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Prerequisites for Adequate Tourism Valorisation of Cultural Resources

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Abstract. Management of cultural resources for the purpose of their valorisation is a highly complex process and requires joint work, synergy and cooperation of cultural and tourism sector. On a national level, most archaeological sites and museums are managed by cultural institutions while tourist boards and local governments are side actors in that process. Many discrepancies in attitudes toward valorisation of cultural resources are found in the process which prevents it from occurring. The goal of this research is to define the main prerequisites for adequate tourism valorisation of cultural resources by including professionals and their practical experiences in a high quality focus group interview. The most important finding relates to the importance of education of participants in cultural and tourism sector in order to avoid discrepancies in the way they perceive the means of tourism valorisation of cultural resources. Specifically, tourism sector aims to exploit the resources economically in a short period of time without paying attention to carrying capacity of the historical resources. On the other hand, cultural sector especially those that manage archaeological sites, have lack of management and marketing skills to be able to valorise the heritage that leads to the need for ongoing education in those fields. Therefore, those key actors should find the mutual path to avoid the uncontrolled exploitations of cultural resources and to achieve its adequate valorisation.

Keywords: *cultural tourism, valorisation, cultural and tourist sector*

1. Introduction

UNWTO (1985) defined cultural tourism as a trip motivated by culture, which includes festivals and similar events, visits to historical sites and monuments, as well as study nature, folklore or art. Cultural motivation of travel differentiates cultural tourism from other tourism types (Ćorluka, Matošević Radić, Geić, 2013). Statistical data on Europe show that more than 50% of tourism in Europe is driven by cultural services, where the consumption of cultural services might appear as primary motivation or consumption while traveling (Cuccia and Rizzo, 2011). Therefore, the need arises for more effective use of this product through valorisation of heritage and cultural resources in general, which emphasizes the need for developing models in which culture and tourism may achieve the synergy. Elements of cultural and historical heritage gain the attraction of global tourism demand. Areas with rich history generate significant demand on the basis of their background. Numerous explanations have been offered as to why cultural tourism has grown. Some relate its popularity to supply factors and some to demand. On the demand side, some analysts argue that tourists have become bored with conventional forms of tourism, especially those that rely on heavily packed products (Douglas, Douglas, Derrett, 2001, pp. 119). Tourists feel a deep need to explore and discover what lies beyond their horizons of knowledge. Mayo and Jarvis (1981)

consider that the journey provides a tour of intellectual knowledge and at the same time is his / her need for exploring and learning the new one. According to research by Nicola and Mas (2006) tourists seeking to discover new cultures and knowledge are willing to travel long distances to meet their needs, while traveling time is not a limiting factor. Regarding Richards (2011) most of the tourists in this category are individuals, which are searching for the information about cultural resources on Internet, traveling during the whole year and spending more than average tourist. The supply side recognized the market opportunity. Through the identification of cultural motivation of tourist demand, cultural tourist offer was developed and valorised. Tourist motivated by this product emphasize as important the attractiveness of destination, complexity of tourism offer, means of presentation and product innovation, as well as the information availability and quality of all products in destination. Cultural tourists have a higher prosperity to spend and in general have higher average income, they often do not spend on homogeneous mass products, being more interested in local quality goods (restaurants, wine, shopping) and in cultural events (shows, concerts, exhibitions) with higher value added, and which benefits are more likely to be evenly spread within the local economy (Figini and Vici, 2012). According to Institute of Tourism, Croatia (2015) exploring cultural heritage is the eight motive of tourist arrivals in Croatia, mostly expressed by youth (under 29 years) older (50 and up) and those arriving to Croatia for the first time. When it comes to the cultural offer in destinations, tourists prefer following activities: visiting local events, sightseeing, visiting concerts, museums, exhibitions. In terms of the satisfaction, tourists are expressing high level of satisfaction with cultural heritage and complexity of offer while they are moderately satisfied with the diversity of cultural events. The cultural heritage is having a great impact in choice of destination by the senior citizens group (50 and up) and in the families coming for the first time in destination. Creative tourism i.e. creative experiences, according to international trends, are becoming a main focus of tourist nowadays leading to the interactive activities such as workshops. Cultural tourism is rapidly growing, with continuous development of sub forms. Cultural tourism is also identified as a successful strategy in resisting tourism seasonality and expanding tourist season (Ćorluka, Matošević Radić, Geić, 2013). The advantage of development of cultural tourism derives from the fact that cultural tourism is considered one such endogenous approach to development (Raj, Griffin, Morpeth, 2013, pp. 27). The importance of creativity in developing cultural tourism product, through experiences and interaction is in the focus, while trends, ethical manners, environmental impact and local quality of life are to be respected and taken into consideration.

Due to the need for following current trends, management of cultural resources, streaming toward valorisation of cultural resources should be at main focus.

It is important to stress out that the management of cultural resources for the purpose of their valorisation is a highly complex process which requires joint work, synergy and cooperation of cultural and tourism sector. On a national level, most archaeological sites and museums are managed by cultural institutions, while tourist boards and local governance are side actors in that process. Many discrepancies in attitudes toward valorisation of cultural resources are found in the process which prevents it from occurring.

