

**DEVELOPMENT OF PILGRIMAGE TOURISM IN ATTRACTING TOURISTS TO
UZBEKISTAN (In the case of Khojaly district)**

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Annotation: This article covers important information about tourism, its impact on human life and its types. On the other hand, pilgrimage tourism and its development in Uzbekistan were discussed.

Key words: *tourist destinations, tourism industry, medical, cultural, event, pilgrimage, Information Technologies, political impact.*

Tourism is vital for the success of many economies around the world. There are several benefits of tourism on host destinations. Tourism is important in the economic development and growth of Uzbekistan, and in the following years, along with other spheres of Tourism, great attention is paid to the development of pilgrimage tourism in the country. At present, one of the promising sectors that will bring a high income to the national economy is National Tourism, says the president of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev, – Uzbekistan is a state with great potential in the field of Tourism. There are more than 7 thousand 300 objects of cultural heritage in our country and most of them are included in the UNESCO list. At the same time, it is possible to open new tourist destinations, taking advantage of the unique nature of our country, the possibilities of beautiful recreation zones[1]. Tourism boosts the revenue of the economy, creates thousands of jobs, develops the infrastructures of a country, and plants a sense of cultural exchange between foreigners and citizens. According to statistics, in 2019 alone, the tourism industry contributed 10.3% of the global GDP – that’s US\$8.9 trillion! It also provided 330 million jobs, or one in 10 jobs around the world, while over the past five years the tourism industry created one in four new jobs. The sector also experienced a 3.5% growth in 2019, exceeding the global economic growth of 2.5% for the ninth year in a row.

There are an infinite number of ways to have fun and interesting time in the world: go on a trip or adventure, explore something, touch sacred places, see unique places untouched by civilization, improve health, have an active rest, experience extreme sports or just spend time in nature with family or friends, and all this is connected with tourism and the tourism industry in general. There are all three main types of tourism in Uzbekistan: inbound, outbound and domestic[2]. Inbound and domestic tourism includes both basic and specific tourism products:

excursions to tourist attractions; accommodation in hotels, recreation areas, resorts, sanatoriums, tourist villages, yurt camps, camping; tasting of national dishes and wines; participation in festivals and celebrations; comfortable travel around the country. All types of travel and recreation in Uzbekistan can be divided by types into sports, ethnic, youth, ecological, gastronomic, medical, cultural, event, pilgrimage, literary, winter, cycling and other types of tourism, also the seasonality should be taken into account when choosing the direction. Now, we will talk about pilgrimage tourism in Uzbekistan.

Pilgrimage, a sphere of tourism, is becoming common among people recently. The number of people visiting various places for religious reasons is also increasing rapidly. For instance, as the Oficina de Acogida de Peregrinos (Pilgrims' Welcome Office) informs, the indicative demonstrates just over 50,000 travelers with religious purpose in 2000, while the pattern grew up to approximately 300,000 visitors in 16 years. In the current time, tourism in Uzbekistan is rapidly developing as well. Especially, pilgrimage is becoming popular among tourists, such as pilgrimages in domestic tourism. In 2017 nearly 9 million Uzbek citizens performed a pilgrimage, as the deputy head of the Uzbekistan Tourism Committee, Abdulaziz Akkulov says. Alternatively, the number of foreign pilgrims visiting Uzbekistan was about 2 million in 2017[3].

The development of tourism is also important in terms of ensuring peace and stability in Uzbekistan, beautification of certain regions and employment of its population. Today, representatives of religion other than Islam carry out their trips to Uzbekistan within the framework of visiting tourism. In the south of Uzbekistan, in the Surkhandarya region, there are such monuments as Fayoztepa, Karatepa, Ayritom, Dalvarzintera, which are associated with the Buddhist religion, and now tourists from Japan, Korea, China are paying great attention to the monuments and temples of Buddhism located here. At the same time, there are holy shrines in Uzbekistan, such as Khazz David and Khaz Daniel pilgrims, who are revered in religions other than Islam, and these pilgrims contribute to the maintenance of peace and tolerance of the nation in Uzbekistan. In Samarkand, along with the Catholic, Orthodox and Protestant churches operating in the present time, there are written sources and historical items indicating that the religion of Qam, Shamanism, Fire worship, Christianity, and Islam and various other religions operate side by side on the basis of tolerance. The first Christian metropolis in Samarkand was founded in the 6th century and Christians played an important role in trade-economic and cultural relations between Sogdiana and Byzantium. At the same time, citizens of many countries of the world use the territory of Uzbekistan as transit during their travels to other countries. Therefore, today it is of urgent importance to pay attention to the issues of further improvement

of necessary infrastructure in the field of visiting tourism in Uzbekistan, attention to the promotion of existing facilities, further improvement of the service system, and creative use of the achievements of Information Technologies[4].

To sum up all given facts it should be noted that Tourism impacts tourist destinations in both positive and negative ways, encompassing economic, political, socio-cultural, environmental, and psychological dimensions. The economic effects of tourism encompass improved tax revenue, personal income growth, enhanced living standards, and the creation of additional employment opportunities. Sociocultural impacts are associated with interactions between people with differing cultural backgrounds, attitudes and behaviors, and relationships to material goods[5]. Tourism can also have significant political impacts by influencing government policies and promoting diplomatic relations between countries. Environmental impacts can be categorized as direct effects including environmental damage, wildlife destruction, deforestation, water pollution, and indirect effects, such as increased harvesting of natural resources to supply food, indirect air and water pollution (including from flights, transport and the manufacture of food and souvenirs for tourists). Tourism also has positive and negative health outcomes for local people. The short-term negative impacts of tourism on residents' health are related to the density of tourist's arrivals, the risk of disease transmission, road accidents, higher crime levels, as well as traffic congestion, crowding, and other stressful factors.

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