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Кыргызстан'da turizm eğitiminin mevcut durumu, sorunları ve çözüm önerileri

Образование в сфере туризма в Кыргызстане: текущее состояние, проблемы и пути их решения.

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THE IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNITY BASED TOURISM IN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT OF LOCAL POPULATION: KYRGYZSTAN CASE

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ABSTRACT
Tourism is one of the world’s fastest growing industries. Tourism industry can create employment opportunities, environmental consciousness and protection, and influx of foreign currency etc. to the host nations.
However, it has been recognized that many tourism policies developed from central governments without local involvement fail to cater for sensitivities and aspirations of the communities that tourists visit.
On the other end, community-based tourism (CBT) has been shown to foster local development in developing countries.
As long as tourism development is well planned and monitored, CBT organizations can be an effective means of economic growth, cultural affirmation and environmental protection without compromising a region’s unique attractions.
In both the Namibian and Kyrgyz cases, an international donor assisted in the creation of a CBT network.
This study evaluates community based tourism. Empirical research has been conducted to find out development and possible effects of CBT in Kyrgyzstan.

Key words: Community-based tourism, Sustainable development, Local communities, Economic and social development, Social – cultural heritage

TOPLUM TEMELLI TURİZMİN YEREL NÜFUSUN EKONOMİK VE SOSYAL KALKINMASINDAKI ÖNEMİ: KIRGIZİSTAN ÖRNEĞİ

ÖZET
Turizm dünyanın en hızlı büyüyen endüstrilerinden birisidir. Turizm endüstrisinin, turist kabul eden ülkeler için, istihdam fırsatları yaratılması, çevre bilinci oluşması ile çevrenin korunması ve geliştirilmesi, döviz girisiğinin artması ve bunun gibi birçok önemli katkı bulunmaktadır.
Bununla birlikte, birçok turizm politikası, turistlerin ziyaret ettikleri yörelerin beklentileri, ihtiyaçları ve duyarlıklarını göz önüne alınmadan merkezi hükümetler tarafından oluşturulmaktadır.
Diğer tarafta, toplum temelli turizm özellikle gelişmekte olan ülkelerde yerel kalkınmayı sağlaymayı hedeflemektedir.

Turizm kalkınması iyi bir şekilde planlanıp yönetildiği taktirde, toplum temelli turizm organizasyonları, bölgenin turizm çesitliliklerini tehlikeye atmadan, bölgenin ekonomik kalkınmasında, kültürel gelişmesinde ve çevrenin korunmasında önemli roller oynamaklar.
Hem Nabibya hem de Kırgızistan öməklərinde uluslararası yardım organizasyonları toplum temelli turizm ağ oluşturulmasına yardımcı olmuşlardır.
Bu çalışma; toplum temelli turizm kavramı açıklanmaktadır, toplum temelli turizmin sürdürülebilir turizm kalkınmasındaki yeri ve önemi vurgulanmaya çalışmaktadır.

Bunun yanında, özellikle gelişmekte olan ülkelerde, yerel toplulukların ekonomik ve kültürel gelişmesi, turizmin en önde gelen girdilerinden olan doğal ortamin korunup geliştirilmesi bakımdan toplum temelli turizmin sağlayacağı katkılar idelemenmeye çalışmaktadır.

Çalışmanın uygulama bölümünde de toplum temelli turizmin, 2007 yılına kadar
1. INTRODUCTION

Tourism is one of the world’s fastest growing industries and a major source of foreign exchange for many developing countries. Employment opportunities, environmental consciousness and protection, and an influx of foreign currency to the host nation are just a few examples of the contributions that the tourism industry can make to the economy of a country. (Aydın and Boz 2006:1) However it has been recognized that many tourism policies developed from central governments without local involvement fail to cater for the sensibilities and aspirations of the communities that tourists visit. (Harris and Vogel, 2007:2)

