

Importance of Tourism in Community Development

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Abstract

Tourism is considered one of the main sectors in our economic system. Tourism demand growth trend in recent years is associated with tourist demand to visit popular places for authenticity, discovering local cultures and traditions, respecting in maximum cultural environment. Today tourist is tired from the same destinations and identical holidays every year. Today tourist is an expert tourist and particularly demanding, which requires countries authenticity "for living environment" and to have a unique experience. Tourism in the same time is an innovation instrument: in tourism sector are each day and more important the ideas, which should be innovative, genial but above all competitive. Recently the offer is focused on the emergence of small structures host quality, by exploiting the wealth of abandoned existing buildings. Among the numerous innovations in the tourist accommodation sector, is analyzed an Italian host innovative structure which is able to create this connection and takes the name albergodiffuse. After that is seen the possibility to implement it in the Albanian reality. Implementation of this formula requires not only the existence of host structures but also the determination and confirmation of residents. For this reason, community involvement is seen as a solution. This paper aims to evaluate the hypothesis of tourism development through the use of innovation and tradition. Firstly is presented the main concepts that will be based on this study. Topic is followed by discussions to assess the possibilities for applying the concept in practice, taking into consideration possible factors. At the end is aimed at giving answers to questions that arise during operation and possible recommendations

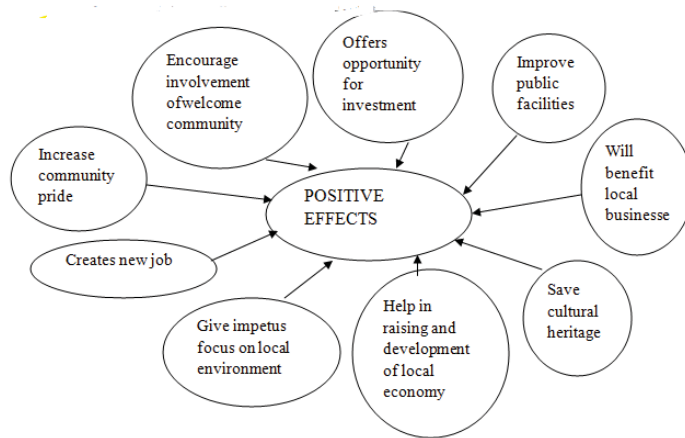
1. Introduction

Why is community participation considered so important in tourism development at the point to draw attention even in the framework of tourism literature?

On this issue are aware even tourism stakeholders as well as academics. In his study Brunetti[1] presents two successful cases of tourism based in a community in the north of Brazil, where not only were rooted a fair model and responsible for environment, but communities have improved significantly life quality. Moreover they discuss the concept of development of "situation in the center". This notion of development, adapted with location, and considered usually habitants as actors in the process of transformation of their territories.

Contrary, Mathieson, A and Wall, G[2] discuss that "Community Based Tourism", might be a wrong direction. Their research established in Latin America, shows that CBT rarely reduces poverty, and that communities better try to enter in overall tourism markets, because this might bring a beneficial impact than traditionally thought. They say that a lot of CBT projects have not been successful, and their initiative failed in terms of achievement of pro-poor benefits. This happened mainly of absence of financial stability, poor market access and weak governance. In many cases CBT are not participative in local government structures and decision making. For this reason, according to Mathieson, A and Wall, G [2] solution will be link of poorest communities with the main tourist flows, instead of implementing an "alternative" tourism. Yet, Poon (cited in Murphy, 1985) [3], argues that the key to survival in the future for developing countries lies in promoting local skills, creativity and innovation. This may lead in community management to obtain a degree of control and power exerted on the development of tourism in their area (Murphy, P. E) [3]

Figure 1.1. Positive effects of tourism development



Source: Tourism Recreation Research and Education Centre, May 2006[4]

2. Methodology

Research is realized through combination of quantitative and qualitative method focused in interviews, focus group, observations, personal survey, and research in archives of historical materials, cultural and artistic one. Study has been done on the identification of primary and secondary data. Secondary data are made on different books, previous research made on this area, or internet materials. In literature review an important place is given to Albergo Diffuso concept. Primary data are obtained through interviews made with local residents of this area. Are realized 8 interviews which are included at the end of the paper, while analyze of interviews are made throughout the paper.

2.1 Theory Resource Based Review

Methodology used to analyze the possibility to realize and Albergo Diffuso in Dardha area is based in the theory Resource Based Review (RBV). Scope of the paper is to identify if Albergo Diffuso, thought as a system of integrated offer, allows the achievement of competitive advantage of Dardha area. For this reason are elaborated data taken from local residents, and from different actors who acts in tourism area in Dardha.

