

ORGANIZATIONAL AND ECONOMIC METHODS FOR ENHANCING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF CULTURAL HERITAGE OBJECTS IN INCREASING THE ROLE OF TOURISM IN THE NATIONAL ECONOMY

Abstract

This article examines the organizational and economic methods for enhancing the effectiveness of cultural heritage objects in increasing the role of tourism in the national economy, using the historic centre of Bukhara as a case study. The research is based on the four-stage organizational-economic method proposed by M. Moscatelli, extended by the author with a fifth stage — the development of a sustainable heritage strategic plan. Drawing on statistical data collection, cartographic, iconographic and bibliographic analysis, and on-site field observation, the study identifies the factors generating negative visitor experiences as well as the threats and opportunities of the area. Based on the principles of the ICOMOS International Cultural Tourism Charter, four heritage sustainability criteria — cultural, ecological, spatial and economic development — are integrated with safety and risk-management dimensions, resulting in a strategic plan for developing sustainable cultural tourism in the historic centre of Bukhara. The findings make it possible to raise the economic effectiveness of cultural routes and, through low-impact tourism and digitalization, to create jobs and promote heritage.

Keywords: cultural heritage, sustainable tourism, historic centre of Bukhara, UNESCO World Heritage, organizational-economic methods, strategic plan, ICOMOS, destination management, low-impact tourism.

Annotatsiya

Maqolada mamlakat iqtisodiyotida turizmning rolini oshirishda madaniy meros obyektlari samaradorligini ta'minlashning tashkiliy-iqtisodiy usullari Buxoro tarixiy markazi misolida tadqiq etilgan. Tadqiqot M. Moskatelli taklif etgan to'rt bosqichli tashkiliy-iqtisodiy uslubni asos qilib oladi va unga muallif tomonidan beshinchi bosqich — barqaror meros strategik rejasini ishlab chiqish bosqichi qo'shilgan. ICOMOS Xalqaro madaniy turizm xartiyasi tamoyillaridan kelib chiqqan holda merosni barqaror rivojlantirishning to'rtta mezonini xavfsizlik va xavf-xatarlarni boshqarish jihatlari bilan integratsiyalashtirilib, Buxoro tarixiy markazida barqaror madaniy turizmni rivojlantirishning strategik rejasini taklif etilgan.

Kalit so'zlar: madaniy meros, barqaror turizm, Buxoro tarixiy markazi, UNESCO Butunjahon merosi, tashkiliy-iqtisodiy usullar, strategik reja, ICOMOS, destinatsiya boshqaruvi.

Аннотация

В статье исследуются организационно-экономические методы повышения эффективности объектов культурного наследия в усилении роли туризма в экономике страны на примере исторического центра Бухары. Исследование опирается на четырёхэтапную методику М. Москателли, дополненную авторским пятым этапом — разработкой стратегического плана устойчивого наследия. На основе принципов Международной хартии культурного туризма ICOMOS четыре критерия устойчивого развития наследия интегрированы с аспектами безопасности и управления рисками, на основе чего предложен стратегический план развития устойчивого культурного туризма в историческом центре Бухары.

Ключевые слова: культурное наследие, устойчивый туризм, исторический центр Бухары, Всемирное наследие ЮНЕСКО, организационно-экономические методы, стратегический план, ICOMOS.

Introduction

An analysis of tourism statistics in the world's developed countries shows that a significant share of gross domestic product is formed thanks to a well-developed tourism industry, while almost half of tourism revenues come precisely from the share of cultural tourism [1]. According to “Grand View Research”, one of the leading statistical portals, the share of cultural heritage tourism in the tourism GDP of the world's top ten countries remains high.

Because most tourists prefer to visit attractions of particular cultural value, states strive to develop, promote and valorize their cultural heritage assets. Granting cultural heritage status is a distinctive form of policy intervention that usually has a significant effect on the economies of the cities and regions where heritage objects are located and on the welfare of local communities [2]. Heritage status affects the real-estate market through legal restrictions on the development and use of buildings, as well as through the aesthetic (amenity) value that the population attaches to the historic built environment and its preservation [3; 4].