The influence of travel and tourism on a community is significant. Most obviously, tourists bring revenue. However, how this revenue is attracted and the number of people who reap the benefits vary greatly. So does the way the money is spent and how it is reinvested. At one extreme, large scale, all-inclusive resorts owned and operated by corporations may have little or no economic influence on a community. Tourists may be flown in, bused to the site, kept “secure” behind patrolled fences, and in some cases given neither the encouragement nor opportunity to spend time or money beyond the borders of the resort. People from the community may be offered only low-skilled minimum wage jobs. In these extreme cases, tourism becomes a highly sanitized, in-resort experience. The influence of this type of resort on the community is minimal. In effect, there are tourists, but no tourism industry. (Hatton 2007:1.2)

In order to diminish negative impacts of tourism policies, significantly though, the 1999 meeting of the UN Commission on Sustainable Development urged governments to “maximize the potential of tourism for eradicating poverty by developing appropriate strategies in co-operation with all major groups, indigenous and local communities.” (Roe, 2001:2)

In order to raise awareness of the positive impacts of tourism and to become widespread of tourism revenues WTO launched a campaign. The “Tourism Enriches” campaign was launched at the First World Conference on Tourism Communications (TOURCOM) end of January 2004 in Madrid. The aims of “Tourism Enriches” campaign are to promote tourism as a basic human right and way of life, to stimulate communication about the benefits of tourism as the most prospective economic activity for the local communities and countries, to enhance cooperation between destinations and the tourism industry with the local, regional and international media and to link individual tourism entities to the larger community of international tourism. (WTO, 2007:1)

With its declaration WTO notes that “The growing socioeconomic importance of tourism all over the world and especially in many developing countries; The effective contribution of tourism to the achievement of several Millenium Development Goals, as already recognized by the WSSD in Johannesburg and the Brussels Programme of Action, especially those relating to poverty alleviation, environmental conservation and creation of
employment opportunities for women, indigenous communities and young people” (WTO, 2005:1)

2. THE COMMUNITY-BASED TOURISM INDUSTRY

The importance of Community-Based Tourism (CBT) increases over time, while countries and public being aware of positive and negative impacts of tourism industry. The objectives of CBT are suitable to the aims of UN Commission on Sustainable Development and the “Tourism Enriches” campaign and declaration of WTO which can be summarized as “to gain local economic development, reach some forms of participation, provide socially and environmentally responsible experience for visitors, and bring positive effect on the conservation of natural and cultural sources. (IGES, 2007:143)

2.1. Definition of Community-Based Tourism

Community-based tourism implicates different subjects and can be defined in different ways such as;

Community tourism (sometimes called community-based tourism) is a form of tourism which aims to include and benefit local communities, particularly indigenous peoples and villagers in the rural. (Tourism Concern, 2007:1)

A community by definition implies individuals with some kind of collective responsibility, and the ability to make decisions by representative bodies. Community based tourism is tourism in which local residents (often rural, poor and economically marginalized) invite tourists to visit their communities with the provision of overnight accommodation. (Responsible Travel, 2007:1)

The community tourism industry is, quite simply, the collection of businesses that creates and sells a variety of goods and services to visitors. The development of these industries is a growing phenomenon as communities respond to the opportunities, and in some cases the threats, of tourism. (Hatton 2007:2)

According to World Wildlife Fund” “CBT is a form of tourism where the local community has a substantial control over and involvement in its development and management; and a major proportion of the benefits remain within the community” (Driskel, 2006:6)

2.2. Successful Implementation of CBT

Successful CBT implementation strategy must incorporate detailed preimplementation feasibility studies, appropriate training for involved locals, a regional CBT network with guaranteed initial technical and monetary support and affective monitoring and evaluation mechanisms. As well as tourism development is well planned and monitored, CBT organizations can be an effective means of economic growth, cultural affirmation and environmental protection without compromising a region’s unique attractions. (Driskel, 2006:7)

Another theme is that of leadership. Often the development of community-based tourism can be linked to the initial spark and leadership of one person or a small group. Fostering change and development on a community-wide scale is not easy. It requires someone with vision, imagination, and great energy.

