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**RURAL TOURISM AS AN OPPORTUNITY TO IMPROVE LIVING
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RURAL TOURISM AS AN OPPORTUNITY TO IMPROVE LIVING STANDARDS IN RURAL AREAS

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Annotation

This article studies the world experience of rural tourism development as a factor in population income growth. The importance of rural recreation as a promising direction for sustainable development in rural areas is considered. The classification of rural tourism and its components are considered. The principles of the development of this type of tourism and its specifics for the Republic of Uzbekistan have been analyzed. Rural tourism is seen as an opportunity to improve the standard of living in rural areas. Constructive conclusions are made, the results of which can be useful in the development of measures to prioritize the development of rural tourism.

Keywords

rural tourism, population income, agrotourism, income differentiation, infrastructure, rural hospitality, tourism services, tourist village, economic growth.

Rural tourism is one of the most integral and sought-after segments of the tourism industry. The peculiarity of its organization and the integration of different types of activities determine its specific role in achieving the dynamic development of rural areas and tourism as a whole. Traditions, culture, life, and lifestyle of the rural population are the main irreplaceable tourist potential that should be preserved. Also, its role in the growth of income in rural areas cannot be overlooked.

At the present stage of development, sustainable tourism in rural areas of our country is undergoing a stage of formation and partial development. Jizzak and Navoi provinces and the northern slopes of the Nurata Range are the regions where its development has a wider scope.

There are various definitions of rural tourism. Let us consider some of them.

Rural tourism is a specialized type of tourism, including elements of organized and unorganized recreation of travelers in rural areas in order to

familiarize them with the local nature, lifestyle of the population, and local ethno-cultural complexes and their values.²⁵

Rural tourism is a type of tourism whose purpose is to form of a fundamentally new agritourism product that goes beyond the traditional concept of tourism, taking into account the natural, historical, and cultural specificity of a particular region, as well as significantly diversifying the traditional offer.²⁶

Different countries have their own social, political, and economic prerequisites for the development of rural tourism, which affect its formation, further establishment, and development.

World experience in the development of this type of tourism indicates that this type of vacation is well suited for families with children. Children who live permanently in large cities with a relatively worsened ecology, where there is little "green" space, will find it very useful to spend time alone with nature. There are many interesting, previously unfamiliar activities for them in the countryside.

Choosing rural tourism today also includes older people, companies of young people, and people who are passionate about sports. There are many opportunities for outdoor activities in the village.

One of the factors in the development of rural tourism in developed European countries is the growth of knowledge-intensive agricultural production, which causes a sharp reduction in jobs and leads to higher unemployment in rural areas. The latter leads to a decrease in the population's income and intensifies the migration process.

Rural tourism is turning for many rural residents into the main activity, with all the necessary components for the tourism business:

- advertising,
- marketing,
- pricing policy,
- qualified personnel.

Income formation is characterized by instability in urban and rural areas.

The fact that almost 49%²⁷ of the population of the Republic of Uzbekistan lives in rural areas raises the question of ensuring the necessary level of income in this sphere. It is known that the formation of rural populations' income is provided by various sources. Since this is based on income from agriculture, subsistence

²⁵ Григорьева М.П. Сельский туризм: понятие, история и тенденции развития//Международный научный журнал «Символ науки».-2016.-№1.-С.93-97.

²⁶ Трухачёв А.В. Сельский туризм как фактор развития региональной экономики туризма.-Вестник АПК Ставрополья.-2017.-№4(28)-С.-154-158.

²⁷ <https://stat.uz/uz/rasmiy-statistika/demography-2>

farming, entrepreneurial activities, and social benefits, intensifying state regulation in this area should also be the focus of attention.

However, it should be noted that the income differentiation of the population is not in favor of rural areas. There are many reasons for the income differences between rural and urban populations, one of which is "place of residence"²⁸.

In the Strategy of Agricultural Development of the Republic of Uzbekistan for 2020-2030, the list of directions of state policy in the field of sustainable development of rural areas begins with improving the efficiency of the rural economy, then the level and quality of life of the rural population, then and the rational use and reproduction of the natural resource potential of rural areas.²⁹

One of the strategic priorities adopted in the State Strategy is "... increasing investment attractiveness; ensuring rational use of natural resources and environmental protection; and developing of rural areas".³⁰

There are many factors that contribute to achieving these goals. One of which is the development of the tourism industry in this area, in particular the development of rural tourism.

Rural tourism is a multifaceted phenomenon. One of its aspects, in view of the current state of the socio-economic development of the country, is social. Therefore, rural "tourism should be considered as one of the means of diversifying the sources of income of the rural population, as a component of the integrated development of rural areas and rural infrastructure, as well as one of the factors of the strategy to overcome poverty in rural areas.