By highlighting the historic and cultural significance of a place, the listing of objects, monuments and historic areas generates a range of positive externalities arising from cultural heritage [5]. In particular, the growth of tourist flows and the increased potential to attract individuals with high human capital have both direct and indirect effects on regional growth [6; 7]. Among the various forms of heritage listing, obtaining UNESCO World Heritage status occupies a central place in scholarly debates on the economic impact of cultural heritage [8].

Although the original aims of the UNESCO World Heritage List (WHL) were mainly related to safeguarding and protecting heritage objects of outstanding significance, in recent years the inscription process has increasingly been viewed as a territorial marketing instrument and a catalyst for place-making [9]. Inscription attracts the attention of mass media, the wider public, potential donors and commercial organizations, which encourages countries and regions to use their economic and political capacities to influence the inscription process [10]. As a result, the expected positive economic impact of World Heritage status justifies the considerable efforts required to obtain it [11].

While the existing literature broadly covers the economic impact of cultural heritage from a general theoretical perspective, the lack of a practical and consistent organizational-economic method aimed at enhancing the effectiveness of heritage objects within a specific historic area remains a notable gap. The aim of this study is to develop an organizational-economic method for determining and enhancing the effectiveness of cultural heritage objects in stabilizing the tourism revenues of the national economy, using the historic centre of Bukhara as a case, and on this basis to propose a strategic plan for developing sustainable cultural tourism.

Materials

The historic centre of the city of Bukhara was selected as the object of study. In 1993, at the UNESCO General Assembly held in Cartagena, Colombia, the “Historic Centre of Bukhara” was inscribed on the World Heritage List on the basis of three main criteria: (ii) the urban layout and buildings of Bukhara had a major influence on the development and planning of cities over a wide area of Central Asia; (iv) Bukhara is the most complete and best-preserved example of a medieval Central Asian city whose urban fabric has remained largely intact; (vi) between the 9th and 16th centuries Bukhara was the largest centre of Muslim theology, and especially of Sufism, in the Near East.

Today there are about 350 cultural heritage objects within the historic centre, and this factor serves as the main reason for the visit of roughly 80 per cent of tourists. The empirical database was compiled on the basis of official statistical data obtained from the Bukhara Regional Tourism Department and the Regional Cultural Heritage Department — the number of foreign and domestic tourists who visited the historic centre and the volume of revenue from entrance tickets to museums and cultural heritage objects.

The theoretical and methodological basis of the study comprises M.Moscatelli's organizational-economic method for the sustainable development of cultural heritage tourism [12; 13], the ICOMOS International Cultural Tourism Charter (1999) [17], as well as studies analysing the negative experiences and satisfaction levels of pilgrims and tourists [14; 15]. Information on the main cultural heritage objects of the area is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Main cultural heritage objects in the historic centre of Bukhara

| No. | Heritage object | Period | Brief description |
|-----|-------------------------|---|--|
| 1 | Poi Kalon ensemble | 12th–16th c. (Karakhanid and Shaybanid) | The symbolic complex of Bukhara, comprising the Kalon Minaret, Kalon Mosque, Miri Arab and Amir Olimkhan madrasahs. Overall condition is satisfactory; restoration is under way at the Miri Arab madrasah. |
| 2 | Ark Citadel | 3rd–18th c. | A citadel on an artificial mound that served as the official residence of the rulers of Bukhara. Area ~4 ha; 1 ha is now a museum and an archaeological park has been established on 3 ha. Condition satisfactory. |
| 3 | Ismail Samani Mausoleum | 9th c. (Samanid) | One of the earliest mausoleums in Central Asian architecture, distinguished by intricate brick ornament and the preservation of Sogdian traditions. Condition satisfactory. |
| 4 | Bolo Hauz complex | 17th–18th c. (Astrakhanid) | The court mosque opposite the Ark, comprising a mosque, minaret and pool. Famous for its carved wooden columned iwan. The outer portal needs repair. |
| 5 | Abdulazizkhan madrasah | 17th c. (Astrakhanid) | Located on the southern side of the kosh (twin) madrasah complex, with two-storey cells. Restoration is currently under way. |
| 6 | Ulugbek madrasah | 15th c. (Timurid) | The oldest of the madrasahs built by Mirzo Ulugbek; together with the Abdulazizkhan madrasah it forms a single architectural ensemble. Restoration is ongoing. |
| 7 | Lyabi-Hauz ensemble | 16th–17th c. (Shaybanid and Astrakhanid) | Comprises the Kukeldash madrasah, the Nodir Devonbegi madrasah and khanaka and a pool. Historically a busy trading square. Condition satisfactory. |
| 8 | Magoki Attori Mosque | 12th–16th c. | Located 4.5 m below ground level, famous for its carved ornament; one of the oldest surviving monuments of Bukhara. |
| 9 | Toqi Telpakfurushon | 16th c. (Shaybanid) | A trading dome built for the sale and making of headwear; second largest of the surviving domes. Condition satisfactory. |
| 10 | Toqi Zargaron | 16th c. (Shaybanid) | A trading dome intended for the sale of jewellery; today it houses artisans' workshops and trading stalls. |

