Intangible Heritage Tourism: Pride or Passion?

by

Petronela Tudorache
The Bucharest University of Economic Studies, Romania
tudorachep@yahoo.com

Abstract: Tourism is a phenomenon that can generate effects on the market, both for visited the state and the state of origin of tourists. However, tourism is contributing to employment growth, business development, social development (the ties between nations), the cultural, environmental quality, development and economic growth.

Even so, to determine the effects of tourism on the market, we must take into account the factors that determine the evolution of tourism. I believe that tourism helps greatly to economic growth and economic development of our country, so take this as a particularly important topic and present. Therefore, tourism can be a catalyst for improvement of living standards of our country and the quality of life and social welfare.

Rural areas have long been and used as appropriate for recreation and tourism activities. Recreation and tourism in many rural areas have gone from being primarily passive and minor elements in the landscape to become highly active and dominant agents of change and control of that landscape. The central focus of discussion which follows is the dynamics of the relationships between leisure and traditional elements of rural areas.

Intangible cultural heritage is a fundamental factor of social life: it develop the intellectual potential at a national level and human capital, it creates, through assessment of cultural diversity, an open society aware of the national identity.

Key words: tourism, rural tourism, intangible heritage tourism

JEL classification: L83, O13

1 Introduction

However, the specific activities which are engaged in during leisure, recreation and tourism are identical, the key differences generally being the setting or location of activities, the duration of time involved, and, in some cases, the attitudes, motivations and perceptions of the tourists.

Leisure, recreation and tourism are closely interrelated. Leisure time is that time which has no claims to it. Recreation is normally thought of as activity that is voluntary and which is engaged in for the purpose of enjoyment and satisfaction during time which is free from obligations, during leisure time.

Tourism implies travel away from home, and frequently implies a time involvement of at least 24 hours.

Recreation has tended to be viewed as a social service and policies have been primarily geared to securing access to resources and providing opportunities for locals and visitors, while tourism has generally been seen as an agent for stimulating economic development or redevelopment, rather than something which the public sector should provide directly.

Rural areas are now host to an almost infinite variety of activities engaged in during tourists’ leisure time, for example: festivals, craft activities.

Heritage has a great capacity to promote social cohesion and integration through regeneration neglected, creating local jobs and promoting a common understanding and a sense of belonging to the community. The sector provides important educational and volunteer opportunities for young people and for older people and promote dialogue between cultures and generations, according European Commission.

2 Literature Review

This study offers a literature review for tourism activities. According to (Lin and Su, 2013), tourism is one of the leading economic sectors in the world, and constitutes, an important source of revenue, employment, exports and taxes. (Camarda, 2008) believes that for the
economical progress tourism is a influence factor, it’s contribution to GDP growth, for the balance of the payments balance, as well as the improvement of the life quality. 

(Munar and Jacobsen, 2014) define tourism as an individual’s subjective evaluation and undergoing of events related to his/her tourist activities that begins before (i.e., planning and preparation), during and after the trip. Experiences are personal and depend on how individuals perceive and react to specific tourism places and products. 

(Nunkoo and Smith, 2013) define tourism as rising the levels of the cost of living the price of the land and the price for housing it lead to a lack of economic diversification and negatively affects a community’s traditional employment patterns. 

The principals goals of tourism development is to analyze and implement policies that assure high-quality tourist experiences that can maximize the benefits to destination stakeholders without compromising the short and long term environmental, social, and cultural integrity of destinations (Kimbu and Ngoasong, 2013). 

The tourism industry therefore it is a social network, a entity with specific institutional arrangements that allows stakeholders to develop and implement tourism policies. 

Tourism development renders various economic, socio-cultural and environmental changes on the host community's life, some being more beneficial than others. So, the participation and active support of local residents is imperative for the sustainability of the tourism industry at any destination. If tourism development is to benefit the local community, attention should also be distributed to the residents' image of the place rather than that of tourists' only (Stylidis et al, 2014). 

(Kim, 2014) suggests that the image of the destination is one of the strongest influences on future behavior. Tourist’s experiences at a destination affect the formation of tourist’s image of the destination. 

(Hassan et al, 2014) think that people are tending to visit attractive places and have an intention to experience other culture, to understand the lifestyle, and discover the uniqueness of other country. 

Viewed from the tourist’s point of view, (Chiriac, 2009) tell us that touristic products refer to the wholeness of experiences that are lived from the moment that the tourist left home until the time he returned home. 

(Iarca (Stanescu), 2007) evaluate the touristic products to be the result of associations, interdependencies between the attractiveness of an area and the facilities offered to the buyer. 

Also, the author believes that the evolution of tourism is influenced by a number of factors, including ones that influences the two correlative sides of the market: - tourism demand factors (income, free time and the population demands); - factors of tourism offer (the diversity and the quality of the services, performance cost and the training level of the work force). 

