

IMPACT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE TOURISM-AN OVERVIEW

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ABSTRACT

In general, the world's leading category of international trade, tourism, is increasingly offering a range of cultural heritage products, from visiting monuments to discovering unique ways of life as supply for increasing cultural and heritage tourism demand. UNESCO defines culture tourism as "to create a discerning type of tourism that takes account of other people's cultures". Indeed culture and heritage tourism has been gaining importance recently not only for its' economic gains but due to more sustainable approaches. As rural and regional economies go through difficult times of change, it may seem to some local communities that heritage can help in terms of economical gains. When what is old and valued in the community can no longer serve its original function, surely it can still attract funding and tourism as a part of cultural heritage. It is a well known fact that a natural link exists between cultural heritage tourism and regional development. Regional development is a key factor which contributes to economic welfare of the host country. The development and application of a system assessing the tourism potential of cultural and heritage assets including cultural, physical, product and experiential values is vital for the sustainability of the tourism attractions. The purpose of this paper is to determine whether there is a link between cultural and heritage tourism and regional development.

Key words: Cultural, heritage, regional development, effects of heritage tourism.

I. INTRODUCTION

Tourism is a world-wide giant industry which has a high increase rate such that

UNWTO's Vision forecasts that international arrivals are expected to reach over 1.56 billion by the year 2020, which were 842 million in 2006 (World Tourism Organization). Cultural heritage tourism is also, increasingly being used as a tool to stimulate regional development in rural and urban areas [1]. In September 2002, World Tourism Organization executive Luigi Cabrini told a gathering in Belgium that "cultural tourism is growing faster than most other tourism segments and at a higher rate than tourism worldwide." [2].

Actually spotlighting the arts, culture, history and heritage to attract tourists is nothing new, particularly in Europe and because travellers were becoming more and more interested in opportunities to learn about places through their art and history, cultural tourism consistently grows. Since tourism is nowadays used to stimulate regional development, cultural heritage tourism is used for, both preservation of regions as well as economic development of the regions. Cultural tourism can be defined as the subset of tourism concerned with a country or region's culture and its customs. Cultural tourism generally focuses on communities who have unique customs, unique form of art and different social practices, which basically distinguishes it from other types/forms of culture. Cultural tourism includes tourism in urban areas, particularly historic or large cities and their

cultural facilities such as museums and theatres.

It can also include tourism in rural areas showcasing the traditions of indigenous cultural communities (i.e. festivals, rituals), and their values and lifestyles. Preserving cultural heritage appears to be a key factor in economic policies supporting tourism development. It is a widely accepted fact that preservation of cultural heritage is important and it is also used as a tool for tourism product differentiation [3]. Cultural tourists as cited by Hughes are seen as “typically well educated, affluent and broadly travelled, and they generally represent a highly desirable type of upscale visitor” [4][1]. It is generally agreed that cultural tourists spend substantially more than standard tourists do. Cultural tourists are expecting different experiences from their vacations and these expectations are becoming more important day by day. During these experiences tourist can interact with three kinds of cultural attributes; the physical (e.g. built heritage), the general (the daily life of the host community) and the specific cultural activities of the host community (e.g. rituals and festivals). Mass tourism is a product of the late 1960s and early 1970s. Since then a number of interrelated developments in the world economy, have converted part of the industry from mass tourism to so-called “new tourism”[5][3][2]. The new tourism, which is the idea of responsible, green, soft, alternative and sustainable tourism, basically refers to the diversification of the tourism industry and its development in targeted markets where cultural heritage tourism is in the first rank. Changing lifestyles of the new tourists are creating demand for more targeted and customized holidays. A number of lifestyle segments –

families, single parent households, “empty nesters” (i.e. couples whose children have left home), double-income couples without children – will become prevalent (common) in tourism, signalling the advent (arrival – start) of a much more differentiated approach to tourism marketing. Changing values are also generating demand for more environmentally conscious and nature-oriented holidays.

II. RELATED WORK

Tourism There is no singular, specific definition of either cultural or heritage tourism. Some call it cultural tourism, some heritage tourism, some cultural & heritage tourism or shortly cultural heritage tourism (Cultural & Heritage Tourism Alliance, 2002). Culture is a set of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features of society or a social group. It encompasses, in addition to art and literature, lifestyles, ways of living together, values systems, traditions and beliefs (UNESCO, 2001).

The World has some 6000 communities and as many distinct languages. The National Trust’s definition of cultural heritage tourism is “traveling to experience the places and activities that authentically represent the stories and people of the past and present. It includes historic, cultural and natural resources.” (Cultural Heritage Tourism, 2005). In 1985, World Tourism Organization (WTO) provided two definitions of cultural tourism. The narrower definition includes: “movements of persons for essentially cultural motivations such as study tours, performing arts and cultural tours, travel to festivals and other cultural events, visits to sites and monuments, travel to study nature, folklore

or art, and pilgrimages.' The wider definition includes: 'all movements of persons[6][7], because they satisfy the human need for diversity, tending to raise the cultural level of the individual and giving rise to new knowledge, experience and encounters.' (Canadian Heritage, 2006). Heritage is a broad concept and includes the natural as well as the cultural environment. It encompasses landscapes, historic places, sites and built environments, as well as biodiversity, collections, past and continuing cultural practices, knowledge and living experiences. It records and expresses the long processes of historic development, forming the essence of diverse national, regional, indigenous and local identities and is an integral part of modern life. It is a dynamic reference point and positive instrument for growth and change.

