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Article

The Role of Municipalities in the Development of Cultural and Educational Tourism

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Abstract: The tourism sector plays an important role in the economic development of countries. Tourism income has a positive impact on the economic growth of countries. The development of the creative economy in Azerbaijan is one of the upcoming priorities. Along with other areas, the formation of a creative economy is closely related to the development of the tourism sector. And the rational use of tourism potential, along with other issues, is associated with the activities of museums in accordance with the requirements of our time.

Keywords: creative economy; tourism; cultural and educational tourism; local government; municipalities

Introduction

Like other countries of the world, Azerbaijan has entered the post-oil era for years. Thus, the future development of the republic depends more on the development of agriculture and non-oil industry, science, technology, tourism and other fields than the exploitation of natural resources. All the directions we have listed are based on scientific knowledge to one degree or another. Therefore, it is of great importance and relevance to convey information about scientific achievements, the results of research and experiments to the general public. Museums play an important role in this.

Literature Review

The place of tourism in the economic growth of countries is increasing due to the influence of globalization. Therefore, there are various studies on this topic in the scientific literature.

Emekli came to the conclusion in his study "Geography, culture and tourism: Cultural tourism" that the relations between geography, culture and tourism are strong and one of the products of these relations is cultural tourism (Emekli, 2006: 57).

Di Lascio et al.'s panel data analysis of monthly observations from 52 Italian provinces revealed that the exhibition of ancient art has a positive effect on tourist flows (Lascio et al., 2011: 536). conducted by Okuyucu and Somuncu in the center of Osmaniye district in Turkey, local residents do not have enough information and experience about tourism, the participants in the survey said that by making handicrafts and marketing them during tourism activities (29.5%), working in tourism facilities (25.9%), agricultural products they said that they can support tourism by engaging in marketing (Okuyucu and Somuncu, 2012: 50).

Selimi et al conducted a series of regression models based on panel data (from 1998- 2014), such as pooled OLS model, fixed effects model, random effects model and Hausman Taylor IV model, and concluded that the results of all models are consistent with tourism and tourism in Western Balkan countries. shows a positive and statistically significant relationship between economic growth (Selimi et al., 2017: 24-25).

Pekerşen and other scholars conducted a questionnaire survey of local residents living in the village of Cumalıkızık in Turkey to find out their thoughts on tourism, cultural heritage tourism, and protecting the resources of cultural heritage tourism. According to the results of the survey, 53.8% of local residents either work or earn money in the tourism sector, and they think that with the

development of the tourism sector, job opportunities will increase, and social and cultural activities will also increase (Pekershen et al., 2019: 363).

According to a survey conducted by Erki   among 480 people in Riza, people consider tourism a factor that improves the quality of life of local residents, leads to progress in the field of cultural activities, brings economic profit, supports the local economy, and attracts more capital to the region (Erki  , 2019: 79).

In their research, Akpınar and Ko   studied Cappadocia tourism using SWOT analysis and identified its strengths and weaknesses. The presence of many types of tourism activities, the realization of balloon tourism, the presence of quality universities and institutes, the continuation of tourism activities throughout the year, etc. are listed as strengths. The weakest aspects are infrastructure problems, poor marketing, high cost, etc. defined as (Akpınar and Ko  , 2023: 330).

Say's research concluded that local administration and residents play an important role in the success of community-based tourism. According to Sayin, local administration is expected to carry out tasks such as advertising, planning activities, protection of natural and cultural resources, environmental protection, organizing social and cultural events for sustainable tourism (Sayin, 2023: 14).

Thus, summarizing the above-mentioned information, we conclude that the share of tourism in the economy has been increasing in recent years. However, the local population's approach to tourism is changing, and people are realizing that this area is increasingly playing an increasingly important role in the growth of economic income and social well-being. In such a case, the role of local management bodies in the development of the tourism sector should be expanded, and their powers and duties in this direction should be increased accordingly.

Cultural Heritage and Tourism

The tourism sector has a special place in the economic development of countries. Scientists have come to the conclusion that although facilities with the potential to attract tourists and developed infrastructure are necessary factors for attracting tourists to the area, other conditions must also be fulfilled. The interests of the modern tourist are focused on things that create impressions ("Soft"), while the infrastructure ("Hard") acts as a provider of the process that creates impressions (Новичков, 2013: 117).

