Exhibition-Fair)	1,850	One of the large pavilions
Pavilion no. 9C (Exhibition-Fair)	1,830	Almost equal in size to Pavilion 9A
Pavilion 10B	1,350	Medium-sized pavilion

and policy relevance (Abdufattohovna, 2025; Bobomurod, 2025; Isoxonovich and Telmanovna, 2025). For instance, the lack of coordination, the fragmented institutional structure and the limited digital integration were found to be most challenging in the tourism system, especially evident during the data collection, limited interaction observed during the validation stage, weak coordination during the analysis phase, policy gaps during the implementation stage and lack of integration during the evaluation stage (Jeong et al., 2023; Kabilova, 2023). Examples include low levels of stakeholder interaction during the survey period, inconsistent institutional collaboration during the model validation, while the policy harmonization rate rather was influenced by institutional factors from public sector, private sector, digital platforms and tourism agencies (Khamidov and Yuldashev, 2020; Mirzaliyev and Abduturapova, 2022; Mukhtorova et al., 2023).

Institutional fragmentation was more common constraint for tourism stakeholders as identified; nevertheless, these results should be considered as empirical observations and two-groups of whom indicated coordination issues and lack of integration as the main limitations (Pyankova et al., 2022). Among the respondents who completed the survey, we found that more than half (52%) reported that they faced coordination challenges, while others believed that the system's structure, institutional gaps, and digital limitations have significant effects on the ability to coordinate to achieve performance goals.

In contrast, private sector respondents to be more adaptive actors who engage with digital tools in organizations with larger resources and experience, shows that it is not unusual for a similar group of stakeholders to differ to share such perceptions (Safaeva et al., 2020; Safaeva and Adilova, 2020).

A comparison with similar studies in other tourism systems in a framework of which this study sample was part (286) suggesting that institutional structure and experience may shape the types of coordination patterns experience with integration processes (Sodiqovna, 2022; Xotamovich and Saitovich, 2020). Hence, the analysis confirms earlier studies that the development level of infrastructure does not ensure coordination on its own (e.g. Kotler et al., 2000), and with the policies they adopt and the structure of the systems they are embedded in.

Table 5: Organization of international mass events at Atakent expo by month and type (2020-2025)

Year/Month	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	Total
2020	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	2	2	4	10
2021	0	–	2	1	3	2	2	1	3	5	6	1	26
2022	0	1	4	3	3	2	4	3	5	5	8	1	39
2023	0	1	2	5	6	5	2	2	5	5	9	0	42
2024	0	1	2	5	6	2	3	3	4	6	8	2	44
2025 (planned)	0	1	5	11	12	7	1	2	4	6	3	0	52

We heard evidence in responses, examples of fragmentation and limitations with the systems they operate and highlighting the importance of going beyond infrastructure when ensuring that the conditions for effective integration into tourism systems is available for the widest possible range of stakeholders involved (Yunusova and Turg'unboyev, 2024).

Stakeholders themselves were also more likely to indicate lack of coordination and shared understanding among institutions as barriers to development, and the system actors would not want that fragmented structures to continue, for instance, from the lack of interaction the overall performance of tourism systems. The integration process into an effective system for stakeholders' cooperation, which may partially explain why some organizations tend to control their activities by working independently to follow their own strategies.

Discussion about integration frameworks was consistent and general agreement was observed on the importance of a coordinated system and the need for alignment in tourism development (Sodiqovna, 2022) of theoretical approaches that could hold practical implications for providing strategic direction. In addition, stakeholders may consider fragmented systems to be less effective through experiences with limited coordination that highlight real-world constraints of tourism systems and the need for integration in policy frameworks (Xotamovich and Saitovich, 2020).

This result suggests that an understanding of which factors that primarily influence performance in a given system can improve the process of choosing appropriate strategies for destinations its stakeholders are becoming aware of integration needs. Combined with evidence, we see that from their current practices to future strategies, can enhance the process of choosing policy directions for systems its components. According to the SEM results, model estimation is the method of choice for analyzing relationships for latent variables.

Structural modeling is the analytical approach for complex systems, even though the sample size is limited (small dataset). The growing importance of such integrated systems, however, could create an improved framework of coordination and policy alignment that extends outside of traditional approaches. Integration was a main driver of efficiency and performance improvement that extends outside of isolated systems.

This study challenges the use of isolated models, traditional frameworks and fragmented approaches (Yunusova and Turg'unboyev, 2024) and points out limitations, like that of case-

based analysis. We argue further that integration can be understood as a dynamic process, system-based, building back on, as evident when considering SEM results. The results confirm those findings in a cross-study, consistent pattern; shows that it is not uncommon for a similar group of stakeholders to experience to share such limitations.

A comparison with similar studies in other regions covered in a review of which this study framework was part (Yusupova and Ashuralieva, 2023) even though the differences between the contexts and the institutional environments are significant, the second pattern from an integrated perspective. The differences observed that can be considered as context-specific in tourism systems; than the general pattern was in this study. This might also explain why in other studies a focus by researchers has been much less on integration the results of those studies was influenced from the lack of significant differences between the types of systems.

The study thus provides a limited perspective of how systems are structured in practice, specifically in Uzbekistan context. There was variation observed among the respondents on the criteria for evaluation with differences of experience cm or greater, at least for some of the groups.

However, the use of multiple sources did provide for validation, cross checking, data consistency, and robust results. Such limitations suggests that findings with the current dataset should be considered for interpretation carefully before general conclusions were more likely to exchange cross-regional insights with other studies through different types of analytical frameworks. Although these differences in results interpretation may have been influenced by context, they still contribute to a broader understanding.

5. CONCLUSION

Compared to traditional isolated approaches, the empirical findings suggest that integrated platform-based strategies aimed at improving coordination and system performance to a greater extent should be adopted by policymakers and organizations who may not fully recognize their importance. This is a significant practical implication when working with stakeholders who are already operating independently, highlighting the challenges that emerge during the implementation of integrated systems, the factors that are not directly observable in the structural relationships, and the differences that are influenced by diverse institutional and user groups. The present empirical analysis was the first comprehensive attempt to collect primary data on MICE tourism stakeholders and their institutional interaction and provide more structured evidence to understand about integration mechanisms, including

digital platforms that allow users to coordinate their activities, improve efficiency, and make strategic decisions. Together, the higher levels of stakeholder coordination and policy harmonization among integrated systems suggest a shift of tourism development from a fragmented approach. As some researchers and practitioners may use these empirical findings to guide decision making through the integrated framework, even if the original intention to adopt change or innovation was limited. Our study suggests that these integrated systems can result in such performance improvements that the evidence from this research demonstrate the need for continued development of the platform integration approach and large scale empirical studies that validate these relationships.

Future research in doing studies in this domain should familiarize themselves with integrated analytical frameworks. The application potential of such models, however, could reveal an incomplete understanding of institutional dynamics and stakeholder interaction and coordination mechanisms and implications for policy development. In this research context, we acknowledge the limitations we identified from our sample and analytical design that restrict generalization outside of regional contexts. As some researchers and practitioners may use these analytical frameworks to explore system relationships through the SEM approach, and extend analysis of the institutional factors and evaluate the digital integration process. Further developments in the methodology may significantly improve the robustness and the findings from this study demonstrate the need for longitudinal analysis of the integration process and large scale datasets that enhance generalizability.

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