

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF CREATIVE TOURISM SERVICES FOR THE STATE TOURISM SECTOR

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Abstract. Creative tourism has emerged as a transformative force within the global tourism industry. Unlike conventional mass tourism, it emphasizes active participation, cultural co-creation, and experiential engagement between tourists and host communities. This paper examines the significance of creative tourism services for the state tourism sector across economic, cultural, and strategic dimensions. The findings demonstrate that creative tourism generates higher per-capita tourist spending, creates sustainable employment, preserves intangible cultural heritage, and enhances destination competitiveness. Policy recommendations are proposed for governments seeking to integrate creative tourism into national tourism strategies.

Keywords: creative tourism, state tourism policy, cultural economy, sustainable development, destination competitiveness.

Аннотация. Креативный туризм стал трансформирующей силой в мировой туристической индустрии. В отличие от традиционного массового туризма, он акцентирует внимание на активном участии туристов, культурном со-творчестве и глубоком взаимодействии между туристами и принимающими сообществами. В данной статье рассматривается значение услуг креативного туризма для государственного туристического сектора в экономическом, культурном и стратегическом аспектах. Результаты исследования показывают, что креативный туризм обеспечивает более высокие расходы туристов на душу населения, способствует созданию устойчивых рабочих мест, сохранению нематериального культурного наследия и повышению конкурентоспособности туристских дестинаций. В статье предлагаются рекомендации для правительств по интеграции креативного туризма в национальные стратегии развития туризма.

Ключевые слова: креативный туризм, государственная туристическая политика, культурная экономика, устойчивое развитие, конкурентоспособность дестинации.

Annotatsiya. Kreativ turizm global turizm sanoatida transformatsion kuch sifatida shakllanmoqda. An’anaviy ommaviy turizmdan farqli ravishda, u turistlarning faol ishtiroki, madaniy hamkorlik va mehmonlar hamda mahalliy hamjamiyat o‘rtasidagi tajribaviy muloqotga asoslanadi. Mazkur maqolada kreativ turizm xizmatlarining davlat turizm sektori uchun iqtisodiy, madaniy va strategik jihatdagi ahamiyati tahlil qilinadi. Tadqiqot natijalari kreativ turizm bir turistga to‘g‘ri keladigan xarajat miqdorini oshirishi, barqaror ish o‘rinlari yaratishi, nomoddiy madaniy merosni saqlab qolishi hamda turistik manzillarning raqobatbardoshligini kuchaytirishini ko‘rsatadi. Davlatlar uchun kreativ turizmni milliy turizm strategiyalariga integratsiya qilish bo‘yicha siyosiy tavsiyalar ishlab chiqilgan.

Kalit so‘zlar: kreativ turizm, davlat turizm siyosati, madaniy iqtisodiyot, barqaror rivojlanish, manzil raqobatbardoshligi.

Introduction

The global tourism landscape is undergoing a paradigm shift as travelers increasingly seek meaningful, immersive experiences beyond passive sightseeing. Creative tourism, first articulated by Richards and Raymond (2000), involves tourists engaging in interactive, hands-on cultural experiences that develop their creative potential while deepening connections with the destination. It encompasses traditional craft workshops, culinary experiences, performing arts participation, agritourism, and community-driven cultural festivals.

For state tourism sectors, integrating creative tourism represents both an opportunity and a strategic necessity. As competition intensifies among destinations and conventional tourism models face diminishing returns, creative tourism offers a pathway to differentiation by capitalizing on unique cultural assets while distributing revenues more equitably across communities. This paper argues that

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creative tourism services hold profound significance for economic growth, cultural sustainability, and international competitiveness within the state tourism sector.

Conceptual Framework

Creative tourism is situated at the intersection of culture, tourism, and the creative industries within the broader creative economy framework. UNCTAD identifies the creative economy as contributing approximately 3% of global GDP. The critical distinction between creative tourism and cultural tourism lies in participation: while cultural tourism involves consuming pre-existing cultural products, creative tourism requires active co-creation. Tourists become temporary members of the creative community, learning traditional techniques and generating original cultural outputs. Pine and Gilmore’s experience economy theory positions creative tourism at the pinnacle of the value chain, offering transformative experiences that engage tourists intellectually, emotionally, and physically, translating into higher value capture per tourist for state authorities.

Economic Significance

OECD research indicates that creative tourists spend 30–40% more per trip than conventional tourists, driven by personalized instruction, workshop fees, raw materials, and extended stays. The economic multiplier effect is particularly noteworthy: unlike mass tourism, where revenues often leak to international chains, creative tourism spending remains within local economies. Studies from Bali, Tuscany, and Oaxaca demonstrate multiplier effects of 1.5–2.3 for creative tourism expenditures, compared to 0.8–1.2 for conventional package tourism.

Creative tourism also creates diverse employment opportunities beyond traditional hospitality. Artisans, craftspeople, chefs, musicians, farmers, and cultural guides become active participants in the tourism value chain. This democratization of tourism employment is particularly significant for rural areas where conventional infrastructure is limited. In Thailand, Peru, and Portugal, creative tourism initiatives have reduced rural-to-urban migration by providing viable income in ancestral communities.

