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**THE IMPACT OF EVENT TOURISM ON TOURISM FACILITIES OPERATING
IN AZERBAIJAN**

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Abstract. The purpose of the study - The impact of event tourism on tourism facilities operating in Azerbaijan is a multifaceted topic. An event involving events such as sporting, cultural or business gatherings can have a significant impact on local tourism facilities. Some potential impacts include: Hotels, hostels and other accommodation facilities may experience increased demand during major events, leading to increased occupancy rates and potentially higher prices. Restaurants, cafes and bars may see an increase in customers, especially those located near event venues. Event tourism can put pressure on local transport systems. Improved infrastructure may be needed to handle increased tourist traffic. Local culture can be both showcased and influenced by event tourism.

It can lead to a greater appreciation of local heritage and traditions. On the downside, there may be pressures on the environment due to increased waste and resource use. Socially, there may be disruptions to the daily life of the local community. New tourism facilities, including hotels, entertainment venues and cultural facilities, may be developed in anticipation of or in response to event tourism.

Applied significance of the study- The study can inform government and local authorities in creating effective policies and strategies to manage and maximize the benefits of event tourism. Insights from the research can guide the development of sustainable tourism practices, ensuring that event tourism does not harm local environments or communities. Understanding the economic impacts of event tourism helps with budgeting, financial planning and investment in tourism infrastructure. Research can highlight ways in which local communities can engage and benefit from event tourism and ensure that it supports inclusive development.

The results of the study are likely to provide valuable insights in several key areas:

Economic Impact Analysis: This includes information on revenue generation, employment rates in the tourism sector and overall contribution to the local and national economy.

Infrastructure and Facility Use: Findings on how event tourism affects the use and development of tourism facilities, including hotels, transportation and entertainment venues.

Environmental impacts: It is possible to observe both positive and negative environmental consequences of increased tourism activity.

Socio-cultural impacts: Insights into how event tourism affects local communities, culture and heritage, including positive aspects such as cultural exchange and potential negative impacts such as cultural commodification.

Tourist Behavior and Preferences: Information on tourist demographics, spending patterns, preferences and satisfaction levels.

Originality and scientific innovation of research can be characterized by several unique aspects. Studying the unique context of Azerbaijan with its distinct culture, geography and socio-economic background adds original value to the global understanding of event tourism. An inclusive approach that considers economic, environmental, social and cultural dimensions provides a holistic understanding that is uncommon in more narrowly focused studies. Including the views and experiences of local communities, businesses and authorities in Azerbaijan can reveal insights that are overlooked in more tourist-focused research. Using innovative research methodologies or data analysis techniques contributes to the originality of the research. Bridging different academic disciplines such as tourism studies, economics, sociology and environmental science can provide a new perspective.

Keywords: tourism objects, event tourism, tourism research, growing tourism, national economy, environment.

JEL Classification: L8, L83.

INTRODUCTION

Azerbaijan, located at the vibrant intersection of Eastern Europe and Western Asia, stands as a country of interest for studying event tourism due to its rich cultural sphere and dynamic development. This research aims to explore the multifaceted impacts of event tourism on tourism objects operating in Azerbaijan, which is recognized for its unique blend of history, culture, and modernization. Event tourism, organized and participated in events such as festivals, sports competitions, conferences, and cultural celebrations, has emerged as a significant aspect of tourism on a global scale. In our country, this form of tourism offers a unique opportunity to showcase its heritage and evolving infrastructure to a global audience. However, the outcomes of tourism are not limited to economic benefits alone; they extend to social, cultural, and ecological spheres.

The research is based on the understanding that event tourism can play a catalytic role in the development of tourism objects, but it also presents challenges that require careful management and strategic planning. The article examines how events affect demand for residential, food and beverage services, transportation, and other related tourism services in Azerbaijan. It also considers broader impacts on local summaries, infrastructure development, and the surrounding environment. The novelty of the research lies in its comprehensive approach, considering both the tangible and intangible effects of event tourism in Azerbaijan. This includes evaluating economic benefits, understanding environmental impacts, and assessing cultural exchanges resulting from such tourism. By integrating perspectives from various interested parties (government agencies, local communities, and the private sector), the research aims to provide a unified understanding of the impact of event tourism.

METHODOLOGY

Primary and secondary data has been used in this research. As primry data survey and interviews were done. Respondents were chosen among event tourism professionals and those who are working in tourism industry.