In other cases, local and regional governments have provided leadership to develop or expand community-based tourism. (Hatton 2007:4)
2.3. Goals of CBT

International organizations and donors have increasingly bet supporting sustainable tourism projects. These projects aim to assist rural poor in utilizing their resources at hand, such as cultural heritage and wildlife, to capitalize on the growing international tourism market. (Akunan and others, 2003:1). Within this approach

Community-based tourism typically subscribes to a number of broadly defined goals. Perhaps most important, community-based tourism is socially sustainable. This means the tourism activities are developed and operated, for the most part, by local community members, and certainly with their consent and support. This is not to suggest that there aren’t dissenting views on tourism development when carried out at the local level, but it does imply that there is a forum for debate, and that the community encourages participation. It’s also important that a reasonable share of the revenues are enjoyed by the community in one way or another. This may include revenue streams which go to co-ops, joint ventures, community associations, businesses that widely employ local people, or to a range of entrepreneurs starting or operating small- and medium-sized enterprises. (Hatton 2002:2)

Perhaps more importantly for poverty reduction efforts, tourism has the potential to channel investments directly to the rural communities where poverty is concentrated (URT, 2002). This can be done through CBT, which consists of tourism activities carried out on community lands in partnership with local people. CBT is important not only for rural poverty reduction efforts but also in terms of diversifying the tourism industry itself. (Akunaay and others, 2003:2)

2.4. Benefits of CBT

2.4.1 Tourism that benefits local people

Community-based development empower people to be more aware of the value of their community assets – their culture, heritage, cuisine and lifestyle. It mobilizes them to convert these into income generating projects while offering a more diverse and worthwhile experience to visitors. Every citizen is a potential business partner to be trained in small business management, environmental awareness product development and marketing. This type of people-centered’ tourism promotes a sense of ‘ownership’ which augurs well for the industry’s sustainability. (TPDCO, 2007:1) For instance, villagers might host tourists in their village, managing the scheme communally and sharing the profits. There are many types of community tourism project, including many in which the ‘community’ works with a commercial tour operator, but all community tourism projects should give local people a fair share of the benefits/profits and a say in deciding how incoming tourism is managed. (Tourism Concern, 2007:1)

The residents earn income as land managers, entrepreneurs, service and produce providers, and employees. At least part of the tourist income is set aside for projects which provide benefits to the community as a whole. (Responsible Travel 2007:1)

Another theme linked to the development of community-based tourism is the growth of employment opportunities, particularly for women, young people and aboriginals. For many people in societies throughout the world, the opportunity to earn money doesn’t come easily. Entrepreneurs of all sorts, including business people, artists, educators, and others who present or exemplify their culture and crafts, develop rapidly within the vicinity of any
community-based tourism project, giving birth to all sorts of jobs and job opportunities. (Hatton 2007:5-6)

2.4.2. Tourism that benefits tourists

These tours open up a world of adventure and opportunity. Visit the Amazon… trek through the Andes or the Sinai… experience the magic of the central Australian desert… Good community-based tours take you beyond mainstream tourism. You’ll meet people from different countries and learn far more about them and their culture than on conventional tours. You’ll feel better knowing that your visit is genuinely helping your hosts. And if you want to simply lie on a beach… well, there are tours here that feature some of the best beaches on the planet. (Tourism Concern, 2007:1)

Community based tourism enables the tourist to discover local habitats and wildlife, and celebrates and respects traditional cultures, rituals and wisdom. The community will be aware of the commercial and social value placed on their natural and cultural heritage through tourism, and this will foster community based conservation of these resources. (Responsible Travel 2007:1)