2.2 The existence of suitable accommodation structure

Primary research is focused in realization of visitor's questionnaire. To identify the presence of visitors in Dardha area is formulated a questionnaire with 16 questions. The questionnaire is formulated based on different literature.

For determining the sample, which will be taken into consideration, is made a preliminary work to specify special moments where the questionnaires shall be realized. For this reason, we have worked with personal survey questionnaire, in 2 different period of time. The first group of questionnaires (30) is realized during august 2010, while the second part is realized during the last days of November. Questionnaire is formulated to involve open and close questions, where each visitor has the possibility to express their personal opinion for specific questions.

Primary and secondary data collection encounters difficulties because for its specific this paper is heterogeneous. Also we cannot provide specific data by hotel owners, who are reluctant to give exact information on their business.

3. Hypothesis of Realization of Albergo Diffuso: Dardhe

In this chapter is taken into consideration the hypothesis of creation of an Albergo Diffuso in the touristic area of Dardha. Analysis starts with a short presentation of Korca region and touristic development in this part of territory. After detailed

analyses of history, natural resources, tradition and its identity combined with elements of the past. SWOT analyses make possible the evaluation of strength and weakness that Dardha presents as a mountain touristic destination, and threats and possibilities thought to face in the future. Analysis of touristic demand and supply followed by a series of measures, which will be needed to realize the specified scope.

3.1 Touristic village of Dardha

Dardha, a beautiful village is located 18 km away from Korca, in an altitude of 1300 m over the range of Morava. This village represents one of the most beautiful models of our national vitality, to our pride for our origin and tradition, but also the thirst to move and to accept the new.

Dardha is renowned for its architecture, urban planning of houses, streets and public fountains. The view that is shown from the building and urban planning of the village, solid and beautiful buildings, carved stones covered with grey ploca, cobblestone streets, and many others give to the village a magnificent view and it seems like a thriving country.[5]

3.2 SWOT Analyses

Destination taken into consideration is been involved in a territorial context, which we should bear in mind, because it influences in touristic-economic view.

3.2.1 Strengths:

- Fresh air, appropriate climate for all ages;
- Typical rural atmosphere in village;
- Possibilities for sport activities (ski, climbing, cycling etc)
- Traditional food, cultural local events, religious events;
- Geographical position and mostly the landscape, help maintain a long stay for tourists interested in natural tourism and especially mountain one.
- Presence of handicraft products and gastronomy with a high quality which maintain the traces of the past, BIO kitchen;
- Presence of cultural heritage, unique architectural in its type.

3.2.2 Weakness:

Low level of collaboration and lack of integration between businesses;

- The absence of integration between active policies for employment and local development interventions in support of small business system;
- The absence of a regional law which enables the implementation of this new form of hospitality which guarantees the authenticity and originality;
- The absence of a public transportation network that connects Dardha with Korca, Voskopoja or other areas of tourist interest in order to create a product, but also facilitate the entry of visitors in the village;
- The absence of a tourist information office;
- The absence of support structures for tourist activity which can diversify the tourist attitude;
- The absence of a signaling system that shows the places to be visited inside Dardha;
- The seasonality presence only in particular months of the year;
- The absence of a waste treatment system;
- Insufficient medical training in the village;
- The absence of a business, such as rent bicycles, sports clothing for skiing;
- The absence of marketing experts;

Meanwhile it is possible to determine **the opportunities** that the place disposes, which can be used by tourism actors to improve the area:

- The close distance with interesting tourist destinations such as Voskopoja, Boboshica, Korca, etc.
- The presence of historical connections that link the country with outskirts by helping to create a mosaic life full

of culture and tradition;

- The wealth of natural and cultural heritage is still to be evaluated;
- The increased demand for local products, the development of a form of tourism which favors little destinations;
- The popular traditions and the folklore, which can be evaluated as attractive tourist element;
- Various international festivals such as the Festival of monodrama "Albamonos" an itinerant festival where participate artists from Serbia, Azerbaijan, Switzerland, Kosovo and Albania etc;
- Good potential for recreation, pure air, natural water;
- Opportunity to generate jobs for women and young people by reducing the rate of migration;
- The potential for direct marketing campaign for traditional quality products;

Meanwhile among **the threats** in tourism development we can emphasize:

- The collapse and the loss of natural and cultural heritage;
- The collapse of the traditional atmosphere in the village as a result of irregular buildings (up to these moments are only 2-3 objects that do not preserve their tradition in construction);
- The need for capital to put in place a plan for infrastructure and facilities: for a relatively long period;
- Specialized human capital migration;
- The loss of a market share due to competition with other places in the region;
- The presence of a negative image of Albania in foreign countries;
- The political instability of Albania and the region;
- The development of touristic village does not reach the standards of competitors in neighboring places;

4. The Analysis of the Visitor Profile in Dardha

The objective of the interviews is the visitor profile study in the area of Dardha. The information gathered here aim to identify the aspects related to the types of visitors, their behavior and their satisfaction from services in the considered destinations.