Source: compiled by the author on the basis of field materials and official data.

Methods

The study is based on the four-stage organizational-economic method proposed by M.Moscatelli, to which the author has added a fifth stage — the development of a sustainable heritage strategic plan for the area (Figure 1). The general logic of the method is to assess the effectiveness of heritage objects stage by stage and to translate the identified results into practical strategic solutions.

Figure 1. Methodological block scheme of the study (M.Moscatelli and the author's elaboration)



The stages of the methodology are as follows: (1) collecting statistical data on cultural-tourism consumers in Bukhara; (2) gathering general information on the heritage objects located along the route; (3) identifying threats and opportunities on the basis of visits to the main heritage objects; (4) defining the sustainability criteria of heritage — cultural, ecological, spatial and economic; (5) coordinating the results on the basis of the four sustainability criteria and the general dimensions of safety and risk management, and developing a strategic plan for sustainable cultural heritage tourism.

In the first stage, the number of visitors, their motivations for visiting, negative experiences and modern transport issues were studied. In the second stage, a comprehensive analysis of cartographic, iconographic and bibliographic online materials was carried out, which ensures the accuracy and reliability of the results. In the third stage, the existing physical condition was assessed through on-site field observation, and locations where the cultural landscape could be developed and revitalized were identified [16]. In the fourth stage, the four criteria of sustainable heritage development were systematized in accordance with the principles of the ICOMOS International Cultural Tourism Charter [17]. In the fifth stage, each criterion was broken down into sub-criteria, which were examined through a cross-sectional analysis of safety and risk-management dimensions and consolidated into a single strategic plan.

Results

Results of the first stage. On the basis of visual study and statistical analysis, the factors that intensify the negative experience of visitors to the historic centre of Bukhara were identified, and recommendations aimed at eliminating them were developed (Figures 2):

- Infrastructure-related problems — a shortage of essential facilities such as accessible conditions for people with disabilities, sanitary points and tourist information kiosks;
- Over-tourism — congestion at key objects such as Lyabi-Hauz, Poi Kalon and the trading domes during the high season (March–May, September–November);
- Lack of information — insufficient English-language signs, explanatory inscriptions and interactive guide systems;
- Heritage-preservation problems — the need for timely restoration in accordance with a management plan based on UNESCO requirements so as not to damage the authenticity of heritage objects;
- Unfavourable climatic conditions — a shortage of shaded and cooling zones in the summer heat, and the need to introduce evening-tourism opportunities;
- Problems of reaching the destination — existing limitations in arriving by road, air and rail transport.

Figure 2. Main reasons motivating visits to the historic centre of Bukhara

Results of the second stage. Ten main cultural heritage objects in the historic centre were selected as objects of study (Table 1, Figures 3): the Poi Kalon ensemble, the Ark Citadel, the Ismail Samani Mausoleum, the Bolo Hauz complex, the Abdulazizkhan madrasah, the Ulugbek madrasah, the Lyabi-Hauz ensemble, the Magoki Attori Mosque, and the Toqi Telpakfurushon and Toqi Zargaron trading domes.

Figure 3. Route of the main cultural heritage objects in the historic centre of Bukhara

Results of the third stage. The on-site study of the area revealed the following threats and opportunities.