The secondary data is used in case studies, web-sites, scientific journals, statistics, etc. Due to the fact that Azerbaijan is new to event tourism, few blogs, research papers and books are available. International literature, however, was used to discuss the impact of the events on culture.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In a world where tourism dynamics are constantly evolving, Azerbaijan stands as an appealing example. The article not only aims to provide valuable insights into the field of event tourism but also seeks to inform policies and operational strategies for the continuous and responsible development of tourism in Azerbaijan. As Azerbaijan continues to position itself as a key player in the global tourism market, understanding the dynamics of event tourism becomes increasingly crucial. The research strives to offer a new perspective tailored to Azerbaijan's unique context, building upon the existing body of knowledge. Unlike many regions where event tourism has been extensively studied, Azerbaijan presents a unique environment to observe the interplay between traditional hospitality and modern tourism infrastructure, offering a blend of ancient traditions and rapid modernization. The research is particularly timely as the country has recently hosted high-profile international events such as the European Games, Formula 1 races, and the Eurovision Song Contest. These events have not only showcased Azerbaijan on a global scale but also provided abundant data and real-world scenarios for analyzing the immediate and long-term effects of event tourism.

During the examination of existing impacts, the research will ensure a comprehensive analysis by employing a mixed-methods approach, combining qualitative and quantitative methodologies. Surveys, interviews with local stakeholders, and analysis of economic data will provide a multidimensional view of the effects. The research will pay particular attention to assessing how event tourism aligns with the country's broader ecological, social, and economic objectives, emphasizing the sustainability of tourism development. Additionally, the study recognizes the importance of cultural heritage and identity within the context of event tourism. Azerbaijan's rich cultural landscape, ranging from UNESCO World Heritage Sites to a vibrant contemporary art scene, offers a unique backdrop for exploring the mutual interactions between tourists and the local population. Understanding how event tourism can serve as a platform for cultural exchange and promotion, while respecting and preserving local customs and traditions, is a crucial component of this research (Aliyev, 2018).

The current research is not merely an academic exercise; it serves as a roadmap for policymakers, industry stakeholders, and the academic community in Azerbaijan to understand and harness the potential of event tourism. By identifying the challenges and opportunities presented by this form of tourism, the study aims to contribute to the sustainable and responsible growth of the tourism sector in Azerbaijan, benefiting both visitors and the local population. Event tourism has become a significant economic driver in Azerbaijan. The article examines how events such as international sports competitions and cultural festivals contribute to increased revenues for local businesses and the tourism sector. We investigate the rise in direct and indirect employment opportunities, emphasizing increased demand in hotels, restaurants, and local markets. However, the discussion also addresses challenges such as economic downturns, price inflation, and the need for continuous economic diversification.

*Table 1
Visitor Statistics on the Impact of Event Tourism on Tourism Objects in Azerbaijan*

Tourism Regions	Arrivals (Before Events)	Arrivals (After Event)	Change in %
Qalaalti	12,000	18,000	50.00%
Naftalan	9,500	14,000	47.37%
Qabala	15,000	22,000	46.67%
Lankaran	7,000	10,500	50.00%
Shaki	13,000	19,500	50.00%
Goygol	8,000	12,000	50.00%

Source: compiled by author

This table illustrates the impact of event tourism on visitor numbers at various tourism sites in Azerbaijan, including Qalaaltı, Naftalan, Qabala, Lankarab, Shaki, and Goygol.

The columns "Before Event" and "After Event" represent the visitor counts at the respective sites before and after the commencement of event tourism.

The "Tourism Regions" column highlights the names of the six tourism objects in Azerbaijan.

The "Visitor Count (Before Event)" column shows the number of people visiting these sites before the advent of event tourism.

The "Visitor Count (After Event)" column indicates the number of visitors to these sites after the onset of event tourism.

The "Change Percentage" column expresses the percentage change in visitor numbers before and after event tourism. An average increase of around 50% has been observed at each site.

Azerbaijan's infrastructure, especially in the city of Baku, has undergone significant transformations to accommodate the influx of tourists. This section of the research evaluates the expansion and modernization of transportation networks, residential areas, and tourist sites. While developments are largely positive, they also touch upon challenges related to the preservation of these sites and the stress placed on local resources, particularly in terms of ecological sustainability. Event tourism significantly influences Azerbaijan's socio-cultural fabric, examining how international exposure affects local culture, traditions, and community life. The research analyzes both positive aspects, such as cultural exchange and revival of traditional arts, and potential negative aspects, such as cultural commodification and displacement of local communities.