(Nita and Nita, 2008) define the tourism demand and offer as: 

- The tourism demand consists of all individuals who have desire to go out periodically and temporarily, for reasons other than performing remunerative activities at the destination place. 

- The tourism offer groups all the elements which compete for obtaining the touristic product, namely: natural and anthropogenic potential, the production equipment of touristic services, the specialized workforce in activities specific for tourism and the touristic infrastructure. 

Tourism demand is the desire for a specific service, doubled by the possibility and the decision to buy it (Kotler, 2005). 

(Mariani et al, 2014) sustain the idea that destination marketers must combine the marketing mix variables to set up the new segments and satisfy the evolved demands of the classical clientele. 

(Ispas, 2011) specify clearly that tourism motivation is a set of interior motives, determined by education, needs, demands, interests and tastes having an intimate nature that guides and energies the tourism demand. In addition, the author has classified the main factor which determines the tourist’s motivation as it follows:
- The Personality;
- The Lifestyle;
- The Previous Experience;
- The Perception;
- The Image.

(Randell et al., 2013) classified the rural tourism as a market niche, which involves: a small number of residences, limited possibilities regarding the hostel's infrastructure and equipment and various activities (landscape assessment, foods and those traditional beverages particular in the respective area, regional fairs visiting or making handcrafts).

(Candea and Simon, 2007) specify the rural tourism as a concept covering the tourism activity developed and managed by the local population and based on the local and anthropogenic potential.

(Ferretti et al., 2013) tell us that according to the World Heritage Convention, the term cultural heritage refers to single monuments, such as architectural works, monumental sculpture and painting, as well as groups of buildings and sites.

(Hoppen et al., 2014) evaluate the main difference between heritage tourism and cultural tourism lies in the destination concept which includes customs, traditions, stories, that makes the heritage tourism to be unique in comparison to the cultural tourism.

(Chen & Chen, 2013) sustain the idea that the heritage tourism, like other leisure, is largely viewed as a process of experiential consumption and the management of tourist experience is always a priority in the heritage tourism context.

(Silverman and Ruggles, 2009) is agree that heritage is an important subject which it gives us an important a source of income, jobs and represents a critical factor in the shaping of the social identity.

(Qu et al., 2013) tell us that a nation's natural and cultural heritage constitute both unique features of the natural environment and the products of human creative genius. Both bear testimony to cultural traditions, promote the development of modern civilization, and show us economic benefits such as tourism income.

(Corsale and Iorio, 2013) sustain the idea that the heritage is constructed at multiple scales in order, for example, to build social identity, to legitimize political power, or to exploit heritage for tourism development.

(Rodz et al., 2013) states that the Malaysian Department of National Heritage classify the cultural heritage as being intangible heritage and tangible heritage. The tangible heritage includes: historic sites, monuments, buildings and the intangible heritage includes the phrase, language, song, folklore songs, traditions, the dance and theater.

(Busuio, 2008) support the idea that cultural heritage values are divided as it follows: tangible heritage (includes movable and immovable goods); intangible heritage (includes customs, beliefs, dances, events and music).

(Wang, 2014) define tangible cultural heritage is a component of its physical location; thus, avoiding certain hazard-prone areas is not necessarily possible.

According to (Wang et al., 2013) it's considered that the intangible cultural heritage has three major components: life of the inhabitants, crafts, folklore.

Based on (Cominelli and Grafts, 2012) the intangible cultural heritage is the practices, representations, expressions, knowledge and skills that belong to the communities and are supported by the residents of such areas.

(Cher et al., 2013) states that the traditional culture is underpinned by values, beliefs, ideas and knowledge systems.

(Suarez et al., 2014) reveal that since the end of the twentieth century the increasing importance of cultural heritage has been complemented with the recognition and protection of intangible heritage.

Intangible cultural heritage is widely regarded as a tool in rural development, this implies the selective expansion of tourist flows designed to achieve one or more of the following goals:

- To sustain and create local income, employment and growth;
- To contribute to the costs of providing economic and social infrastructure;
- To encourage the development of other industrial sectors;
- To contribute to the conservation of environmental and cultural resources, especially as scenic urban and rural surroundings are primary tourist attractions.
Cultural heritage does not end at monuments and collections of objects. It also includes traditions or living expressions inherited from our ancestors and passed on to our descendants, such as oral traditions, performing arts, social practices, rituals, festive events, knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe or the knowledge and skills to produce traditional crafts, according UNESCO.

3 Methodology

I have read scientific literature (articles, books) in order to conceive this article. The main aim of the article is to observe the intangible heritage tourism. Therefore my article is focusing on the customer’s benefits from this environment.