According to the research provided by the Institute of tourism, Croatia (2015), a disagreement in attitudes towards cultural resources valorisation between many stakeholders was identified. Namely, representatives of the counties and municipalities are grading the existing cooperation with cultural institutions and tourism sector as relatively good, although one quarter of research participants consider this cooperation not to be on a satisfactory level. Most of the participants stress the importance of cultural resources in branding and running projects aiming at cultural tourism development. However, most of the municipalities and

counties do not have a tourism development strategy while development of cultural is included in general development plans. Although most of the research participants consider the cooperation with tourism and cultural sector a satisfactory one, still this cooperation is marked as the most important limiting factor in further development of cultural tourism offer. Apart from cooperation, promotion and limitations in existing cultural resources management models are three most important barriers in development of cultural tourism. Most of the public sector representatives prefer investing in cultural tourism products that require small investments like festivals, events and other history projects. It is important to notice that investments in visitor centres or new museums are not considered as important and worth investing. Tourist boards and cultural institutions are currently running cultural tourism projects, but they do not express satisfaction with the level of culture and tourism synergy. On the other hand, representatives of cultural sector are not satisfied with the level of synergy, which leads to the question why cultural resources/programmes are not included in development of cultural tourism or cultural sector considers some resources more valuable in terms of their use in tourism, than they really are. Differences between cultural and tourism sector are visible when it comes to the quality of cooperation. Most of the tourist boards consider this cooperation good or very good while cultural sector is not satisfied with the level of cooperation. They both consider that key problems in development of cultural tourism are – lack of awareness on tourism potential of cultural resources, inadequate cooperation promotion and management model. In the same time, the cultural sector points out more limitations in development of cultural tourism relating to the level of awareness on tourism potential of cultural resources, cooperation and promotion. The importance of visitor centres, festivals, reviving history projects, theme routes is stressed out by tourist boards. The cultural sector, on the other hand, gives general support to above mentioned activities, but are more ready to support investment in contemporary cultural production and creative workshops. Both sectors agree that more investments are needed in promotion, revitalization and private entrepreneurship in culture.

When we take into consideration the importance of cultural tourism, market trends and attitudes of all sectors included in the management of cultural resources, the need for adequate tourism valorisation of cultural resources becomes a high priority. The goal of this research therefore is to define the main prerequisites for adequate tourism valorisation of cultural resources by including professionals and their practical experiences in a high quality panel discussion.

2. Research Methodology

A pilot study with focus group interviews with professionals from tourism and cultural sector was conducted. Focus group members were tourist board representatives, University representatives, city government representatives and archaeological institutions representatives.

3. Research Results

Management of cultural resources for the purpose of their valorisation is a highly complex process and requires joint work, synergy and cooperation of cultural and tourism sector. Research findings indicate following process necessitating's for the tourism valorisation of cultural resources:

- **Educated and proactive municipality** – Culture and all the process related to culture are not at the focus of the local leaders who don't have enough knowledge on management and valorisation of cultural resources and don't recognize its importance for the city development. The lack of financing when it comes to culture, perceiving

cultural investment as not necessary or being at the bottom of priority list and in general ignorance and lack of knowledge of local and national leaders, are main restraints in developing cultural products and valorisation cultural heritage. Dialogue with main stakeholders, as citizens, tourism sector and cultural sector, is desirable.

- **Educated and cooperative cultural and tourism sector** – Effective valorisation of cultural resources relies on the education and cooperation of cultural and tourism sector. Cultural sector should invest in the lifelong education with goal of obtaining appropriate skills and knowledge such as: education of tourist guides, education of employees in museums, archaeological sites and other cultural institutions in management, marketing and tourism segment, education of agencies in sector of archaeological tourism. The educational sector (universities) especially those in archaeology should be the initiators and carriers of valorisation and involvement of all key stakeholders in process of research presentation and interpretation of archaeological and cultural heritage and its tourism valorisation. The most important finding relates to the importance of education of participants in cultural and tourist sector in order to avoid discrepancies in the way they perceive the means of tourism valorisation of cultural resources. Specifically, tourism sector aims to exploit the resources economically in a short period of time without paying attention to carrying capacity of the historical resources. It also occurs that tourism sector due to the lack of knowledge are not interpreting the history in a proper manner thus leading to lack of authenticity which is one of the primary requisites for adequate valorisation of cultural resources. Therefore, the cooperation with cultural sector should be intensive and tourism sector should receive all the necessary data prior to organization of cultural events. On the other hand, cultural sector especially those that manage archaeological sites, have lack of management and marketing skills to be able to valorise the heritage that leads to the need for ongoing education in those fields. It seems that cultural sector, as defined by their profession, is mainly focused on the preservation and conservation of cultural heritage without investing in marketing and tourism valorisation of their resources. The perception of the cultural sector and tourism sector are much different when it comes to the exploitation of the resources. Cultural sector is not a fan of fast exploitation of the resources. They consider the exploitation of resources in terms of tourism valorisation as an „attack“ on the heritage. The valorisation of cultural resources, from their point of view, should be a long term process and when it comes to investments they prefer investment in conservation of the monuments rather than its interpretation and presentation. The lack of management skills and thus marketing and other skills in presenting the sites, is issue in almost any cultural institution. Therefore, the need for lifelong education and development of those skills should be set as a strategic goal on a national level. Tourism depends on cultural resources and therefore it should make additional efforts to maximize its potential. Therefore, those key actors should find the mutual path to to achieve its adequate valorisation.
- **Local community that respects and protects is heritage** – The importance of educating the local community is emphasized, from youngest to older generations, in order to emphasize the need for responsible and sustainable use of cultural resources in development of tourism. More education and more interaction with locals should be set as priority. The campaign with the aim of raising awareness of importance of cultural heritage protection should be developed.
- **Sustainable use of cultural resources – carrying capacity** – Efficient and transparent national laws with clearly defined local strategies for the use of cultural