The essence of rural tourism is the visit of tourists to rural areas for recreation, cultural, and leisure activities in ecologically clean areas. The main driving forces for choosing rural tourism are the following factors: the need to restore health; limited financial opportunities; eating "ecologically" pure products; and "peculiar" life in the countryside.

The implementation of rural tourism is ensured by the creation of special tourist villages and the formation of rural tours, including food and accommodation services, in rural settlements that are located in ecologically clean areas. In fact, tourism is related to visiting rural areas, living in rural houses, vacationing in nature with picturesque, beautiful landscapes, and participating in local folk traditions, festivals, and customs.

²⁸ https://ru.wikipedia.org/wiki/дифференциация_доходов

²⁹ <https://lex.uz/ru/docs/4567337>

³⁰ <https://lex.uz/ru/docs/4567337>

There is no single or universal model for rural tourism development. Each country and even region has its own concept of rural tourism development in accordance with the peculiarities of natural conditions and resources, traditions and ways of life, and economic policy.

Based on the experience of the development of this type of tourism and the impact on the rural economy, in particular on the income of the population, it is possible to summarize its advantages for the development of rural areas:

- reducing the unemployment rate and stimulating the creation of new jobs in rural areas, which is very important nowadays for the economy of Uzbekistan. As one of the reasons for the outflow of population from rural areas is the lack of new jobs;

- income growth and improvement of living standards of rural residents at relatively low financial costs. It should be noted that one of the main sources of income for the population in rural areas is income from external migration.

- improvement of village amenities, development of engineering, and social infrastructure. In reality, almost all rural areas have problems with the development of infrastructure and rural amenities. Very often, these programs are financed by public funding (private funding is almost nonexistent).

- development of small businesses in rural areas, as well as the environmental attractiveness of rural areas. Small entrepreneurship is one of the components of a market economy. Its development in rural areas will lead to a reduction of social differences between urban and rural areas.

- expanding the range of homestead products. This will lead to an increase in rural incomes, and the "organic products" factor will always be in demand.

- on-site sales of personal farm products, in particular, ready-to-eat food products.

- incentivize the protection of local attractions, preservation of local customs, folklore, and folk crafts. Unfortunately, the realities of modern development and urbanization contribute to the depreciation of the values, customs, and traditions of the local population. Folk crafts, in the economic aspect, are economically unprofitable due to the use of manual labor and a lack of technological factors in the production process.

- raising the cultural and cognitive level of the rural population. There is an increasing need to learn foreign languages and improve the quality of services provided.

- replenishment of local budgets through additional revenues. And these revenues are related to the development of this type of tourism at the regional level.

- does not require significant investment and utilizes predominantly private sources of funding, and capital investments are quickly repaid. In a market economy, it is private investments that are efficient because they have a long-term trend.

- relieves the most popular tourist centers, reducing the negative environmental consequences of too intensive activities in the so-called "prestigious" tourist regions, which is relevant for developed countries. So far, this advantage for the economy of Uzbekistan is not considered fundamental because the tourism sector is in the stage of formation and development.

The possibility of additional income in rural areas leads to an increase in income, which subsequently affects the growth of living standards.

In general, studying the experience of rural tourism development, we can draw the following conclusion: the development of tourism in rural areas is a real opportunity to increase the income of the population in rural areas.

The development of this type of tourism has a progressive impact on the economy of the village. The economic structure of rural areas is being improved, the development of industries involved in the hospitality industry is being stimulated, and remote areas that were previously considered unpromising for the development of other activities are being brought into the economy.

The established way of life in rural areas is characterized by a relative "lag" in development. The reasons for this may be remoteness from cities, relatively less developed infrastructure, a predominance in the structure of the population's income of incomes related to the direct development of agriculture (subsistence income in the form of agricultural products), or the presence of a small number of industrial enterprises.

In general, the development of rural tourism in socio-economic terms solves a number of problems:

- ensuring the socio-economic development of rural areas through relatively non-traditional activities;

- creation and increase of jobs in the hospitality industry (providing employment in rural areas);

- reducing the outflow of young people from rural areas (in recent years, Uzbekistan has experienced an outflow of rural population to urban areas);

- preservation and popularization of traditional rural ways of life, crafts, and methods of land cultivation;
- revival of national traditions, customs, and national culture;
- solving environmental problems related to nature protection;
- development of rural infrastructure, which requires partially state regulation;
- raises the cultural and intellectual level of the villagers;
- stimulates the production of environmentally friendly foodstuffs;
- mastering new service-related professions;
- establishment and active operation of tourist enterprises in remote and sparsely populated regions.

Thus, the presented analysis has shown that our country has a rich natural and agricultural potential for the development of this type of tourism. A systematic approach is also needed to create serious competition for rural areas by increasing demand for tourism services, thus ensuring their sustainable development. The connection between the development of rural tourism and the growth of income in rural areas cannot be overlooked either.

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