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CULTURAL TOURISM AND ITS IMPACT ON THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF LOCAL COMMUNITIES

Abstract: The paper examines the relationship between tourism and the economic development of a country, with a particular focus on one specific form of tourism: cultural tourism. Tourism represents an important source of income and a significant factor in economic stability as it contributes to increasing foreign exchange inflow and creating new jobs. Countries, as brand carriers, have become aware that it is no longer sufficient to invest only in the development of individual tourist destinations, such as those related to coastal tourism, metropolises, ski resorts, or spas. For the modern tourist, the entire country must be presented as a tourist destination, and cultural tourism emerges as the best option. This shift has been influenced by changes in habits, desires, and needs of tourists, who now seek diverse vacation experiences as society evolves.

Keywords: Cultural tourism, Branding, Economic Development, Selective Forms of Tourism

Introduction

The concept of tourism is closely tied to notions such as tourist destination and tourist attraction. It is essential to define these terms from the outset. A tourist destination is undoubtedly a broader concept than a tourist attraction, as it represents a larger spatial and functional entity. A destination's brand is a set of perceptions that individuals have about a place. It represents a blend of key features that make it recognizable and memorable. These are enduring essential values that distinguish it from competing tourist locations.

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From a tourism perspective, the subject of branding can encompass various entities, ranging from purposefully developed areas to villages, cities, regions, and states. A tourist attraction, on the other hand, is a site primarily designed to provide engaging, entertaining, or educational content that serves to attract tourists (Dašić, 2013; dašić, 2014; Zolak, 2024; Jovanovic, et al., 2024).

With the increasing development of transportation, there has been a true "explosion" of tourism, prioritizing the 3S (sun, sea, sand) objectives of rest and recreation. Greater mobility, higher education levels, and technological advancements have opened up new possibilities for tourism development, particularly in market segmentation, identifying a completely new form: cultural tourism. Prominent and already well-developed tourist destinations, faced with growing competition, are turning to the development of new attractions and the massive expansion of selective forms of tourism, including military tourism, rural tourism, conference tourism, health tourism, religious tourism, archaeological, urban, recreational, spa, eco, and ethno tourism, dark tourism, and sports tourism (Dašić, 2021; Dašić, 2018b; Đukić, Kojić, 2023; Ivanović, Gajević, A. Gajić, 2020; Pavlović, Perić, Milunović, 2023).

However, the greatest growth in interest has been observed in cultural tourism, with predictions that by 2020, the cultural tourism market would become one of the top five segments in the tourism industry (Krivošejev, 2012). Importantly, cultural tourism is an exceptionally broad concept, capable of encompassing or generating almost all the aforementioned forms of tourism (Petrović, 2018), such as historical, archaeological, artistic, and even sports tourism, among others, which are increasingly becoming niches within the broader domain of cultural tourism.

In times of significant economic crises, when all types of tourism report declining numbers of travelers, religious tourism or "pilgrimage travel" has emerged in recent years as one of the leading forms of tourism globally. Statistics indicate that religious tourism accounts for more than 20% of the total number of tourists worldwide, which is close to 200 million people. Regarding our country, many believe that religious tourism presents an exceptional

opportunity. People are willing to forgo many pleasures and needs to visit a sacred site, as evidenced by interest in visiting Ostrog Monastery or the Holy Land and Hilandar in our region.

In attracting foreign tourists to our country recently, medical tourism has often been discussed (Pavlović, et al., 2023; Čolić, et al., 2022). Our dental services are several times cheaper than those in the West, with comparable quality. Initially, this trend was recognized by our citizens living and working abroad. Such clients usually stay for seven to ten days, and the primary challenge is the lack of sufficient content to "hold" their attention during their visit (Isakov, 2014, p. 12).

Cultural tourism can benefit local communities through numerous complementary services and other activities, revitalizing traditions, enabling the development of social minorities, economic advantages, harmonization, and more (Dašić, 2023). Current trends in Europe demand a broader and more comprehensive role for cultural heritage. In this sense, its role, including all associated segments, is expanding and becoming more significant for society as a whole. Cultural heritage is often perceived as a means to achieve national unity, through the recognition of architectural structures and cultural monuments present in the territories inhabited by the community (Rusalić, 2011, p. 50).

Cultural Tourism

Considering the various economic sectors, tourism and its specific forms—such as ecotourism, rural tourism, nautical tourism, and others—can serve as valuable tools for financing the protection of sensitive areas and the socio-economic development of the populations living in or near these regions (Dašić, 2018a; Dašić, Savić, 2020). To implement the principles of sustainable tourism, nature tourism and ecotourism are of particular importance, as they inherently ensure respect for natural heritage and local communities while aligning with the overall capacity of the area. However, it is essential not to wait for opportunities to be presented on a silver platter. A truly sustainable path requires strengthening cooperation and partnerships among research think tanks from the public sector (state research institutes, universities) and the civil sector

(professional associations, NGOs), as well as business organizations, local communities, and others (Stojić-Karanović, 2007).