Cultural tourism market share development strategy focuses on promotion of the unique cultural aspects of a city or region, in order to draw tourists interested in those particular cultural subjects to the area. Heritage management, on the other hand is defined as management of regions' natural, cultural and built environments. As a strategy, this focus is gaining widespread acceptance nationwide and internationally among tourism offices and bureau to differentiate their cities, regions and states as desirable tourist destinations in an increasingly competitive marketplace Cultural tourism brings increased revenue to the heritage sites and, more broadly, to the community and country that hosts them. It can be an engine of economic growth. Heritage management enables the critical balance to be maintained between the needs of the resource and the needs of the visitor. Through education and entertainment and

the enjoyment of heritage attractions such as nature reserves, national parks, museums, historic houses and gardens, villages or towns by people of all ages and socio-economic groups with different lifestyles, it is possible to develop a climate of conservation awareness. Heritage resources are not replaceable; therefore conservation is the critical point in heritage management. The following figure 1.1 shows the survey from the years 2012-mid of 2015.



Figure 1.1 Survey for heritage tourist visitors in India

III. CASE STUDY –FINDINGS

Cultural heritage tourism has gained a substantial attention in the tourism industry in recent years. Because travellers are becoming more and more interested in opportunities to learn about places through their art and history, cultural tourism consistently grows. This often involves manipulating culture for tourists 'benefit' until they bear little or no resemblance to the original cultural experiences derived over centuries. In some cases the original meaning of the ritual or performance to local people is lost as the 'tourist' version takes hold (Francis, 2001). When this change continues it threatens culturally important places and artifacts. This leads to erosion of traditions where it may be seen as staged authenticity and assimilation.

Perpetuates negative stereotypes leading to ethnocentrism, may led to conflict due to cultural differences. Also, when heritage tourism is applied in large scale in terms of mass tourism, heritage sites are negatively affected with too many visitors.

Therefore, the answer for the problem is achieving the right balance between encouraging the expansion of cultural heritage tourism and protecting heritage sites, resources and monuments by educating local people and keeping the volume of tourists to heritage travel destination areas to within optimum sustainable limits. Also, within the measures to be taken to overcome the problems with the development are:

- ✓ Zoning,
- ✓ Regional planning,
- ✓ Licensing regulations,
- ✓ Control in central areas and
- ✓ Decentralization of cultural supply

When developmental and promotional strategies are analyzed; improvement in educational and cultural context of tourism, concentration of activities around important themes, strategic usage of mass media and development of out-of-season tourism seem to be the global issues concerning all areas using cultural heritage tourism for regional development.

Conclusion Heritage is a comprehensive concept that consists of many diverse values like cultural, natural, historical, architectural, archaeological, and geological values. Heritage is a mirror of different ways of lives and habits, in other words, different cultures and eras of the mankind and the society they live in. A well-preserved heritage enables

communities to learn about their cultural history truly and chronologically. After the World War II, the world has seen a gradual increase in technology and urbanization resulting in a series of threats to heritage; social, environmental and economical. Because of migration and industrialization population density between rural areas and cities differ greatly. The following figure

1.2 shows the related growth and oscillations for the different sector of tourism from the years 2012-mid of 2015.

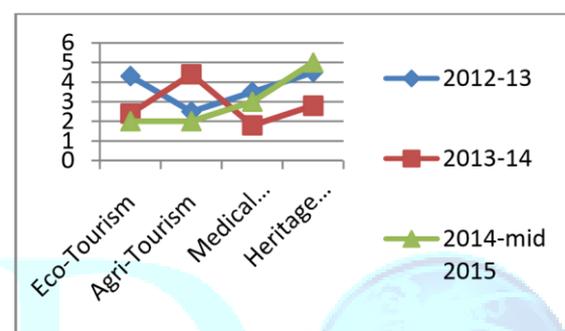


Figure 1.2 Survey for an Related ration of different tourism sectors

Globalization changed people's lives in an undeniable way, a way that is mostly stereotyped. These kinds of facts pose a great threat to intangible cultural assets. Heritage is not a renewable resource; therefore it should be conserved in the most efficient way.

The word "preservation" has existed from the beginning of the very early times of human history, but its definition. Until recently preservation is nearly equal to just protecting the physical assets, but now it is seen as a clear fact that when trying to protect heritage national, social, cultural and economical aspects of the protection process should be taken into account. It aims to conserve, use and develop the heritage and to sustain it values and significance by giving the heritage a

compatible use. It is worth of mentioning that, the most important innovation of the management approach involves the sustainability principle.

IV. CONCLUSION

The lack of cooperation between the governmental bodies and the private sector is always being felt heavily and this causes a great problem for the promotion of Izmir as a touristic destination. Therefore it is essential that a master tourism marketing plan is prepared in coordination with all the authorities either from public or private sector. It is also necessary to overcome infrastructure problems such as transportation in order to ease reaching heritage sites. Izmir should make use of its well-known attractions such as its coastal line, historical sites and history dating back to ancient times. An inventory study should be made in order to define these attractions and a unified body consisting of members from government and private sector should define and direct efforts which could be used in marketing these attractions.

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