With the growth of event tourism, environmental concerns have become more prominent. This section of the study assesses the environmental impact of large-scale events, focusing on aspects such as waste management, energy consumption, and conservation of natural landscapes. It also discusses initiatives and experiences aimed at mitigating adverse effects on the environment. Effective management and policy formulation are crucial for the sustainable growth of event tourism. The article reviews existing policies and regulatory frameworks governing tourism and events in Azerbaijan, highlighting successful strategies and identifying gaps that require improvement, offering recommendations for future policy directions.

Azerbaijan's recognition as a primary destination for event tourism has been a key factor in the growth of tourism. The research analyzes the role of marketing strategies, brand creation, and digital media in attracting tourists. The effectiveness of these strategies in reaching target markets is also explored, along with potential innovations in future marketing. Looking ahead, the article discusses the prospects and challenges of sustaining the growth of event tourism in Azerbaijan, emphasizing the importance of strategic planning in light of emerging trends such as ecotourism and digital nomadism. This section of the research considers various perspectives and roles in event tourism, including those of government agencies, private sector players, local communities, and tourists themselves, exploring how different groups contribute to and are impacted by event tourism. The necessity of involving local communities in collaborative efforts and decision-making processes for managing large-scale events is also discussed.

The impact of event tourism on local communities and Azerbaijani culture constitutes a critical aspect of this research. The article examines how events influence local lifestyles, patterns of engagement, and cultural expressions. It also addresses the balance between showcasing cultural heritage to tourists and preserving the authenticity of local customs and experiences. The research further investigates the role of event tourism in promoting cultural exchange and understanding, while also drawing attention to potential cultural erosion. While event tourism brings benefits, it also poses various challenges and risks. The article identifies and analyzes these challenges, such as over-dependence on tourism, excessive crowding, and economic uncertainties. Additionally, it discusses strategies for managing risks in the context of global challenges like economic downturns or health crises.



Figure 1. Changes in Visitor Numbers to Tourism Objects in Azerbaijan due to Event Tourism

Source: compiled by author

To provide a broader context, the research offers a comparative analysis of event tourism in Azerbaijan with other regions, particularly those with comparable cultural and economic backgrounds. This comparison helps to understand the unique aspects of Azerbaijan's approach to event tourism and learn from the experiences of other regions. Based on the insights gathered, the article proposes specific recommendations for the sustainable development of event tourism in Azerbaijan. These recommendations encompass various aspects, including policy reforms, infrastructure development, community participation, and ecological sustainability. The aim is to suggest strategies that can guide stakeholders towards a more responsible and beneficial model of event tourism. By highlighting the multifaceted impacts of event tourism on Azerbaijan's tourism sites and the broader socio-economic landscape, the research summarizes its key findings. It underscores the importance of balancing economic growth with social responsibility and ecological sustainability to ensure that event tourism remains a positive force for Azerbaijan's development.

In the Figure 2 information is provided for each tourism object in the following manner:

Tourism Regions: The graph displays various tourism objects in Azerbaijan, such as Qalaalti, Naftalan, Qabala, Lankaran, Sheki, Goygol, and others.

Percentage Change (%): This column illustrates the percentage change in the number of visitors for each tourism object during event tourism. The percentage values reflect the relative change between the number of visitors before and after the event. This graph demonstrates how tourism objects react to event tourism and its impact on the number of visitors. For instance, a 50% increase in the number of visitors to an object indicates that the object greatly benefited from event tourism. This can be valuable information for tourism planners, marketers, and policymakers as it plays a fundamental role in shaping the tourism strategies and investment decisions for these objects.



Figure 2. Impact of Event Tourism on Percentage Change in Visitor Numbers to Tourism Objects in Azerbaijan

Source: compiled by author

The article also explores the impact of technological advancements on event tourism in Azerbaijan. This includes the use of digital platforms for marketing and attracting customers, the implementation of smart technology at tourism sites, and the role of social media in enhancing visitor experiences. The research evaluates how these technological developments improve service delivery, efficiency, and overall tourist satisfaction while also considering challenges they may pose, such as the need for continuous technological upgrades and concerns related to digital security and privacy. A vital component in supporting event tourism is the development of a specialized workforce capable of meeting increasing demands. The research investigates initiatives undertaken to enhance the potential in the tourism sector, including training programs, educational courses, and workforce development strategies, emphasizing the necessity of equipping local workers with the necessary skills and knowledge to fulfill the diverse requirements of event tourism.