Threats: the unsatisfactory condition of some heritage objects; the proximity of groundwater to the surface and a high level of salinity; insufficient attention to objects located off the main route; the near-absence of a drainage system, and the flooding of some routes and objects during the rainy season; insufficient night lighting along some routes; and a shortage of promotional and informational materials.

Opportunities: the main tourist routes are already formed in areas with developed infrastructure, and there is an opportunity to include less-frequented areas in a single route by developing their infrastructure; the heritage objects are mutually harmonized and form a single complex; catering and accommodation facilities are well established; and more than 80 per cent of the staff of business entities operating in the historic centre can communicate in at least one foreign language.

Results of the fourth stage. The four criteria of sustainable heritage development — cultural, ecological, spatial and economic development — were harmonized with the principles of the ICOMOS International Cultural Tourism Charter (Table 2).

Table 2. Overview of the four criteria for developing sustainable cultural tourism in the area

| Sustainability criterion | Definition of the criterion | Link to the ICOMOS Charter |
|--------------------------|---|--|
| Cultural development | Integrating the area with local culture, preserving and presenting the rich cultural heritage; showcasing monuments to create a meaningful experience for tourists. | The Charter emphasizes preserving the integrity of cultural heritage and raising public awareness; the criterion deepens understanding of the area's historic and cultural significance. |
| Ecological development | Sustainable management and protection of natural resources; promoting eco-friendly practices that reduce the environmental impact of tourism. | The Charter supports sustainable tourism practices that protect the natural and cultural environment; the criterion ensures the conservation of resources for future generations. |
| Spatial development | Physical planning and improvement of infrastructure: convenient walkways, accommodation, service facilities and transport; improving the experience while preserving the integrity of historic objects. | The Charter emphasizes the importance of integrated management of heritage and tourism; the criterion improves accessibility while preserving historic-cultural integrity. |
| Economic development | Developing the local economy through tourism, creating jobs and stimulating heritage-related economic activity; fair distribution of financial benefits. | The Charter stresses that tourism must bring economic benefit to local communities; the criterion ensures a fair distribution of income, leading to sustainable growth. |

Results of the fifth stage. Each of the four sustainability criteria was broken down into sub-criteria and examined through a comparative analysis of safety and risk-management dimensions. As a result, the following general aspects, taking into account the problematic elements recently encountered in the area, were defined: flow management and infrastructure implementation; medical services and operational strategies; heat and weather management; technological devices and safety measures; ecological sustainability and travellers' awareness; and regulation and compliance. These aspects were consolidated into an integrated strategic plan for developing sustainable cultural tourism in the historic centre of Bukhara (Table 3).

Table 3. Strategic plan for developing sustainable cultural tourism in the historic centre of Bukhara based on the integration of sustainability criteria and risk-management elements

| Sustainability criterion | Sub-criteria | Strategic solutions | Safety & risk-management elements |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------|--|---|
| Cultural development | Restoration and conservation | Restore and preserve heritage monuments (citadel, madrasahs, mosques, pools); repair ancient walkways along the route. | Flow management: separating sustainable transport flows and a hierarchy of routes. |
| | Cultural heritage programme | Information panels and excursions; interactive exhibitions; cultural centres and virtual museums. | Infrastructure implementation: increasing the capacity of key sites and optimizing entry/exit points. |
| Ecological development | Sustainable practices | Use of natural energy sources and solar panels; water saving and recycling. | Medical services: mobile clinics and rapid-response teams; pre-visit health checks. |
| | Ecological programme | Promoting low-impact tourism (walking, camel/horse riding); electric vehicles; linear greening along routes. | Operational strategies: phased planning of movement and advanced communication systems. |
| Spatial development | Infrastructure network | Building a secondary network perpendicular to the main route; a comprehensive map; introducing GPS-enabled "smart" applications. | Heat & weather management: shaded areas and cooling stations. |
| | Accessibility and connectivity | Stopping and cooling areas; public transport (shuttle); pedestrian/cycle paths; alternative routes. | Technological devices: wearable devices and crowd-simulation models. |
| Economic development | Local economy | Cultural events and festivals; a fee system to maintain monuments; promotional seminars. | Safety measures and ecological sustainability: security staff and eco-friendly materials. |
| | Tourism facilities | Shops selling local products and souvenirs; spiritual/reflection zones; medical points; lighting for night tourism. | Visitor education and regulation: strict control of permits and registration. |