Intangible cultural heritage contains its own representative benefits which are as well highlighted by the study conducted by the World Tourism Organization in 2013. According to this study successful marketing requires a sound understanding of the products on offer, the target market and underlying industry conditions. By defining touristic products you have the possibility to identify the types of tourists and markets which have to be targeted, meanwhile training to gain entrepreneurial abilities as well as branding which can help communities to achieve a greater understanding of heritage values related to touristic products.

Identification of stakeholders and the establishment of the mechanisms that is related to participation – The most important players that are linked to assets regarding intangible cultural heritage should have a clear identification, taking into consideration their point of views, in order to assure a supportable development. In order to ensure this sustainability, you have to take into account to incorporate the feedback from different views regarding management, the development of products, marketing and different strategies related to business is essential.

Ensuring authenticity – There are certain challenges when analyzing the commercialization of living culture, as this can contain the simplification regarding heritage having its target of transmission. A clear and strong balance has to contain a mixture of commodifying intangible cultural heritage touristic related products in order to make them feasible from a commercial point of view, while in the same time they have to be prevented not to become over-commodified. In order to safeguard core cultural values, different models of promoting or presenting products related to intangible cultural heritage that can provide benefits for the host communities.

Ways of creating partnerships – There should be created stable partnerships between all relevant stakeholders, particularly governments, the private tourism sector, NGOs, and local communities. In order to establish a link between communities, tourism and heritage fields, there are allowed different projects related to community-based tourism, meanwhile encouraging a sustainable development of cultural assets as touristic products.

Putting certain limits of different acceptable changes (LAC) – In order to mitigate the possible tension between the development of tourism and the control over cultural identity, there is an imperative need of constant dialogue between communities, heritage and different touristic related sectors on the “limits of acceptable change”. There should be adopted a proactive approach for the creation of touristic products, in which various assets are changed with a strong involvement of local stakeholders, while there is a sensitive negotiation between local space and tourist space.

Setting limits for acceptable changes: It should be taken into consideration a clear dialogue between various communities, tourism and the limits of acceptable changes in what concerns tourism sectors, in order to soften the strong tension between tourism development and the control over cultural identity.

Balance between education and entertainment – Showcasing, for the best of living culture to tourists, in an interesting and attractive way, involves having a clear balance between both education and entertainment. Different workshops for tourists in either visual, performing or culinary arts represents an useful way of offering deep cultural experiences in
which host countries may directly express their core values.

**Assuring a dynamic culture** – Care may be used in order to help cultures to remain dynamic and endowed, also with the knowledge to make sure that their intangible heritage maintains itself. The participation in touristic activities may be a strong catalyst for various local cultural reproduction and revitalization. Moreover, cultural exchange represents a well-known positive effect on communities opening up to tourism.

**The strong need for research and monitoring systems** – It is necessary to assess the performance and sustainability of intangible cultural heritage touristic related products in order to ensure a responsible management for them. Different monitoring systems may analyze if the target is reached or thresholds breached. Also, research represents an important part in having a successful management, marketing and delivery of quality experiences for tourists, meanwhile safeguarding their living heritage.

**4 Conclusion**

Importantly, particular attention needs to be with the heritages which focus on spiritual and educational attributes in consolidating a sense of national belonging and national solidarity. Consequently, rural destinations are represented by both their actual and idyllic characteristics, together with a pragmatic but imaginative tourism culture.

The future of recreation and intangible cultural heritage depends on tourists.

Here, both tangible and intangible heritage is crucial in contributing to recognizing and re-emphasizing the ethnic and cultural affinities of a nation. Although tourist attractions are the drivers of tourism to many communities, and local citizens’ support of these attractions is vital to their viability, the economic outcomes of such support have never been assessed.

It is concluded that a wider and longstanding perspective of local resource management is necessary to enhance the complementary relationship between economic gain of local intangible cultural heritage and tourism development.

**References**


Iarca(Stanescu), M. D. (2007), Cercetari in domeniul estimarii calitati si eficientei serviciilor in turism, Coord stiintific: Prof.univ.dr. Ion Dianconescu.


Stylidis, D., Biran, A., Sit, J., Szivas, E. M. (2014), Residents' support for tourism development: The role of residents’ place image and perceived tourism impacts, Tourism Management ,45: 260-274.


Busuioc, M. F. 2008, Strategii de dezvoltare si promovare a turismului cultural in Romania, Bucharest, ASE.


Kotler, Ph. (2005), Managementul marketingului, Bucharest, Teora.


World Tourism Organization (2013), Study on Tourism and Intangible Cultural Heritage


Author description

Petronela Tudorache, aged 25, is a freshman in PhD at the Academy of Economic Studies, Faculty of Commerce, the research theme”Pragmatic approach to valorisation through tourism activities, the intangible cultural heritage in rural areas ”. I graduated faculty of Marketing and Master in Marketing and Communication in Business Area at Academy of Economic Studies. I worked at Emag, at project manager in departament of marketing, now I have my own business. I have a ngo with the followings areas: tourism, social, and human resources.