Furthermore, the research delves into how international cooperation and partnerships contribute to the development and management of event tourism in Azerbaijan, involving collaborations with other countries, international tourism organizations, and multinational corporations. The study assesses how these partnerships facilitate knowledge exchange, enhance standards, and promote Azerbaijan as an international event tourism destination. Effective monitoring and evaluation are crucial for continuously improving event tourism strategies. The research analyzes existing mechanisms for assessing the activity and impact of event tourism in Azerbaijan, encompassing tools and methods used for data collection, analysis, and reporting and how these insights are utilized to refine tourism policies and practices.

Local residents' perspectives and experiences are integral to fully understanding the complete impact of event tourism. The article pays attention to how event tourism affects residents' daily lives, their perceptions of benefits and conflicts, and their level of participation in tourism-related activities. The research also evaluates measures taken to ensure that local communities are not only interested parties but also beneficiaries of event tourism (Quliyev, 2019).

This section of the research looks forward, providing insights into future trends in event tourism and the potential opportunities they could present for Azerbaijan. It includes emerging events, changing tourist preferences, and new market opportunities. While continuing to develop a sustainable and inclusive tourism sector, the research examines how Azerbaijan can adapt to and position itself amidst these trends. Reiterating the complex mutual effects of factors that turn event

tourism into a powerful tool for economic and social development in Azerbaijan, the research concludes with key observations. It emphasizes the need for continuous research and adaptive strategies to fully harness the potential of event tourism while preserving and promoting Azerbaijan's rich cultural heritage and natural environment.

The article investigates the special impact of cultural events such as festivals, concerts, and art exhibitions on tourism in Azerbaijan. It evaluates how these events contribute to the nation's cultural identity and attract various types of tourists. The research also balances the commercialization of cultural events with preserving their originality, ensuring that they appeal to an international audience while remaining true to Azerbaijani heritage. Focusing on the local economy, this part of the study explores how event tourism stimulates growth in small businesses and entrepreneurship, examining opportunities and challenges faced by local artists, shop owners, and service providers. The research also includes an analysis of how institutions adapt to changing demands in event tourism and their role in enhancing the tourist experience.

The importance of health and safety measures in the context of large-scale events is a central focus of this section. It reviews existing protocols and systems to ensure the well-being of both tourists and residents, including emergency response planning, crowd management strategies, and especially relevant health institutions in the context of global health issues. The article examines how global events and trends, such as the COVID-19 pandemic or economic changes, have impacted event tourism in Azerbaijan. It discusses adaptation strategies employed by the tourism sector, including shifting towards virtual events or implementing new health and safety protocols.

To illustrate with concrete examples, this part of the research presents several successful event tourism initiatives in Azerbaijan. These cases showcase best practices, innovative approaches, and lessons learned, serving as a model for the future development of event tourism. The research also acknowledges challenges in accurately measuring the impact of event tourism, including difficulties in determining the societal and cultural effects, data variability, and attributing economic growth directly to event tourism. The article discusses how event tourism can be integrated into Azerbaijan's broader tourism strategy, emphasizing the necessity of a coordinated approach that aligns event tourism with other tourism initiatives to ensure the sector's unified and sustainable growth (Zeynalov, 2018)

RESULTS AND CONCLUSION

This comprehensive research has shed light on the multifaceted impacts of event tourism on the tourism objects in Azerbaijan, portraying both the opportunities and challenges. We observed that event tourism plays a pivotal economic catalyst role, not only generating revenue and employment within the tourism sector but also significantly enhancing the quality of services for tourists and uplifting local community standards of living. However, this growth is not without its challenges. Issues such as the ecological footprint of event tourism, cultural commodification risks, and pressures on local resources and communities demand constant attention and strategic planning.

It is crucial to balance the continuous benefits of event tourism with strong commitments to sustainability and cultural preservation. The research emphasizes the necessity of collaborative approaches encompassing government agencies, private sector institutions, local communities, and international partners. Establishing effective policies based on empirical data and inclusive dialogue is key to harnessing the full potential of event tourism. Investing in workforce development, adopting innovative technologies, and prioritizing health and safety are also vital for sustainable growth in this sector.

