Influence of “thematic parks” to the development of tourism in Uzbekistan

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ABSTRACT

Fairs in medieval Europe (for example, St. Bartholomew’s Fair, founded in 1543 in London), were one of the origins of modern amusement parks. Ever since the Elizabethan era, fairs have become centers of fun for people with entertainment, food, games. They have become the natural birthplace of various forms of fun entertainment. Since 1810, Oktoberfest in Germany has become not only a beer festival, but also a place of folk festivals. For example, the structure of water parks is becoming more and more relevant, which has so far received little attention. This article analyzes and examines the possible impact of “Theme Parks” in Uzbekistan. The development of not only local tourism in the country, but also in the cities of neighboring republics is studied on the example of water parks. The authors have placed questionnaires in student dormitories and hotels in the capital of Uzbekistan.

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Влияние «тематических парков» на развитие туризма в Узбекистане

**АННОТАЦИЯ**
Ярмарки в средневековой Европе (например, Варфоломеевская ярмарка, основанная в 1543 году в Лондоне), были одним из источников зарождения современных парков развлечений. Еще со времен елизаветинской эпохи, ярмарки стали центрами веселого времяпрепровождения людей с развлечениями, едой, играми. Они стали естественной родиной различных форм веселых развлечений. С 1810 года Октоберфест в Германии стал не только пивным праздником, но и местом народных гуляний. К примеру, структура аквапарков становится все более актуальной, чему до сих пор уделялось мало внимания. В данной статье анализируется и рассматривается возможное влияние «Тематических парков» в Узбекистане. Исследуется, развитие не только местного туризма в стране, но и в городах соседних республик на примере аквапарков. Авторами размещены опросные анкеты в студенческих общежитиях и в гостиницах столицы Узбекистана.

**INTRODUCTION**
Do tourists visit other countries to visit the “Thematic parks”? Do “Thematic Parks” Affect the Number of Tourists in a Country? Why do tourists prefer to relax in “Thematic Parks”?
A Thematic park is a collective term describing a number of attractions and other types of entertainment located in one area. A Thematic park differs from ordinary parks in that it is intended specifically for the entertainment of people, mainly adults, teenagers and children.

The world’s oldest (and still operating) amusement park, Bakken, near Copenhagen, opened in 1583. The most famous of London’s Vauxhall Gardens was founded in 1661. The Prater Park in Vienna opened in 1766. Founded in 1843, the Tivoli Gardens in Copenhagen are another example of a leisure park that has been successfully operating to this day.

Aqua park – is an entertainment complex, which has an infrastructure for playing games on the water and water attractions such as water slides, sprinklers, pools with a tower, fountains, “lazy river” and other water activities.

The water park, on the one hand, is a territory of fun and relaxation with family or friends, and on the other, it is a highly profitable investment in the entertainment industry. The first water parks, according to various sources, appeared in the 40-60s of the 20th century.

The very first water park in Uzbekistan called “Tashkent water park” is located in Tashkent in the city center next to the amusement park “Tashkentland” not far from the TV tower, which can be seen from afar. Now in Tashkent there are several beautiful modern water parks, but this one was opened the very first, in 1997, on the site of the former “Victory Park”.

Today in Uzbekistan there are about 220 parks with various attractions. In recent years, there has been a tendency for their specialization. So, along with amusement parks, a network of water parks began to develop, and the first eco-park appeared.

The State Committee for Tourism Development is convinced that the time has come to build theme parks in the country.

The construction of various amusement parks enhances the attractiveness of the city and the country. Like all developed and developing countries in Uzbekistan, the number of such parks is also increasing. This undoubtedly affects the development of many areas of the state. In this article, we will try to find out what role amusement parks play in the development of tourism in the country and try to answer the above-highlighted questions.

Methods. It is very difficult to find and interview tourists about the tourism of the country and ask them a few questions. Therefore, the study took place in Tashkent in the three-star hotel “SV hotel” on “Ivleev” street and in the hostel of the “Tashkent State Conservatory” on Farhad street.