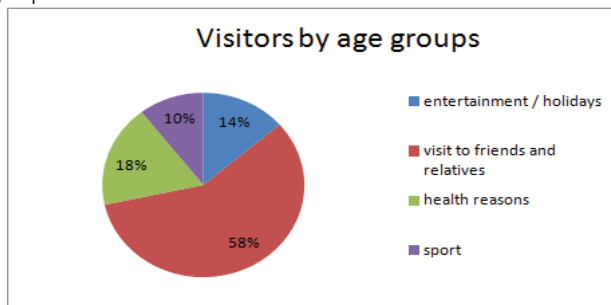
4.1 Tourist type profile

The visitors, who visit Dardha despite how they are grouped into categories, family groups, social groups, or youth, have as a common characteristic the desire for nature contact, in every season of the year.

Gender. The results of samples taken in consideration show that the group of visitors is made up 54% of males and 46% females.

Age. The questionnaire is designed on categorizing the groups by age with the aim to facilitate the graphical representation. From the chart is evidenced that the age groups whom we find more in Dardha, belong to the 25-44 years old, who represent 45% of respondents. The second age group (45-64 years) represents a percentage amounting 33%. While 10% and 12% respectively occupy age groups 15-24 years and over 65 years. The average age of visitors reaches the 38 years of age. Many of the respondents stated that they has arrived as a family including children who are not included in above mentioned age groups.

Graph 1: Visitors by age groups



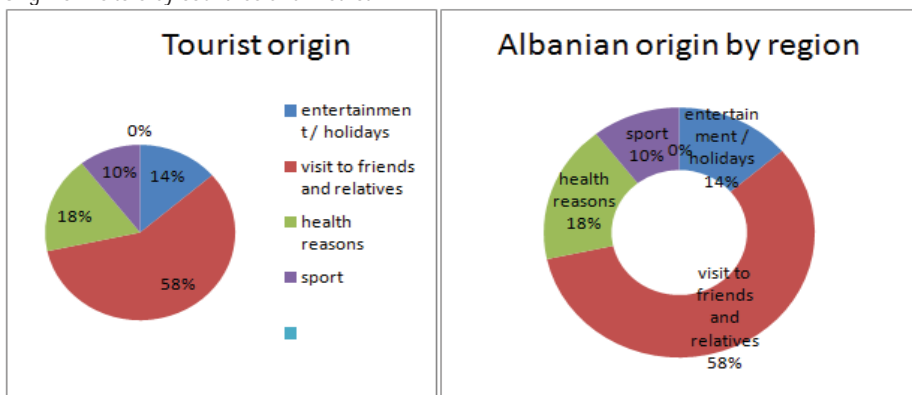
Source: Personal analysis based on questionnaires

4.2 Visitor identikit

If we take in consideration **the origin of tourists**, will see that 24% belongs to the region of Korca District, 46% of national origin and the remaining 32% of international origin, where respectively 12% with American citizenship, 4% with French citizenship, 8% Italian and 6% with Greek citizenship.

This variety can be explained by the fact that the area of Dardha, known as one of the areas with a migration flow since its early 20s century. People of Dardha have migrated in the direction of the United States of America, have created their families there, but at the same time are trying to maintain ties with ancestors land. Economic connections, or the impact of many immigrants in Greece has increased curiosity in this tourist zone and Greek visitors, who are taking advantage of the geographical position of Dardha, prefer to spend a few days there in the company of Albanians friends. Another element that should be taken into consideration is the recognition of the language in this area to assist in communicating with visitors.

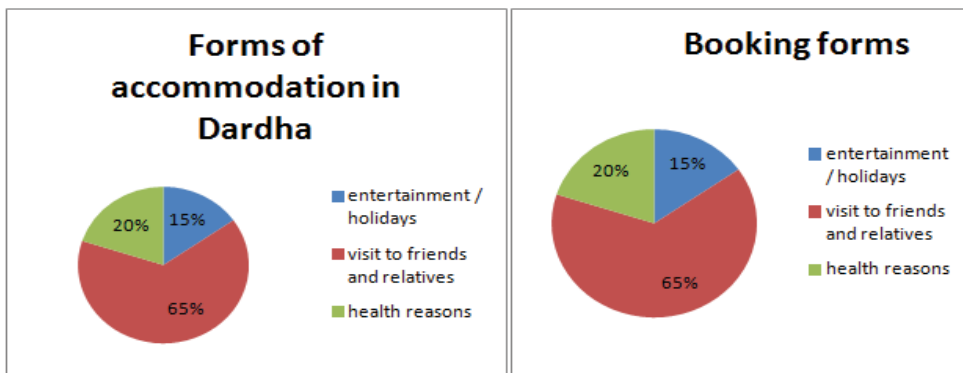
Graph 2: Origin of visitors by countries and District



