Yulduz Pirnazarovna Urunbayeva

Associate Professor (PhD), Samarkand Institute of Economics and Service

Aziza Ismailova

Student, Samarkand Institute of Economics and Service

THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC SIGNIFICANCE OF MUSEUM TOURISM IN IMPROVING THE WELL-BEING OF THE POPULATION

Abstract. The well-being of the population is characterized by such factors as the scale of the service sector, its share in key macroeconomic indicators, and the volume of services per capita. This article examines the role of museum tourism in improving the well-being of the population.

Keywords: museum, tourism, culture, education, values, population well-being, quality of life, demand, consumption, household income, wages, leisure time.

INTRODUCTION

At the current stage of social development, museum tourism is becoming an increasingly important area in connection with efforts to improve the well-being of the population, develop science, education, and culture, and strengthen international economic and social relations. In many countries around the world, museum tourism has emerged as a factor that influences various sectors of the economy and contributes to socio-economic development.

The socio-economic reforms and new economic relations taking place in Uzbekistan are creating broad opportunities for the development of museum tourism. This sector plays an important role in strengthening the country’s economic stability, preserving cultural heritage, and improving the living standards and well-being of the population.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Improving the well-being of the population is one of the primary objectives of any economic system. Consequently, social welfare and living standards have been

studied by numerous economists. In theoretical approaches to tourism, it is generally defined as the temporary movement of people away from their permanent places of residence and the set of relationships and services arising from this process.

Under contemporary conditions, factors affecting population well-being include the integration of global markets, the expansion of the movement of goods and services, the development of labor markets, environmental security, and the strengthening of social justice principles. Improvements in living standards increase people's professional and social engagement and encourage their active participation in economic processes. However, the role of museum tourism services in shaping the well-being and quality of life of the population has not been sufficiently explored in many economic studies. Therefore, this article focuses on the significance of museum tourism in this process.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study employs comparative and logical analysis, a systems approach, scientific abstraction, observation, generalization, statistical grouping, correlation and regression analysis, and forecasting methods. These methods are intended to explain the socio-economic nature of museum tourism and systematically identify the ways in which it affects population well-being.

ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Museums are scientific, educational, and cultural institutions that preserve and transmit the tangible and intangible heritage of previous generations to future generations. Every family may possess an object, photograph, or document that reflects its historical memory. Preserving such heritage and passing the associated knowledge on to younger generations helps ensure the continuity of national memory and cultural values. Objects and works of art preserved in museums elevate individual family heritage to the level of public and universal cultural wealth.

Museums of various types and specializations operate in Uzbekistan. For example, the State Museum of Nature of Uzbekistan was established on July 12, 1876, and is considered one of the oldest museums in Central Asia. Its scientific collections preserve materials related to natural history. The expansion of museum collections is associated with scientific expeditions, research activities, and the acquisition of new exhibits.

Museums play an important role in strengthening historical memory, broadening people's spiritual outlook, and fostering respect for national values. A person's spiritual development is also associated with the ability to understand and independently evaluate surrounding events and phenomena. Therefore, the effective use of museum heritage in education and upbringing is highly desirable.

A certain legal and organizational framework has been established in Uzbekistan to develop museum tourism, improve museum operations, enhance service quality, and introduce innovative approaches. Nevertheless, further consistent efforts are needed to improve the scope and quality of services, develop tourism infrastructure, and adopt international best practices.

The development of museum tourism can contribute to population well-being in several ways:

— Meeting the needs and demand of the population for museum tourism services.
— Organizing leisure time meaningfully and ensuring its effective use.
— Increasing employment in museums and related service sectors.
— Encouraging local entrepreneurship and service-related business activities.
— Increasing household incomes and strengthening economic activity in regional areas.

These areas are interconnected and affect population well-being indicators both directly and indirectly. Improving the quality of museum tourism services requires

training qualified personnel, expanding the range of services, using modern information technologies, and creating convenient conditions for visitors.

As household incomes and living standards rise, demand for services related to education, culture, art, and travel also increases. Museum tourism not only meets people's cultural needs but also helps them spend their leisure time meaningfully. At the same time, an increase in tourist flows can stimulate the development of tour guiding, transportation, catering, retail, handicrafts, and other services.

Museum tourism contributes to promoting national heritage, preserving historical and cultural sites, strengthening the economic activity of local communities, and increasing the attractiveness of regions. Museums should therefore be viewed not merely as places where exhibits are stored, but as important institutions that bring together education, culture, tourism, and economic development.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Museum tourism is becoming increasingly important for the country's economic and social development. It creates opportunities not only to preserve and promote cultural heritage but also to improve population well-being, develop the service sector, and expand employment.

Based on the findings of the analysis, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. Expand the range of services provided by museums and continuously improve their quality.
2. Increase the use of digital technologies, virtual tours, and interactive exhibitions.
3. Strengthen cooperation among museums, educational institutions, tourism organizations, and local entrepreneurs.
4. Train qualified tour guides and museum staff and improve their professional skills.

5. Promote national history, traditions, and cultural values more widely among young people and international tourists.
6. Create additional jobs by developing local handicrafts, retail, and other services around museums.

In conclusion, the systematic development of museum tourism helps meet the cultural needs of the population, make leisure time more meaningful, strengthen regional economic activity, and improve quality of life. Therefore, the development of this sector should be approached as an area in which economic and spiritual progress are closely interconnected.

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