Đukić and Todorović argue that tourism has become a developmental sector of increasing interest to all levels of government in Serbia compared to previous periods. Cultural tourism, in particular, has garnered attention due to its reliance on the rich cultural offerings of local communities, intended for both residents and visitors from other cities, regions, and countries (Dašić, Živković, Vujić, 2020). However, government activities in tourism development must be executed through partnerships involving a broad range of stakeholders across the public, private, and civil sectors, including the cultural sector. This would ensure that all government activities and measures (whether at the state or local government level) are based on actual developmental potentials and appropriate solutions for their tourism activation, addressing both municipal and broader regional or national levels. This approach also demands a high degree of intergovernmental cooperation, which is crucial for creating a favorable environment on both micro and macro levels (Velojić, 2016). Additionally, the process requires integrating interdisciplinary knowledge, encompassing culture, tourism, urban planning, geography, economics, finance, law, marketing, and others, with an emphasis on management and public policy (Đukić, Todorović, 2008).

The authors highlight the principles identified in numerous publications by a specialized group commissioned by the European Commission to develop a European tourism development plan (Đukić, Todorović, 2008, pp. 268–270):

- **Integration Principle:** Measures to enhance quality must be integrated into all tourism functions of the destination.
- **Authenticity Principle:** Visitors seek genuine experiences; cultural heritage assets must be respected and presented realistically to preserve their value.
- **Distinctiveness Principle:** Visitors desire unique experiences; otherwise, they would stay home. High-quality tourism offerings should create distinctiveness at the destination.

- **Market Realism Principle:** Quality management should be based on a realistic assessment of the destination's market potential, identifying competitive advantages and ensuring they are not diminished.
- **Sustainability Principle:** Tourism management must account for the potential environmental and social impact, ensuring sustainable practices are implemented.
- **Consumer Orientation Principle:** Quality management involves understanding visitors' needs and continuously monitoring their fulfillment.
- **Inclusiveness Principle:** Tourism services should provide high-quality experiences to all visitors, including those with special needs.
- **Attention to Detail Principle:** Quality services require creativity and attention to details, such as visitor information, accommodation, and added value.
- **Rationalization Principle:** Improving quality can be achieved through fewer but more effective initiatives rather than numerous mediocre ones.
- **Partnership Principle:** Quality management requires involving various stakeholders, including small businesses and local groups, to deliver exceptional visitor experiences.
- **Interdependence Principle:** The quality of tourism services depends on support from all stakeholders at the destination.
- **Engagement Principle:** Enthusiasm and commitment among tourism workers are fundamental to achieving high quality.
- **Monitoring Principle:** Regular monitoring and evaluation of tourism's impact on visitors and the environment are essential.
- **Communication Principle:** A constant flow of information among stakeholders is crucial for success.
- **Timing Principle:** Tourism development planning must realistically account for the time required to achieve goals.

One of the most frequently cited definitions of cultural tourism is "the movement of people outside their usual residence, driven by cultural attractions, with the intent of gathering new information and experiences to satisfy cultural needs." The World Tourism Organization (WTO) identifies various motivational potentials, such

as visits to historical heritage, cultural tours, festival travel, nature study, pilgrimages, folklore, and more.

Krivošejev classifies cultural tourism consumers into two groups based on interests and motivations. Tourists with specific interests visit diverse destinations to explore different cultures and experiences, while those with nonspecific interests prefer fewer destinations focused on acquiring knowledge about particular locations or specialized experiences (Krivošejev, 2012, p. 193). The author also emphasizes the importance of both intersectoral and international cooperation for developing cultural tourism potentials. Significant roles are played by governmental and intersectoral collaboration, often uniting tourism and cultural ministries, as seen in Greece, Turkey, Indonesia, and Azerbaijan.

Cultural events, such as sports events, music or film festivals, celebrations, or traditional festivities like the Rio Carnival, offer significant opportunities for branding a destination. Successful cultural tourism development requires full cooperation between nonprofit and for-profit sectors, with a clear understanding of their partnership roles. Tasks may include planning the capacity of registered cultural heritage, determining periods and types of visits, designing new attractive programs, and modernizing existing ones.

A major advantage of cultural tourism lies in its broad spectrum of potential attractions, which are generally not tied to specific seasons or weather conditions. Cultural tourism, by definition, enables destinations without year-round tourist activity to create offerings based on their cultural and artistic potentials (Đukić-Dojčinović, 2005, p. 10).

