

THE ROLE OF EDUCATIONAL TOURISM FOR SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

Abstract

Today's globalized society has significantly changed the ecology, population and economy of our planet, and these changes have defined the daily lifestyle of ours and future generations. While many industries have undergone dramatic changes due to the proliferation of transportation, communications and industrial technologies, tourism has probably seen the most significant changes. One of the major and relatively recent changes in the tourism industry is the development and implementation of sustainability. This future will definitely be built by young people. That is why it is important to promote sustainable tourism among youth through educational tourism. This article analyzes and defines the concepts of educational tourism and sustainable tourism, presents the conceptual framework, and discusses the possibilities of using educational tourism to develop sustainable tourism.

Key words: *sustainable tourism, educational tourism, environmental, ecological, social, economical, concept*

I. Introduction

There has been a significant increase in the tourism sector in recent years, with the spending of holiday and business travel increasing year by year over the past five years. While this growth has created opportunities such as job creation and socio-economic development, it has also led to a global increase in greenhouse gas emissions (mainly a 5% share of transport), overpopulation and social stagnation in host communities lead to problems such as loss of cultural identity. As a result of these challenges, there has been a growing trend in educational and sustainable tourism in recent years.

Sustainable tourism is a way of travel aimed at minimizing the harmful effects of tourism on the natural environment. In order to fully integrate sustainability into tourism, many things need to be taken into account, from laws and regulations to the needs of locals and tourists. Therefore, it is important to look at sustainable tourism not only from the point of view of a tourism provider, but also from the point of view of an individual tourist. Every gear in the car is critical to ensure that sustainable tourism thrives.

Therefore, it is necessary to introduce methods and directions to promote sustainable tourism from the earliest stage of society to the elderly. Because achieving sustainability is not the work of one person, but of many. In the current era of globalization, the most popular and common type of tourism for young people is educational tourism. Educating the community begins with the youth. Bringing together potential greenery-loving tourists of the future can be achieved right now through the chance of educational tourism of the globalization process.

II. Methodology

During the research, scientific studies on international and national experiences of the development of educational tourism were studied. Scientific-theoretical, observation and selection, empirical observation methods and case study methods were used in the process of creating the article. The reliability of the research results is based on the foreign statistical official sources of UNWTO.

III. Literature review

Learning outcomes have been found from the travel portion of the study experience, and some research has found that out-of-class experiences were the most impactful portion of study abroad. Personal growth, increase in life skills, and knowledge also result from independent international travel, as well as “objectiveless” travel [1].

Sustainability is a dominant theme in tourism practice. Increasingly, research and education of tourism stakeholders is also necessary in improving sustainable tourism practice. This book pays systematic attention to education for sustainability in tourism, and is thus a valuable resource for sustainable tourism educators and scholars [2].

Globally acknowledged and well-accepted topical areas such as Artificial Intelligence, Machine Learning, Robotics, Animation, 3D, Drone Application, AR/VR and VFX Media and Cyber Security should be included in the curriculum to attract the students. The combination of Wellness and Information Technology courses may also be one of the attractive options for the foreign students as they will get their respective degrees with the wellness certificates [3].

International mobility programs embed higher education (HE) students in a learning process in which they gain key knowledge, skills, and attitudes (KSAs), some of them crucial in pursuing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). [Adriana Perez-Encinas](#) and her co-authors propose an innovative theoretical framework that links such KSAs to the UNESCO’s Key Competences for Sustainability and specific SDGs. Moreover, they analyzed which KSAs are addressed by institutional initiatives to support mobility students, exposing their contribution to the SDGs. Notwithstanding, additional institutional support may be needed for students to leverage their learning outcomes and transform international mobility into a key driver of the necessary social change towards the achievement of SDGs [4].

In order to develop truly sustainable tourism programs, participants and planners must be educated about issues in both the origin and the destination [5].

Providing educational opportunities by hosting workshops or seminars on sustainable travel practices can teach participants how to reduce their carbon impact when traveling to events and their educational establishments. Using these measures, event organizers may dramatically minimize the transport emissions connected with their activities. This promotes a more sustainable event experience and instills a feeling of environmental responsibility among attendance [6].

IV. Results

According to a recent analysis by Grand View Research, the size of the educational tourism market will exceed 365.9 billion in 2022 [7]. Between 2023 and 2030, the market annual growth rate (CAGR) is expected to be 13%. Also, increasing number of international students in Uzbekistan HEIs increased by almost 40 percent in the past five years.

Different countries are focusing on educational tourism as a development strategy. While the host country benefits from the international student’s food and beverage, accommodation, tuition, entertainment and recreation expenses, and not to mention the inevitable taxes, the market has a positive impact on the economy.