Discussion

The studies analysed in the first methodological stage, drawing on data about pilgrims' motivations and desires, identified a variety of drivers for visitors, such as spiritual elevation, cultural enrichment, social interaction and personal obligations. On the one hand, these motivations align with the criteria of sustainable heritage preservation derived from the ICOMOS

Charter; on the other, the results revealed the main problems of the historic centre of Bukhara — congestion, a lack of infrastructure and services, and safety issues.

The results obtained are consistent with the conclusions of the studies conducted by Quaium et al. (2023) and Hassan et al. (2022). On the basis of a large-scale survey, Quaium et al. identified problems related to congestion, insufficient infrastructure, a lack of information and health-related issues, and put forward recommendations on managing people flows, developing infrastructure and improving logistics [14]. Hassan et al., in turn, showed that the satisfaction of religious-tourism participants — especially with services related to congestion and infrastructure — is low and that this negatively affects their experience [15]. The results of the present study likewise confirm that improving service quality precisely in these areas can significantly enhance the overall experience of heritage-tourism participants.

From this perspective, the proposed strategic solutions serve to strengthen the country's reputation as a centre of cultural tourism within the framework of the “Uzbekistan–2030” strategy. The strategic solutions presented in Table 3 can be applied not only to the selected route but also along other routes throughout the historic centre; this serves as a practical guide for popularizing and revealing cultural heritage through the development of sustainable cultural tourism. As a limitation of the study, it should be noted that the primary data rely mainly on official statistics and field observation, and that the qualitative analysis of negative-experience factors predominates; in future research, a large-scale sociological survey and quantitative modelling will further increase the reliability of the results.

Conclusion

This study is a first step in highlighting the importance and role of the economic effectiveness of cultural routes in the heritage-restoration planning process in Bukhara, and serves as a starting point for developing subsequent stages for each aspect of route development. The creative implementation of the pilgrimage route examined in this study plays an important role in restoring heritage and in creating benefits for the local community.

The aim of the proposed strategy is to transform the historic centre of Bukhara into an economic driving force and a first-class cultural route offering rich artistic and cultural assets. This approach is aimed at enhancing the cultural heritage and identity of the landscape, integrated with the assessment of ecosystem services, and thereby informs spatial planning and decision-making with reliable data. Ultimately, the strategic approach formed on the basis of the studied methods demonstrates how cultural heritage can be enhanced while creating jobs and ensuring economic growth along the heritage route through the development of low-impact tourism and digitalization.

References

1. Grand View Research. Heritage Tourism Market Size, Share & Trends Analysis Report. URL: <https://www.grandviewresearch.com/industry-analysis/heritage-tourism-market-report> (accessed 2024).
2. Van Balen K., Vandesande A. Heritage Counts. – Antwerp: Garant Publishers, 2016.
3. Ahlfeldt G.M., Moeller K., Waights S., Wendland N. Game of zones: The political economy of conservation areas // *The Economic Journal*. – 2017. – Vol. 127, No. 605. – P. F421–F445.
4. Waights S. The preservation of historic districts — is it worth it? // *Journal of Economic Geography*. – 2019. – Vol. 19, No. 2. – P. 433–464.
5. Zhou Y. The political economy of historic districts: The private, the public, and the collective // *Regional Science and Urban Economics*. – 2021. – Vol. 86. – Article 103583.
6. Rizzo I., Throsby D. Cultural heritage: economic analysis and public policy // *Handbook of the Economics of Art and Culture*. Vol. 1 / eds. V. Ginsburgh, D. Throsby. – Amsterdam: Elsevier, 2006.
7. Cerisola S. Cultural Heritage, Creativity and Economic Development. – Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing, 2019.
8. Di Giovine M.A. The Heritage-Scape: UNESCO, World Heritage, and Tourism. – Lanham: Lexington Books, 2018.