When it came to choosing a data collection method, there were several options that were very simple and easy. But they weren’t that spectacular. The most effective way, in our opinion, was “Face to face interview”.

The Method of collecting data is “Face to face interview”.

During the interview, each participant was asked 10 questions and all the answers were written.

The data collecting process took place during March 2021.

If there were any difficulties in answering, the participants were provided with previously prepared answers.

All members were delighted to take part in our interview.
Questions
1. What is your name?
2. What is your age?
   1) under 18  2) 18 to 35  3) 36 to 55  4) over 56
3. What is your gander?
   1) male  2) female
4. Where are you from?
   1) Uzbekistan regions  2) Asia  3) Europe  4) other
5. What is the purpose of your visit to Uzbekistan?
   1) business  2) pleasure  3) study  4) other
6. Have you been to Tashkent before?
   1) No  2) Yes
7. Are there any water parks in your hometown?
   1) No  2) Yes
8. Is it warm enough to swim in the open air in your hometown?
   1) No  2) Yes
9. Have you ever visited at least one of the water parks in Tashkent?
   1) No  2) Yes
10. Would you like to visit (again) water parks in Tashkent?
    1) No  2) Yes

Results. We examined our hypotheses using the 50 participants of our interview. It was difficult to find participants for our interview. Since not all tourists agree to be interviewed. Another daunting task during the interview was overcoming the language barrier between the foreign participants in our interview.

During the interview, each participant was asked 10 questions and all the answers were written.

The data collecting process took place from 1 to 30 March 2021.

If there were any difficulties in answering, the participants were provided with previously prepared answers.

The survey results showed that:

Table 1.
7 of the participants were under 18
11 of the participants were between 18 and 35
14 of the participants were from 36 to 55
16 of the participants were over 56 years old.

Table 2.

What is your gender?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

32 of the participants were female,
18 of the participants were male.

Table 3.

Where are you from?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Uzbekistan regions</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asia</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europe</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

29 of the participants were from regions of Uzbekistan,
9 of the participants were from Asia,
8 of the participants were from Europe,
4 of the participants were from other countries of the world.
Table 4.

What is the purpose of your visit to Uzbekistan?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Business</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pleasure</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To the question “What is the purpose of your visit to Uzbekistan?”: 8 of the participants answered “business”, 6 of the participants answered “pleasure”, 31 of the participants answered “study”, 5 of the participants answered “others”.

Table 5.

Have you been to Tashkent before?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To the question “Have you been to Tashkent before?”: 27 of the participants answered “Yes” 13 of the participants answered “No”
To the question “Are there any waterparks in your hometown?":
16 of the participants answered “Yes”
34 of the participants answered “No”

Table 6.

To the question “Is it warm enough to swim in the open air in your hometown?”
29 of the participants answered “Yes”
21 of the participants answered “No”

Table 7.
Table 8.

**Have you ever visited at least one of the water parks in Tashkent?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To the question “Have you ever visited at least one of the water parks in Tashkent?”:
31 of the participants answered “Yes”
19 of the participants answered “No”

Table 9.

**Would you like to visit (again) water parks in Tashkent?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To the question “Would you like to visit (again) water parks in Tashkent?”
42 of the participants answered “Yes”
8 of the participants answered “No”
Conclusion. Yes, many believe that the influence of theme parks on the development of tourism in the country is not significant, or even theme parks do not in any way affect the development of tourism in the country. However, although not very many people were interviewed, a lot was clear. Many participants responded that there are no water parks in their hometowns. There were also some participants who answered that they come every year just to visit the Tashkent water park, since the weather in the participant’s hometown does not allow swimming in the open air. In conclusion, relying on the results of our research, we can say with confidence that theme parks significantly affect not only the arrival of tourists to the country, but also increases the number of citizens who come from the regions. This means that theme parks affect both the development of local tourism and the development of tourism in the country as a whole.

Acknowledgment. We would like to express special gratitude to the three-star hotel “SV hotel” located in the center of Tashkent city on “Ivlev” street and to the administration of the “Tashkent State Conservatory hostel” located in the center of Tashkent city on “Farhad” street for the help in conducting the interview for our research.

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