Students, on the other hand, benefit from educational tourism because it promotes personal and professional growth not only through their studies but also through communication with people in the visited region. These factors will contribute to the growth of the educational tourism market in the future.

In an ever-changing modern society, educational institutions, especially schools, play a major role. Recently, there has been a lot of focus on changes in the content of education, and the issues of what to teach, how much to teach, and how to do it are hotly debated. Creative education, which helps to develop a person’s abilities and ability to express themselves can be developed through active practice, has become very important. Such practices are encouraged in sustainable tourism, which includes competence in environmental culture and environmental issues, the ability and propensity to use knowledge of the natural world, as well as natural research methods, to

answer these questions and seek evidence-based conclusions, solutions, understanding changes in nature as a result of human activity, taking personal responsibility for protecting the environment, and protecting the health of oneself and others [8]. Therefore, it is widely believed that education and training are important to achieve sustainable tourism [9] and sustainable development.

In addition, Ritchie et. al. suggest that educational tourism can be divided into two travel markets. The first market classifies those whose main destination is travel, where education or learning becomes an integral part of the “targeted life cycle” [10].

The second market is classified as university students or schools, where education and learning are the main goals and the result of a tourist experience. One of the components of educational tourism is the development of this person’s intercultural competence. The definitions of intercultural competence by Donahue [11] is based on the practices and strategies that students use in their meetings abroad.

Benefits of educational tourism (table 1): There is a popular common saying among people “I hear and I just forget, I see and I can remember, I practice and I can understand,” it describes the theory of retaining more information when visually experiencing the activities in a chosen environment. Below are some of the key benefits of educational tours and reasons why getting students on these trips are good for them.

Table 1. Benefits of educational trips

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| Interactive Learning | Excursions help students interact with what they are learning. Experience goes beyond reading about the concept; students can see it, manipulate it, or participate physically. Students can see the elements with their own eyes rather than read about it and believe what is said in books or by teachers. These excursions give students the opportunity to explore through travel, especially to places they may not be able to visit. Educational trips provide valuable learning opportunities away from the classroom, without the use of textbooks and other tools used in a normal school setting. Students on study trips can often enjoy and learn in an informal setting. If the campus has a professional guide who teaches students practical lessons, such as a science center or history museum, students will be happy to learn from a new person. |
| Entertainment | Educational trips will also be fun for students. They often work as a strong motivator for students. Giving up the usual habits gives students a refreshment, which can make them focus more on reading. Learning and entertainment always create a great combination. Field trips are considered fun, but students learn whether they understand it or not. No matter how much students learn during the study tour, their favorite memories can be based on the enjoyment of the day. A day or even half a day away from the institute is always exciting for students and educational trips are always expected. Students can relax with their friends or classmates and they can return to class more carefully. |
| | Moving away from the usual environment of college or school allows students to spend time with each other in a new environment. They can relate more on a personal level without the structure of a normal school day. Students can spend most of the day of the study tour in small groups, observing each other, talking, and learning. Traveling during the semester or early semester is wise because it allows students to connect with people they don’t know well. Also, dropping out of class for a study trip places |

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| Social Interaction | students in a different social environment. During the average trip, they encounter a new set of people. These interactions teach them how to behave in different environments. They learn more rules of self-control and communication. This creates a sense of teamwork and community as students experience the journey together. In addition, students can interact with other people from all walks of life. This gives them the opportunity to have new perspectives and learn from absolute strangers who have objective opinions. |
| New Experiences | Many students are unable to experience the usual travel destinations with their families. Due to financial problems or lack of resources, not all parents are able to take their children to zoos, museums and other travel destinations. Educational travel gives students the opportunity to experience new places or destinations. While field trips require a lot of effort, it is worth it to broaden students' worldviews. In addition, new learning environments and experiences are possible when students and teachers travel together. Students may be able to observe many things that are not available at school or college, including exotic wildlife, rare plants, industrial machinery, and more. It is wise to discuss the study tour in advance as this will allow students to know what they are going through in time. away from school. |
| Better Exposure | Better exposure is another advantage of educational journeys in student life. Students visit new places and this is a great opportunity for students who don't have many opportunities to go on trips. Especially for curious students who are constantly eager to learn new things, these study tours are a great way to test their knowledge and experience. They can learn new things and this practical knowledge will help them go a long way in their careers. |
| Passion for Travel | A study tour can be a safe way to experience the world outside of home. On the tour, students are surrounded by other people they know and are guided by their teachers and other guides throughout the experience. Also, they often pay less than they go. Once students realize how much they enjoy traveling, it can open new doors for them. They may decide to study abroad to delve deeper into different cultures. They can also travel independently in the future, which can continue to expand their understanding of the world. Some students may even realize their passion for learning other cultures and turn it into a career. |
| Cultural Observation | On a good educational journey, students experience a different culture with their own. Today, many travel agencies organize tours that offer volunteer opportunities and other opportunities for people of different socioeconomic backgrounds to see how different locals live. Such experiences help students develop more empathy for people from different lifestyles. It also helps them think about how these problems affect people near their homes and inspires them to work for change. |
| Independence | Away from home and with the convenience of a regular support system, students have the opportunity to see what they are capable of. Traveling allows students to develop themselves in ways that are not accessible without going beyond their comfort zone, mature, independent, and self-aware. |