2.4.3. Tourism that benefits natural and socio cultural environments

Another important feature of community-based tourism is its respect for local culture, heritage and traditions. Often, community-based tourism actually reinforces and sometimes rescues these. Similarly, community-based tourism implies respect and concern for the natural heritage, particularly where the environment is one of the attractions. (Hatton 2007:2)

Community tourism promoters need to evaluate natural resources in an area and find what is special locally, and market those resources. A community must have a plan to protect their resources before they use them, or risk destruction of the resources which attract tourists. (OSES, 2007:4)

2.5. Properties of CBT

According to Tourism Concern CBT should have following properties: 1. Be run with the involvement and consent of local communities. (Local people should participate in planning and managing the tour.) 2. Give a fair share of profits back to the local community. (Ideally this will include community projects (health, schools, etc.).) 3. Involve communities rather than individuals. (Working with individuals can disrupt social structures.) 4. Be environmentally sustainable (Local people must be involved if conservation projects are to succeed.) 5. Respect traditional culture and social structures. 6. Have mechanisms to help communities cope with the impact of western tourists. 7. Keep groups small to minimize cultural / environmental impact. 8. Brief tourists before the trip on appropriate behaviour. 9. Not make local people perform inappropriate ceremonies, etc. 10. Leave communities alone if they don’t want tourism. (People should have the right to say ‘no’ to tourism.). (Tourism Concern, 2007:1)

2.6. CBT and Sustainable Tourism

As we can understand from definitions, CBT and Sustainable Tourism shares similar values. (Figure 1.)

“Sustainable tourism” is difficult to define. It means different things in different contexts. For example it might refer only to environmental sustainability or only to economic viability. Here we describe sustainable tourism as “an enterprise that achieves an
effective balance between the environmental, economic, and socio-cultural aspects of tourism development in order to guarantee long-term benefits to recipient communities. (Driskel, 2006:5-6)

The World Tourism Organization defined sustainable tourism as early as 1988 as “leading to the management of all resources in such a way that economic, social and aesthetic needs can be fulfilled while maintaining cultural integrity, essential ecological processes, biological diversity and life support systems.” (Roe, 2001:2)

Figure- 1: Concept of Sustainable Development for Community – Based Tourism in Protected Area


3. TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN KYRGYZSTAN

Tourism industry is an initial and growing sector in Kyrgyzstan. During the last few years this growth was quite obvious. The number of tourists between 2002 and 2005 increased 2.3 times, from 139,600 to 319,300 tourists. Consequently, the export of tourist services increased from 35.7 millions to 71.6 millions USD. (Смакунова, 2007)

According to Border Guards data, in the first 9 months of 2006 there were 900,000 incoming tourists. This is a 21.9 % increase when compared to 2005.

About 80% of these were holidaymakers from CIS countries, including 60% from Kazakhstan, Russia (15%) and Uzbekistan (3%). About 20% of tourists were Kyrgyz citizens. Added value in tourism was 2883.9 millions soms in 2006, 28.8 % higher than the one in 2004 and 23.2% higher than the value in 2005. (Kyrgyz Tourism Today: 2007)

Tourism in the Republic continues to develop. Kyrgyzstan has great potential to attract not only regional, but also international tourists and tourism is already attracting...
internal and external investment and creating new jobs that are very important for the Republic and the population. Tourism in the Republic continues to develop. Kyrgyzstan has a great potential to attract not only regional, but also international tourists and tourism is already attracting the internal and external investment and creating new jobs that are very important for the Republic and the population. (Tourism Market in Kyrgyzstan, 2006:2)

In recent years, thanks to the state support, and a fortunate state of affairs in world markets, international tourism is playing an important role in the republic, through contributing to the socio-economic development of the state. On the initiative of the President, tourism has become a key segment in the economic development of Kyrgyzstan as a part of the Country Development Strategy (CDS) for 2006-2010 and tourism industry was designated an important part of the economy of Kyrgyzstan, having distinct export potential and increasing the state budget. (Kyrgyz Tourism Today, 2007)