According to the researchers, the exclusivity and diversity of tourism services, the promotion of these services as cultural-understanding tourism objects or events expand the size of the tourism market. The development of tourism in the regions is directly related to the authenticity and uniqueness of local tourism services, the opportunities created for close contact of tourists with local cultures. These trends determine that the attractiveness of the area for tourists depends more on the activities of the local self-governing authorities than on the state or regional authorities. So, if what we mentioned first strengthens the basic foundations of the activity of the tourism sector, local self-government bodies ensure the formation of a competitive, differentiated tourism product that meets the expectations of various social groups (Фролова, Пора  , Рябова, 2020: 2012).

Tourism development is based on people with different tastes. Therefore, the sustainable development of tourism is divided into directions that appeal to different tastes. The cultural and historical heritage of countries allows for economic benefits. Globalization affects how people see and learn about different cultures and plays a role in the development of international tourism. In order to attract more tourists from countries with different cultures and to protect cultural heritage, they carry out the presentation of cultural heritage through touristic activities. Thus, the basis for the development of cultural tourism is created. Feycens groups cultural tourism as follows (Table 1).

Table 1. Categories of cultural tourism (Fagence, 2023: 57).

category	An example
High, institutionalized culture	Museums, exhibitions, visual arts, historical sites, theater, performing arts, literature, science and technology centers
Folk, popular culture	Movies, entertainment, sports, mass media , shopping, events, food, products, arts , customs
Ethnic symbols	Education, transportation, religion, clothing, language, work patterns

As can be seen from Table 1, visits to museums, exhibitions, historical places, etc. are expressed as a high cultural factor. Interest in historical places and cultural heritage is growing. As a result of the rapid development of innovation and technology, it is easier to find information about places and events that are of interest to people. Information about the cultural heritage of countries should be available for those who want to get information. For this, information on the sources of cultural tourism is systematized. According to Swabrook, sources of cultural tourism include religious sites (mosques, churches, temples, cathedrals), language (local dominant language, minority and regional language, language schools), industry and commerce (business trips, popular shopping stores, markets and .s), art (art galleries, theaters), architectural style, festivals and special events (folklore, performing arts, sports events, special interest events), traditional handicrafts, heritage (museums and historical centers, castles, mansions, ancient monuments, historic gardens, landscaped gardens, historic villages), sports and leisure activities (participants, spectators, traditional games and sports), famous people and historical events, traditional food and drinks, contemporary popular culture (films, local television), thematic trips and travel programs) and special interest trips (Baykan, 2007: 36).

Thus, as noted by economists, "in order to protect the economic well-being of countries in the global world, they attach special importance to the development of exports in order to achieve sustainable economic growth... specializing in exports of a limited product harms the country's economy with fluctuations in the world market. Therefore, there is a need for countries to expand their basket of export products" (Hüseynov, Tağıyev, 2023: 28). Taking into account modern realities, tourism products must be included in this basket.

The Role of Municipalities in the Development of Tourism

The activity of local self- government bodies on tourism development should include such directions as attracting capital to tourism infrastructure, branding and marketing the area, involving the population in this activity, and stimulating entrepreneurial initiatives in the field of tourism and hospitality (Veselova, Savchenko, 2016). Municipal institutions must have financial, personnel and organizational resources to solve the listed complex and comprehensive issues.

Municipalities have a unique place in the development of cultural-understanding tourism. Awareness raising for the development of sustainable tourism among local residents, close participation in museum work according to regional products, etc. can make municipalities an important driving force in the process. We must take into account that museums currently perform the collection, research and display of information about events, direct participation in the teaching and learning process, recreation, communication and other social functions. Initiatives that can be implemented by municipalities will lead to an increase in the income of institutions by creating a flow of tourists, and will form alternative sources of income for the development of regions.

Based on world experience, great importance is attached to the development of sustainable and socially responsible tourism in our republic. The goal of sustainable tourism is to organize a more efficient and humane activity based on the interests of local communities and environmental opportunities. Socially responsible tourism also gives a person the opportunity to make a real contribution to the sustainable development of the destination, ensures the protection of nature, promotes the social and economic development of the region, instills a sense of respect for the historical and cultural heritage, the environment and traditions.

In order to clarify the activities of municipalities in the field of tourism development, it is necessary to look at the legal documents that regulate the work of these institutions. In Article 144 of the *Constitution of the Republic of Azerbaijan*, the powers of municipalities include 7) adoption and implementation of local social protection and social development programs, 8) local economic development programs and 9) local environmental programs. It is also noted that "Municipalities may be given additional powers by the legislative and executive authorities" (AR Constitution, 1995).

Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan on the status of municipalities **among the areas of local social protection and social development programs** implemented by these institutions, the cultural field, providing assistance to the development of cultural institutions, and preservation of historical and cultural monuments are mentioned in the relevant articles. It also envisages the implementation of local economic development and environmental programs (Law, 1999). We believe that, taking into account modern realities and challenges, the tourism sector should be included in a separate clause.

In Article 7 of the *Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan on the Basics of Municipal Finances*, the fact that some items that form local budget revenues (for example, resort and hotel fees, etc.) belong to the field of tourism (Law, 1999) once again emphasizes the importance of tourism and the elimination of gaps in this field in the existing legislation. raises the issue of removal.

Gaps should also be addressed in the Law of Tourism (Law, 2021).

Cultural Tourism, Museums and Municipalities

Taking into account the characteristics of cultural-understanding tourism, we must emphasize that the development of museums, which are an important component of it, according to the requirements of the time and the creation of new museums that meet the emerging realities will play an important role in the formation of the knowledge society and economy.

Currently, cultural-understanding tourism is the second sector of the economy in developed countries of the world in terms of income and the first sector in terms of invested capital. Museums are an integral part of this type of tourism. Events on museum management and marketing have become widespread in the world. National museums must also join this process. Also, museum expositions and exhibitions should be organized in an interesting form for people, especially according to the principles of visibility and interactivity. All museums operating in the post-Soviet space, including in Azerbaijan, should abandon the concept of "the museum is for museum employees" and be open and accessible to the general public in the true sense of the word. Proper implementation of PR activity and advertising, organization of exhibitions and programs that highlight various topics for children and adults, as well as affordable prices for all classes - all these issues require special attention (Jafarova, 2015: 175).

It is known that tourists coming to different countries visit the museums operating here as well as other places. In general, the expansion of museum functions, the active participation of these institutions in the life of modern societies, the direct participation of museums in both the collection and creation of knowledge create ample opportunities for close contact of these institutions with creative industries.

Scientists note that "creative industries are the source of new ideas and modern technologies in the economic sector. The creative component makes it possible to present museum collections in a completely new way. In addition to the content, creative industries provide products and services suitable for the international market, which boosts the recognition and competitiveness of the museum in the global cultural space" (Batova, 2021: 67).

Speaking about the projects that municipalities can implement in the field of cultural-understanding tourism development, we want to emphasize the activity of eco-museums. Again, we need to talk about gaps in the legislation: in the Republic's *Law on Museums* (Law, 2000), the legal status of ecomuseums does not even exist. However, eco-museums and "greenways" must be created in different regions of our republic, distinguished by its rich cultural and natural heritage. Ecomuseums are initiatives aimed at both the development of tourism and the solution of social, economic, and cultural problems of the local population. It is no coincidence that George Henri

Rivière, the author of the concept of ecomuseum, called ecomuseums both "space, movement and time" museums, as well as "a mirror through which society looks to recognize itself and a window through which others look to recognize it" (Юренева, 2003: 313).

One of the main principles of ecomuseums is the representation of the population as an active participant. Ecomuseums are jointly planned, created and used by the population and local authorities. Authorities participate in this process by allocating specialists and necessary, including financial, resources. Taking into account the potential of Azerbaijan, the creation of the mentioned places and roads in our country is a very urgent issue (Jafarova, 2023: 103- 104).

If we relate ecomuseums to village and settlement municipalities, city municipalities also have a special place in the development of museums. For example, if we look at the world experience, many city history museums (Carnival Museum in Paris, Warsaw History Museum, etc.) were created on the initiative of city municipalities. Also, exhibitions and events dedicated to municipalities are held periodically in city history museums, that is, municipalities cooperate with these types of museums. In Azerbaijan, taking advantage of these experiences, the implementation of relevant measures is convenient and appropriate both from the point of view of education and from the point of view of the development of cultural-understanding tourism and economy. The initial concepts of the historical museums of Baku (Jafarova, 2021), Shusha (Jafarova, 2021) and Nakhchivan (Jafarova, 2022) have already been prepared and presented to the public. Only appropriate measures should be taken.

Conclusion and Suggestions

Thus, local self-government institutions can promote the development of many types of tourism, including cultural-awareness tourism, by implementing various projects or participating in relevant projects.

In our opinion, taking into account the realities of our time when the knowledge society and economy are developing, all these issues should be reflected in the relevant legislation so that the municipalities' powers in the field of tourism are expanded.

Taking into account the above, we can confidently state that the role of museums in the development of cultural-understanding tourism and the creative economy in general is undeniable. We think that, based on world experience, municipalities can directly act as initiators and participants in the process of creation of urban history museums, eco-museums and "Green roads" in Azerbaijan.

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