Source: formed by the author

V. Discussion

Educational tourism presents a unique opportunity to bridge the gap between tourism and sustainability. By fostering a deeper understanding and appreciation for local cultures, environments, and traditions, educational tourism can empower tourists to become responsible stewards of the destinations they visit. The article highlighted several key aspects of educational tourism that contribute to sustainable development. First, educational programs can directly address environmental challenges faced by destinations. Tourists can participate in conservation efforts, learn about responsible waste management, and understand the impact of their travel choices. This fosters a sense of environmental responsibility that extends beyond the duration of their trip. Second, educational tourism that emphasizes cultural immersion fosters respect and appreciation for local traditions and customs. Tourists gain a deeper understanding of the social fabric of the destination, leading to a more positive and enriching travel experience for all involved. Third, educational tourism can be a driver of economic development, particularly in rural or marginalized communities. By supporting locally-owned businesses, engaging with traditional artisans, and participating in fair-trade initiatives, tourists contribute directly to the economic well-being of the destination. And last, educational tourism can create a platform for meaningful interaction between tourists and local communities. This fosters a sense of shared responsibility for preserving cultural heritage and protecting the environment.

However, it is important to acknowledge potential challenges that educational mobility can bring about. First, educational tourism programs need to be accessible and affordable for a wider range of travelers. This may involve offering scholarships, tiered pricing models, and ensuring programs cater to diverse learning styles. Furthermore, maintaining consistent quality and ensuring educational programs align with sustainable tourism principles is crucial. Collaboration between educational institutions, tourism operators, and local communities is essential. The feature of **authenticity and Commodification is another aspect that should not be ignored**. Educational tourism experiences must be authentic and avoid commodifying local cultures. Striking a balance between preserving traditions and catering to tourist expectations requires careful planning and community involvement.

VI. Conclusion

The future of tourism lies in a delicate balance between economic growth and environmental and social responsibility. Educational tourism emerges as a powerful tool to achieve this balance, fostering a new breed of travelers who are not only consumers but also active participants in sustainable development. This article has explored the multifaceted contributions of educational tourism, highlighting its ability to several positive aspects of educational tourism. For example, educational tourism **cultivates environmental stewards**. By fostering knowledge and appreciation for local ecosystems, educational tourism empowers tourists to make responsible choices that minimize their environmental impact. It **bridges the cultural divide**. Educational programs that emphasize cultural immersion foster respect and understanding, creating a more positive and enriching experience for both tourists and host communities. Moreover, educational tourism **empowers local communities**. Educational tourism can be a significant driver of economic development in rural areas. By supporting local businesses, traditional crafts, and fair-trade initiatives, tourists directly contribute to the economic well-being of the destination. Educational tourism can **promote collaborative conservation**. Educational tourism creates a platform for meaningful interaction between tourists and local communities, fostering a sense of shared responsibility for preserving cultural heritage and protecting the environment.

However, for educational tourism to reach its full potential, continuous development and adaptation are essential. Addressing accessibility concerns by offering scholarships and tiered programs ensures inclusivity. Maintaining consistent quality through collaboration between educators, tourism operators, and local communities is crucial. Finally, striking a balance between authenticity and tourist expectations requires careful planning and community involvement to prevent the commodification of local cultures.

In conclusion, educational tourism offers a transformative approach to travel, fostering responsible and sustainable practices. By nurturing environmental awareness, cultural sensitivity,

and economic empowerment, educational tourism paves the way for a future where tourism enriches both travelers and destinations alike. By addressing the identified challenges and embracing collaborative efforts, we can unlock the true potential of educational tourism as a cornerstone for a more sustainable tourism industry. By going on educational tours, students gain a better understanding of the world around them as they are in direct contact with new situations, preparing them to face challenges in their future professional lives. The importance of taking students out of the classroom to master, interact, and dive into history and nature, and educational trips have a number of learning advantages for students to gain practical information in the brain and develop respect for the environment.

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