9. Adie B.A. Franchising our heritage: The UNESCO World Heritage brand // *Tourism Management Perspectives*. – 2017. – Vol. 24. – P. 48–53.
10. Ryan J., Silvanto S. The World Heritage List: The making and management of a brand // *Place Branding and Public Diplomacy*. – 2009. – Vol. 5. – P. 290–300.
11. Meskell L. The rush to inscribe: Reflections on the 35th session of the World Heritage Committee // *Journal of Field Archaeology*. – 2012. – Vol. 37, No. 2. – P. 145–151.
12. Moscatelli M. Enhancement of cultural heritage tourism along the Darb Zubaydah pilgrimage route in Saudi Arabia // *Proceedings of the IFKAD “Managing Knowledge for Sustainability”*. – Matera, Italy, 7–9 June 2023.
13. Moscatelli M. Heritage as a Driver of Sustainable Tourism Development: The Case Study of the Darb Zubaydah Hajj Pilgrimage Route // *Sustainability*. – 2024. – Vol. 16, No. 16. – Article 7055. – DOI: 10.3390/su16167055.
14. Quaium A., Al-Nabhan N.A., Rahaman M. et al. Towards associating negative experiences and recommendations reported by Hajj pilgrims in a mass-scale survey // *Heliyon*. – 2023. – Vol. 9. – Article e15486.
15. Hassan H.T., Abdou A.H., Abdelmoaty M.A., Nor-El-Deen M., Salem A.E. The Impact of Religious Tourists’ Satisfaction with Hajj Services on Their Experience at the Sacred Places in Saudi Arabia // *GeoJournal of Tourism and Geosites*. – 2022. – Vol. 43. – P. 1013–1021.
16. Oikonomopoulou E., Delegou E.T., Sayas J., Vythoulka A., Moropoulou A. Preservation of Cultural Landscape as a Tool for the Sustainable Development of Rural Areas: The Case of Mani Peninsula in Greece // *Land*. – 2023. – Vol. 12. – Article 1579.
17. ICOMOS. International Cultural Tourism Charter: Managing Tourism at Places of Heritage Significance (1999). URL: https://www.icomos.org/images/DOCUMENTS/Charters/INTERNATIONAL_CULTURAL_TOURISM_CHARTER.pdf

Muassislar:
Buxoro davlat universiteti
“Economic science” mas’uliyati cheklangan jamiyati

| | | |
|---|--|---|
| <p style="text-align: center;">"IQTISODIYOT VA TURIZM" xalqaro ilmiy va innovatsion jurnali</p> <p style="text-align: center;">2026-yil 1-son (27)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">2021-yildan chiqa boshlagan.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">OBUNA INDEKSI: 200117</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Manzil: Buxoro shahri, M.Iqbol ko'chasi, 11-uy, 2-bino, 403-xona.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">ilmiy va innovatsion nashri</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Jurnal oliy o'quv yurtlarining professor- o'qituvchilari, ilmiy tadqiqotchilar, ilmiy xodimlar, magistrantlar, talabalar, akademik litsey va kasb-hunar kollejlari hamda maktab o'qituvchilari, shuningdek, keng ommaga mo'ljallangan.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Jurnalda nazariy, ilmiy-metodik, muammoli maqolalar, fan va texnikaga oid yangiliklar, turli xabarlar chop etiladi.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Nashr uchun mas'ul: Gavhar XIDIROVA Muharrir: Navruz-Zoda Baxtiyor Negmatovich</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Jurnal tahririyat kompyuterida sahifalandi. Chop etish sifati uchun bosmaxona javobgar.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Bosishga ruxsat etildi 15.02.2026 Bosmaxonaga topshirish vaqti 20.02.2026 Qog'oz bichimi: 60x84. 1/8 Tezkor bosma usulda bosildi. Shartli bosma tabog'i – 12,0 Adadi – 100 nusxa Buyurtma №86. Bahosi kelishilgan narxda.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">“Sadriddin Salim Buxoriy” MCHJ bosmaxonasida chop etildi. Bosmaxona manzili: Buxoro shahri M.Iqbol ko'chasi 11-uy.</p> |
|---|--|---|