Source: Personal analysis based on questionnaires

If we take in consideration the host structure elements, we see that hotels and homes of local residents represent the preferred solution with respectively 48% hotel accommodation and 42% accommodation in homes of local residents, while a third category choose accommodation in homes relatives. This is based on a logic according to which, most of the inhabitants of Dardha though for years in migration, have begun restructuring their homes and borrowing them to their acquaintances or other relatives during the year, in order give life to their homes in the absence of the owners.

Graph 3: Accommodation and booking forms in Dardha

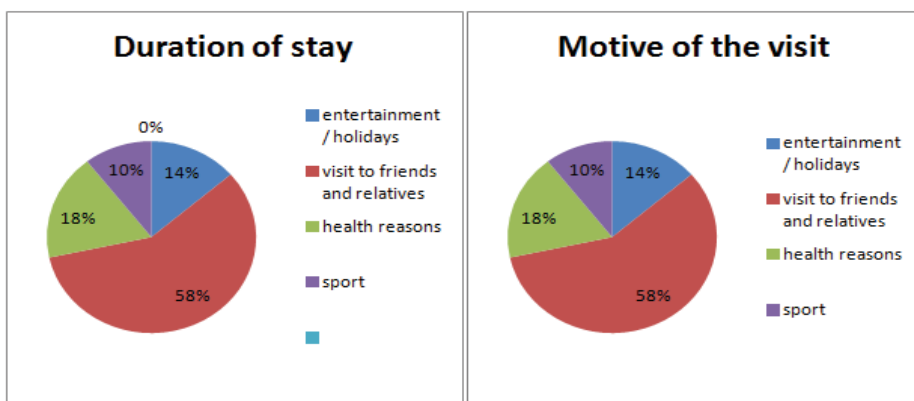


Source: Personal analysis based on questionnaires

The analysis continues with the booking form: the category of visitors who arrive in Dardha "without booking" occupies a low percentage, 8%, and bookings by e-mail reach 27%. Booking by phone reaches 65% and represents the main form used by respondents. Still do not exist any facility that utilizes online booking.

Weekend most frequently represents the moment of attitude for visitors. From questionnaires of August we see that a relatively high percentage (63%) prefer this moment visit to Dardha, 17% belong to the category who stay 3 days and other categories of 10% belong to groups that prefer to stay 7 days or more.

Graph 4: Duration and Motive of the visit



Source: Personal analysis based on questionnaires

5. Conclusion and Recommendation

The whole paper is seen in a new optic to increase the tourist flow, under the optic of relationship tourism. This kind of tourism is developed taking into account all the territory in its diversity as a result of opportunities to transform a "place" into a "destination" or a "source" into an "attraction".

The paper is focused at Dardha area, because of its characteristics; it fulfills the conditions of this kind of strategic marketing of territory. Conclusions achieved for Dardha are:

- There is a long tradition in the tourism sector, which had its beginnings 30 years
- There is a special hospitality with the atmosphere which makes you feel like at home
- Suitable climatic conditions for tourism, providing a tourism 365 days of the year
- Saves with fanaticism folklore, tradition and its history
- Traditions in gastronomy which has become attractive element in present day tourist
- Unique and inimitable architecture
- Its visitor belongs to different age groups
- Tourism started to develop especially in recent years
- Dardha lacks in tourist itineraries of the most important operator tours of the country
- Actually started to be involved in various artistic and cultural manifestations even though these sporadic
- Lacks a genuine marketing for Dardha
- Emigration affects negatively touristic growth
- Albergo diffuso in a possible way of development, because it influences in the increase of self-employment of residents

Based on this optic, tourism relationship and albergo diffuso or "hotel village", for the development of Dardha, but it seems still long the way to pass in order to convert these development possibilities in real and concrete possibilities.

6. Recommendation

Paper is intended as a study from the academic point of view. At the end of it possible recommendations are:

- The realization of a genuine guide for Dardha in which to unfold all its attractive elements
- Coordination and cooperation with the community
- Identification and renovation of abandoned structures that add space for a traditional and ecological tourism, without destroying the environment
- Intervention for the implementation of facilities in public transport
- Coordination of grant funds and various donor organizations with local authorities for a more efficient expense
- Revitalization of community life through well-managed activities
- Periodic training of laborers

In the end, such opportunities inside Albanian territory are innumerable. There are required only actors and local operators to further develop those relationships with tourists that have begun to take their form even though in sporadic form and separated.

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