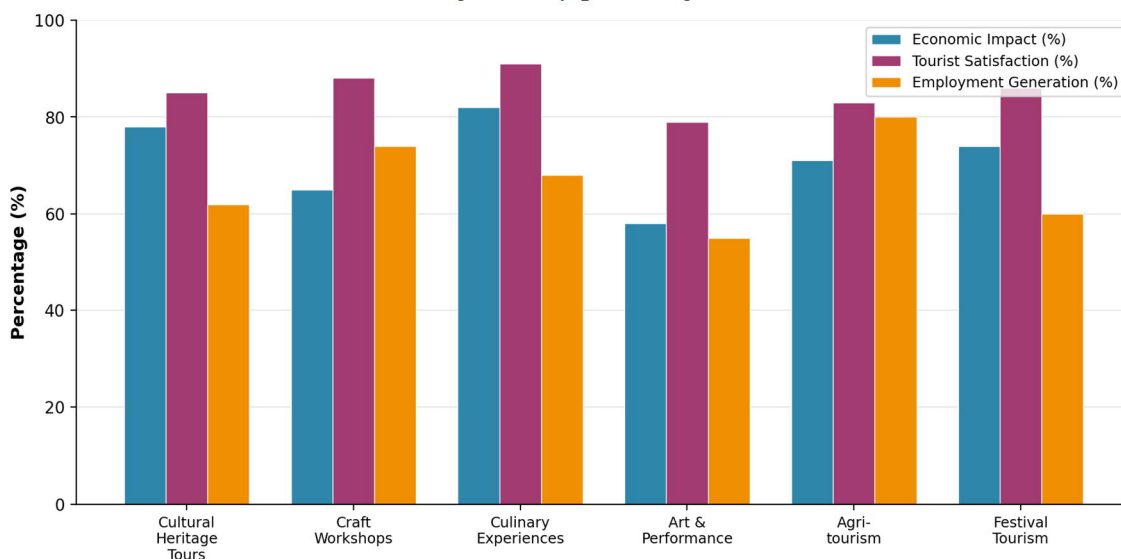


Figure 1. Comparative analysis of creative tourism service categories

Source: UNWTO, OECD, 2024

As Figure 1 illustrates, different creative tourism categories demonstrate varying performance across key indicators. Culinary experiences and cultural heritage tours yield the highest economic impact, while craft workshops and agritourism excel in employment generation, reflecting their labor-intensive nature. This underscores the importance of a diversified creative tourism portfolio within state strategy.

Cultural and Social Significance

Creative tourism serves as a powerful mechanism for preserving intangible cultural heritage. Traditional crafts, culinary practices, and artisanal techniques face extinction due to urbanization and globalization. Creative tourism provides an economic incentive for younger generations to perpetuate these traditions, transforming heritage from a nostalgic relic into a living, income-generating asset. UNESCO’s Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage recognizes this role. In Japan, creative tourism programs centered on pottery and textile dyeing have sustained artisanal communities, while in Uzbekistan, initiatives focused on silk weaving and ceramics have revitalized centuries-old traditions in Bukhara, Samarkand, and Khiva.

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Creative tourism also fosters social inclusion by engaging marginalized communities — women, indigenous peoples, elderly artisans, and rural populations — in the tourism economy. The participatory nature promotes cross-cultural understanding and reduces the commodification that accompanies mass tourism. Research from Latin America, Southeast Asia, and Central Asia demonstrates that community-led creative tourism generates stronger social capital and more equitable distribution of benefits.

Strategic Significance for Destination Competitiveness

Creative tourism serves as a powerful differentiator in an era of intense global competition. While natural attractions exist across many destinations, creative experiences are inherently place-specific and inimitable. A ceramic workshop in Provence, a cooking class in a Thai village, or a silk-weaving experience in Margilan cannot be replicated elsewhere. Furthermore, creative tourism contributes to destination branding, as social media amplifies authentic user-generated content from participatory experiences. Creative tourism also addresses seasonality: unlike beach or ski tourism, workshops and culinary immersions operate year-round, enabling consistent tourist flows and optimized infrastructure utilization.

Conclusion

State tourism authorities should develop integrated creative tourism strategies through inter-ministerial coordination between tourism, culture, and economic development portfolios. Targeted investment in capacity building for artisans — encompassing traditional skills, business management, digital marketing, and language competencies — is essential. Quality certification systems should be established to ensure consistent standards while preserving authenticity. Digital infrastructure and public-private partnerships are critical for expanding global reach and mobilizing investment in creative tourism facilities. In conclusion, creative tourism services represent a paradigm shift in how the state tourism sector generates economic value, preserves cultural heritage, and promotes inclusive development. As global tourism evolves toward experience-driven travel, the strategic importance of creative tourism will only intensify. States that proactively invest in creative tourism development and empower local communities will be best positioned to capture the benefits of this transformative trend.

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