Krsojević argues that cultural tourism shares the fate of tourism as an economic sector in Serbia. The dominance of sun-and-sea tourism in former Yugoslavia sidelined Serbia from Europe's and the world's tourism map. He concludes that cultural tourism is still not sufficiently recognized or accepted in Serbia. Globally, cultural tourism involves more than visiting historical monuments and museum exhibits; it encompasses cultural exchange, experiences, events, and active participation in manifestations, offering Serbia a

significant opportunity to reclaim its place on the global tourism stage (Krsojević, 2011, p. 42).

The Lisbon Strategy on Development and Employment underscores creativity as a driver of the European economy, emphasizing the cultural industry's contribution to Europe's dynamics and competitiveness. Given that the cultural sector employs over five million people in the EU, the European Commission has proposed fostering creativity in education, lifelong learning, and managerial training in the cultural sector. It also suggests innovative funding sources, fostering partnerships between the cultural sector and other industries (e.g., IT, research, tourism), and attracting investments in culture (Hrustić, 2012, p. 342).

Economic Impact of Cultural Tourism on Local Community Development

The importance of integrating culture into primary assets must be justified by the moral demand for recognition and prosperity, which is vital for individual well-being, as well as because culture's role is a prerequisite and a factor shaping and fulfilling individual freedoms (Stanković-Pejnović, 2011, p. 193). Citizens of various EU member states have different ideas about cultural identity, belonging, and citizenship rights, but they also face the question of coexistence of different cultural identities based on mutual respect and the shared desire and effort to live in one community, founded on values that are the European ideals of peace and security. Culture has always been a fundamental part of the European integration process and a vital element in international European relations.

Cultural tourism represents a significant stimulus for the economic development of local communities, especially in the context of diversifying income sources, employment, and cultural heritage preservation. This type of tourism allows local communities to position themselves as competitive destinations and generate economic benefits through direct, indirect, and induced effects.

One of the main advantages of cultural tourism is the increase in revenue for local communities. Visitors to cultural destinations spend money on accommodations, food, souvenirs, and tickets for cultural

events, resulting in increased income for local businesses. According to research by Smith and Richards (2020), the average expenditure of cultural tourists is 40% higher compared to general tourists.

Cultural tourism also contributes to job creation. Examples include employment in hospitality, tour guiding services, and the production of local handicrafts (Hughes, 2018). According to Hughes' study, in regions with developed cultural tourism, employment rates increase by 3–5% annually.

Cultural tourism plays a key role in preserving local culture and traditions. As noted by Timothy and Boyd (2015), revenues generated from tourism are often used for restoring historical monuments and organizing cultural events. This not only fosters economic growth but also strengthens the sense of community belonging.

The economic impact of cultural tourism is multifaceted, including increased revenue, job creation, and cultural heritage preservation. With appropriate strategies, cultural tourism can become a key instrument for the sustainable development of local communities.

Conclusion

In the absence of industrial activity, the development of cultural tourism based primarily on strengthening cultural and tourist offerings can mitigate the negative effects of unemployment and improve the ambiance of an entire region. Globally, we can cite Sweden's Gotland Island as a positive example. Besides agriculture, it has developed tourism. Visby, a small medieval town, is on UNESCO's heritage list and receives between 600,000 and 800,000 visitors annually. Frank Gehry's Guggenheim Museum project in Bilbao transformed the economy of the city and the entire region. The innovative architecture of this building is so unique, attractive, and captivating that it has become an attraction in its own right, independent of the museum's exhibits. Of the four million visitors from around the world who visit this remarkable structure annually, at least 40% say they primarily come to experience its unique architectural design.

In holistic branding, everything—from trademarks and design to the implementation of marketing programs, processes, and activities—is viewed as interconnected and mutually reinforcing. Holistic marketing, as well as holistic brand management, acknowledges that "everything matters." Relationship marketing, integrated marketing, internal marketing, and socially responsible marketing are components of holistic marketing.

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КУЛТУРНИ ТУРИЗАМ И ЊЕГОВ УТИЦАЈ НА ЕКОНОМСКИ РАЗВОЈ ЛОКАЛНИХ ЗАЈЕДНИЦА

Апстракт: Рад разматра везу између туристичког и економског развоја земље, фокусирајући се посебно на један облик туризма, културни туризам. Туризам представља важан извор доходака и значајан фактор економске стабилности, из разлога што доприноси повећању девизног прилива, као и отварања нових радних места. Државе као носиоци брэнда, постале су свесне да више није довољно улагати само у развој појединачних туристичких дестинација, као што су оне које су везане за морски туризам, метрополе, скијалишта или бање. Савременом туристи се мора цела држава представити као туристичка дестинација, а културни туризам се намеће као најбоља опција. На наведено је утицала чињеница, да је са развојем друштва дошло и до промена у навикама, жељама и потребама туриста, који данас желе различите врсте одмора.