resources – solid grounds for efficient processes in the development of cultural tourism and for valorisation of cultural resources are required. The cooperation between experts in cultural and tourism sector in defining the carry capacity of cultural resources is stressed as obligatory. Although the carrying capacity should be defined by laws and regulations both on national and local level the sustainable use of cultural resources should be set in the minds of local citizens and sectors using the cultural resources as a priority. Based on the efficient laws and regulations, the strategic documents should be developed with the aim of achieving the carrying capacity of the historic cities and sites. The lack of efficient laws and regulations has led to the uncontrolled exploitation of cultural resources.

4. Discussion

As noted earlier the management of cultural resources for the purpose of their valorisation is a highly complex process and requires joint work, synergy and cooperation of cultural and tourism sector. According to the findings driven from the organized focus group interviews, tourism and cultural sector should work more closely in order to achieve adequate valorisation of cultural resources. Since one of the prerequisites defined is an educated and proactive municipality, where the problems occur mostly in perception of culture thus also in financing of culture, the joint efforts of both sectors should raise awareness of local municipality to perceive culture as a driving force in development of cultural tourism. Projects prepared in a high quality manner and constant initiative and enthusiasm of the cultural and tourism sector should lead to more finances allocated for valorisation of cultural resources. This may be achieved through public-private partnership or through the applications for various grants allocated for presentation and protection of cultural resources. The other finding related to education of cultural and tourism sector emphasizes importance of cooperation between these two sectors and better education in those fields. In tourism sector, problem occurs in exploitation of resources which may be resolved through transparent and well defined laws and regulations on local and national level. Problems with unauthentic interpretation of cultural resources are easily reduced by closer cooperation with the cultural sector. Involving the representatives from the cultural sector at least as advisors in the process of organizing event is inevitable. On the other hand, cultural sector appears to have a problem with a lack of management and marketing skills and their perception on the valorisation of cultural resources. This leads to the lifelong education in those fields but points out the problems with financing this education. Since cultural tourism is a key driving force in development of tourism, cultural and tourism sector should work closely on organizing educational workshops and seminars for cultural sector, especially for the museum personnel or personnel working and managing the archaeological sites. The education is very welcomed in any sphere of EU funding therefore the finances could be allocated through EU funds. Another prerequisite for adequate valorisation of cultural resources implies the importance of local community respecting and protecting their heritage. In order to achieve this goal, the the campaign with aim of rising awareness of importance of cultural heritage protection should be developed. The education of local community, from youngest to older generations is a key to success. Therefore, the cultural and tourism sector should perform activities and campaigns of teaching the local community on heritage in their cities and the ways how to protect it and save it for the new generations. This may be done through various educational events. Further, the sustainable use of cultural resources should be a “must have” both for local community and for the cultural and tourism sector and the local municipality should invest effort in defining strategies and activities that would lead to the effective use of resources or i.e. achieving carrying capacity of the specific monument or site.

5. Conclusion

The management of cultural resources is a long term and flexible process that requires the involvement of the municipality, that needs to be a generator of team work among the main actors in planning and decision making processes within the historical cities. The most important finding relates to the importance of education of participants in the cultural and tourist sector in order to avoid discrepancies in the way they perceive the means of tourism valorisation of cultural resources. Specifically, tourism sector aims to exploit the resources economically in a short period of time without paying attention to carrying capacity of the historical resources, and sometimes due to the inadequate prior knowledge of historical data may create events that don't interpret the cultural resources in a proper manner. On the other hand, cultural sector especially those that manage archaeological sites, have lack of management and marketing skills to be able to valorise the heritage and produce the economic effects that leads to the need for ongoing education in those fields. Other prerequisites for adequate valorisation of cultural resources used for tourism include laws and regulations as well as the attitude of the local citizens in order to achieve sustainable development of historical cities and localities. Key actors in the process of valorisation and protection of the cultural resources should therefore find the mutual path to avoid the uncontrolled exploitations of cultural resources and to achieve its adequate valorisation.

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