3.1. CBT in Kyrgyzstan

There are some successful CBT networks established with international donor assistance. Two of them are the Namibian Community-Based Tourism Association originating from USAID project, and the Kyrgyz Community-Based Tourism Association founded by Helvetas of Switzerland. In both cases, similar strategies were used to improve the living level of local citizens through alternative tourism. In both the Namibian and Kyrgyz cases, and international donor assisted in the creation of a CBT network, but with a 3-5 year goal of establishing locally managed and financially sustainable organization. (Driskel, 2006:8)

The Kyrgyz Community Based Tourism Association "Hospitality Kyrgyzstan (KCBTA) is a membership-based association of community based tourism enterprises in rural Kyrgyzstan. The association provides support to its member organizations by marketing, training and organizational development and also represents its member’s interests in policy development at the national level and in negotiations with the mainstream tourism industry (Helvetas, 2007).

KCBTA is located in the capital Bishkek, KCBTA is an umbrella association uniting 17 diverse destination communities ("CBT groups") plus a 5-group association of shepherd families offering jailoo (yurt) tourism ("Shepherds’ Life"). The CBT association was registered on January 3, 2003 with the support of Helvetas Kyrgyzstan Programme’s Community Based Tourism Support Project (CBT SP) with operations throughout the country.

The association’s objective is to improve living conditions in remote mountain regions by developing a sustainable and wholesome ecotourism model that utilizes local natural and recreational resources. (KCBTA Hospitality Kyrgyzstan)

3.2. The main tasks of KCBTA:

- One of the main tasks of KCBTA is to raise the economic benefits (income and employment levels) of selected rural areas through tourism in order to improve the living standards of local people. (Raeva, 2005)
- KCBTA provides support to member organizations by marketing their services and products, providing business training, seminars and study tours. (CBTQ, 2006)
- KCBTA is aimed to incorporate CBT into the mainstream of tourism industry. The enterprises that are members of KCBTA cater to a wide range of tourists.
(Raeva: 2005)

- The association showcases each region's best attractions. Local community members present attractions and their beauty with intimate, age-old, insight and immersion in their lifestyle, history and culture. (Guidebook, 2006)

3.3. Services offered by KCBTA

Services of offered by CBT-groups in 2006 are as follows (Table 1)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kinds of services</th>
<th>Short description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Living in houses (B&amp;B - bed and breakfast)</td>
<td>National and European style houses are offered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Living in yurts (jailoos)</td>
<td>Visiting &quot;jailoo&quot; - summer pastures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food</td>
<td>National and European cuisine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tours</td>
<td>Visiting jailoo and other places</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport and other kinds of movement</td>
<td>Mikrobuses, buses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guides-translators</td>
<td>English, German, French or Italian speaker guides</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National games and folk concerts</td>
<td>Ulak-tarysh, , Kyz-Kuumay, Odarish, Kurosh and other national games Folk concerts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Souvenirs</td>
<td>Unique souvenirs in different variations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Show of Kyrgyz felt carpets and souvenirs</td>
<td>Tourists have a chance to make souvenirs by themselves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Museum</td>
<td>Learn about the history of given place</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Community Based Tourism Guidebook, (2006), The Kyrgyz Community Based Tourism Association (KCBTA) “Hospitality Kyrgyzstan”

3.4. The benefits of CBT to Kyrgyzstan

KCBTA has done an interview among CBT-members that purposed to collect information about CBT families. 141 families, 34% of the total families participated in the interview. Total 414 families (360 families CBT members + 54 families from new groups).

Figure 2: Statement of Work of CBT-Groups Except Tourism Sector

Source: KCBTA:2007

As shown at Figure 2, 30% of the CBT-members don’t work at all, 8% are retired,
other 62% of members have another job other tourism business. (KCBTA:2007a) In a country where the average professional salary is only € 50 a month, local people can earn extra income by opening their homes to tourists. Yet the tourists also benefit, not only from cheap accommodation but also the chance to gain fascinating glimpses into Kyrgyz culture, traditions and way of life. (Kelly, 2007)

Inquiry shows that CBT-members’ income sources are: 20% of CBT-members work as a civil servant, 16% are farmers, 18% work at tourism area, 13% of members breeds livestock and others are retired or have another source of income. So, for rural citizens working at tourism area may give important ratio of income.