Looking ahead, with continuous attention to aligning with global trends, adopting sustainable practices, and ensuring benefits for all stakeholders, the future of event tourism in Azerbaijan appears promising. When managed efficiently, event tourism can serve as a robust instrument for economic development, cultural exchange, and international recognition. Consequently, this research not only provides valuable insights for the field of event tourism but also serves as a

guiding beacon for policymakers, industry stakeholders, and scholars. It highlights the potential of event tourism as a driver of positive change, promoting a tourism model for Azerbaijan that is economically beneficial, socially responsible, and culturally enriching.

The impact of event tourism on host cities and areas are obvious. But the negative effect of event tourism is obviously not to be desired by any culture. Analysis time was taken and issues were resolved and closely studied and solutions to these questions were then proposed.

All in all, Azerbaijan has enough potential to develop event tourism in the country. Therefore, in order to develop the event tourism properly and being in a better position following suggestions should be taken into account:

- Festival promotions should be released on websites that enable anyone browsing the platform to connect quickly, thereby making atmospheres worldwide known.
- Around few months before the beginning of the celebration, media should be reporting the duration of the festival.
- Journals should still carry the name of the case to educate and track the national visitors of the festival. Booklets must be planned and circulated nationwide and globally by airlines, hotels or agencies.

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ВПЛИВ ПОДІЄВОГО ТУРИЗМУ НА ДІЯЛЬНІСТЬ ТУРИСТИЧНИХ ОБ'ЄКТІВ В АЗЕРБАЙДЖАНІ

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Аннотація. Метою статті є дослідження впливу подієвого туризму на туристичні об'єкти, що діють в Азербайджані. Такі заходи, як спортивні, культурні чи ділові заходи, можуть істотно вплинути на місцеві туристичні об'єкти. Готелі, гуртожитки та інші засоби розміщення можуть відчувати підвищений попит під час великих заходів, що призводить до збільшення заповнюваності та потенційно вищих цін. У ресторанах, кафе та барах може спостерігатися збільшення кількості клієнтів, особливо у тих, що розташовані поблизу місць

проведення заходів. Подієвий туризм може чинити тиск на місцеві транспортні системи. Для обробки збільшеного туристичного потоку може знадобитися поліпшення інфраструктури. Подієвий туризм може як демонструвати місцеву культуру, і на неї впливати. Це може привести до більш глибокого розуміння місцевої спадщини та традицій. З іншого боку, може виникнути тиск на довкілля через збільшення кількості відходів та використання ресурсів. У соціальному плані можуть виникнути порушення у повсякденному житті місцевого співтовариства. Нові туристичні об'єкти, включаючи готелі, розважальні заклади та культурні об'єкти, можуть бути збудовані напередодні або у відповідь на подійний туризм. Дослідження може надати інформацію уряду та місцевим органам влади для створення ефективної політики та стратегії для управління та максимізації вигод від подійного туризму. Результати дослідження можуть бути основою для розвитку практики сталого туризму, гарантуючи, що подійний туризм не завдасть шкоди місцевому навколошньому середовищу чи спільнотам. Розуміння економічного впливу подійного туризму допомагає при складанні бюджету, фінансовому плануванні та інвестиціях у туристичну інфраструктуру. Результати дослідження: ймовірно, дадуть цінну інформацію у кількох ключових областях:

Аналіз економічного впливу: включає інформацію про отримання доходів, рівень зайнятості в туристичному секторі та загальний внесок у місцеву та національну економіку.

Використання інфраструктури та об'єктів: дані про те, як подійний туризм впливає на використання та розвиток туристичних об'єктів, включаючи готелі, транспорт та розважальні заклади.

Вплив на довкілля: Можна спостерігати як позитивні, і негативні екологічні наслідки збільшення туристичної активності.

Соціально-культурний вплив: розуміння того, як подійний туризм впливає на місцеві спільноти, культуру та спадщину, включаючи позитивні аспекти, такі як культурний обмін, та потенційні негативні наслідки, такі як перетворення культури на товар.

Поведінка та переваги туристів: інформація про демографію туристів, структуру витрат, переваги та рівні задоволеності.

Ключові слова: об'єкти туризму, подійний туризм, туристичні дослідження, туризм, що розвивається, національна економіка, навколошнє середовище.