Table 2: Annual Income of CBT-members from Tourism Business.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Income (Som)</th>
<th>Rate of exchange (USD)</th>
<th>Total Income (USD)</th>
<th>Number of families CBT-members</th>
<th>Average Income Per Family (USD)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>1196526</td>
<td>46.94</td>
<td>25490.5</td>
<td>152</td>
<td>167.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>3870988</td>
<td>42.67</td>
<td>90719</td>
<td>304</td>
<td>298.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>3985386</td>
<td>41.01</td>
<td>97180</td>
<td>362</td>
<td>268.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>5412172</td>
<td>40.16</td>
<td>134765.2</td>
<td>419</td>
<td>321.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Interview with Aisha Mambetalieva, Head of Marketing Department CBT-Kyrgyzstan, April 2007

The total income earned by CBT members in 2002 was 25490.5 USD. (Table 2) In comparison with 2002, in 2006 total income increased and composed 134765.2 USD which shows 529% rise. (KCBTA, 2007b, Рынок Экотуризма в Кыргызстане, 2004)

Contributions of communities in developing CBT-groups are as follows:

✓ increasing the quality of the given services
✓ assisting in organization of some actions, festivals, etc.
✓ continuously paying commissions
✓ working as a service-provider
✓ helping and developing the CBT-groups (KCBTA, 2007)

4. CONCLUSION

Tourism is one of the biggest sectors in the world. Due to the opportunities of employment and foreign currency revenue it enabled, tourism is getting more essential especially for developing and underdeveloped countries.

In order for creating new opportunities for employment in a very short time and increasing foreign currency revenue, the tourist destination countries enable various inducements for local and foreign investors.

These inducements usually appeal to mass tourism. As the mass tourism appears in the spotlight, the tourism investments are focusing initially on the coasts, then on some specific regions of the country. Besides, as a characteristic of the mass tourism, tourism is getting more intense during some specific seasons and accommodation facilities being upfront, tourism investments are in large scales.

As a conclusion, since there is not enough capital fund in the developing and
underdeveloped tourist destination countries, tourism investments such as transportation, accommodation and tour guiding are being done by grand international investors.

In this case, tourism incomes return not to the tourist destination countries but to the tourist sending developed countries.

Besides, due to the mass tourism is close to all inclusive system and due to the low income of the tourists who joined the mass tourism, the desired employment opportunities and tourism incomes could not be enabled.

Finally, the tourism’s focusing on some specific regions during in specific seasons in mass tourism is leading to environmental problems.

In view of such negative influences of the traditional mass tourism and the changing tourist preferences, searches for alternative tourism models have gained pace in recent years.

Community based tourism happens to be an important matter especially for a sustainable development of underdeveloped and developing tourist destination countries.

The main properties for CBT are:
- The local people’s (as managers, employees, investors etc.) getting involved in tourism actively and having a big share from the tourism incomes.
- The expand of tourism in different regions of the country in different seasons,
- Local, cultural and natural features’ getting in spot light,
- The tourism’s being sustainable,
- Local community’s having the right to talk about the planning of tourism and managing it

The tourism in Kyrgyzstan is getting in spot light as a pioneer sector for the country’s development. The tourism in Kyrgyzstan is scarcely in infancy phase. Six years ago, in the leadership of Switzerland centered Helvetas, Kyrgyz Community Based Tourism Association was founded. The number of the local members is increasing day by day and has reached 450s.

In the following years, it is being considered that the CBT tourism in Kyrgyzstan will develop gradually and contribute to the tourism and the development of the country.

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