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INNOVATIVE AND PRACTICAL APPROACHES TO COMMUNITY-BASED TOURISM PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT IN AZERBAIJAN

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Community-Based Tourism (CBT) is increasingly recognized as a strategic approach to inclusive development, particularly in rural areas of Azerbaijan. Unlike traditional top-down tourism models, CBT emphasizes community-led development, where local populations are not passive beneficiaries but active participants in the planning, production, and delivery of tourism experiences. This research examines innovative and pragmatic strategies for the diversification of CBT products and provides a theoretical foundation for rethinking CBT beyond conventional paradigms in Azerbaijan. The main aim of this research is to develop innovative, context-sensitive CBT product diversification strategies applicable to Azerbaijan's rural tourism sector. The study applies a qualitative workshop-based approach involving key stakeholders such as local residents, tourism professionals, and policymakers to co-create adaptive CBT product concepts. The findings confirm that CBT has the potential to become a key pillar in Azerbaijan's rural development agenda, provided that empowerment, capacity building, and inclusive governance structures are prioritized.

Keywords: Community-Based Tourism (CBT), participatory tourism, rural development, capacity building, local empowerment, tourism diversification, Azerbaijan.

INTRODUCTION

Tourism has evolved into a key driver of socio-economic development, stimulating cultural exchange, economic growth, and regional revitalization [53]. Within this broad sector, community-based tourism (CBT) has gained prominence as a sustainable model that emphasizes local participation, resource conservation, and equitable economic benefits [17]. CBT initiatives seek to empower local communities by positioning them as primary stakeholders in tourism development, ensuring that cultural and natural heritage assets are preserved while enhancing visitor experiences [34]. The origins of CBT can be traced back to early forms of communal hospitality in primitive societies, where local traditions and resources played a fundamental role in hosting travellers [41]. Over time, tourism has transitioned from unrestructured of communal hospitality to structured, market-driven approaches that integrate participatory governance and sustainable development principles [3]. The historical evolution of communities has shaped the way local groups interact with tourism today. Early human societies were based on small, tightly knit communities where resources were collectively shared and managed. This early form of communal living laid the groundwork for modern concepts of community governance and resource management. As society evolved, particularly with the advent of agriculture and trade, communities began to expand and diversify, developing complex social, political, and economic structures [32].

In the context of tourism, the importance of these communities became evident as tourism began to interact with local cultures. Initially, tourism was a top-down process where tourists arrived in experience “authentic” cultures, often without meaningful interaction with the community. Over time, however, it became clear that for tourism to be sustainable, it must involve local communities, ensuring that their traditions and practices were respected, and that they had a stake in the benefits generated [2]. In this early conception, CBT was about ensuring that local service providers, suppli-

ers, and community members played a central role in shaping the tourism experience. The term “local tourism” gained traction as CBT began to focus on connecting visitors with the authentic culture and environment of a destination. Early definitions stressed the importance of engaging the host community in every step of tourism development, as tourism was seen as an instrument for local development and empowerment. This notion was captured by Hall [21], who noted that CBT could create a more sustainable tourism industry by ensuring the host community had a say in the decision-making process. In these early stages, participatory planning and community control became integral to the concept of CBT [28].

As CBT evolved, its scope broadened to encompass not only community control but also the integration of sustainable practices. The triangular partnership between tourism, sustainability, and community development is based on the interdependence of these three elements. Sustainable tourism practices enhance community development by supporting environmental conservation, creating opportunities for local businesses, and preserving cultural heritage. In turn, the active participation of communities in tourism management ensures that sustainable practices are embedded within the local context and that the benefits of tourism are distributed fairly [51]. Despite the potential benefits of the triangular partnership, several challenges must be addressed to achieve success. One of the main obstacles is the potential conflict between economic growth and environmental conservation [25]. While tourism can generate substantial economic benefits, it can also lead to over-exploitation of natural resources, particularly in fragile ecosystems such as coral reefs and rainforests. Balancing these competing interests requires effective resource management, long-term planning, and a commitment to sustainable practices by all stakeholders [37].

The primary goal of CBT is to ensure that the economic, social, and environmental benefits of tourism are directed towards local populations [41]. CBT models evolved as a response to the negative impacts of mass tourism, which often leads to environmental degradation, cultural erosion, and unequal distribution of economic benefits [36]. The early development of CBT focused on rural and indigenous communities where tourism products are designed around the preservation of culture, nature, and the environment. Through its participatory nature, CBT provides an alternative to mainstream tourism, encouraging local autonomy and sustainability [47]. CBT is deeply connected to the concept of the Triple Bottom Line (TBL), which highlights the balance between economic, social, and environmental sustainability. The social dimension of TBL aligns with CBT’s emphasis on community empowerment and local involvement, ensuring that tourism initiatives benefit the residents and enhance their participation in the decision-making process [41]. The environmental pillar of TBL intersects with CBT’s commitment to environmental preservation by promoting sustainable tourism practices that minimize ecological footprints and contribute to conservation efforts [26]. Additionally, the economic aspect of TBL ties to CBT’s aim of providing economic benefits to local communities, improving livelihoods, and fostering poverty alleviation through tourism ventures. In the case of Azerbaijan, CBT development is still in its infancy. The government has initiated various rural tourism projects with the intention of empowering local communities and diversifying the tourism industry. However, challenges remain in integrating local communities into the decision-making and benefit-sharing processes, which is a crucial aspect of CBT success [24].

MAIN PART

Theoretical Framework of Community-Based Tourism

CBT is often characterized by its focus on local community participation, where the community plays a key role in the planning, development, and management of tourism activities. The community plays a central role in CBT initiatives, serving as both the provider and the beneficiary of the tourism product [49]. This model contrasts sharply with traditional tourism, where external entities, often from outside the community, dominate the decision-making processes. This approach also aims to increase income earning opportunities and support sustainable development while con-



tributing to the creation of high quality, authentic and diversified tourism products. Sustainable CBT products aim to conserve local natural and cultural resources while providing economic opportunities for local people [8]. The long-term success of CBT hinges on balancing the needs of the community with the preservation of its heritage and environment [36]. Equitable benefit-sharing is another core principle that ensures that the financial benefits derived from tourism are distributed fairly among community members. This principle is integral to preventing the exploitation of local populations who asserts that ensuring equitable benefits prevents the “leakage” of tourism revenue to external stakeholders [16]. It is argued that without equitable benefit-sharing, CBT risks exacerbating local inequalities [40]. For CBT to be truly beneficial to communities, it must create an inclusive model where all members, including marginalized groups, can access the opportunities tourism offers [21].

The successful development of CBT products requires collaboration across various stakeholders, notably the local community, the government, and the private sector. The collaboration is a crucial element in CBT product development, ensuring that diverse perspectives are considered in the decision-making process and that the resulting products reflect the needs, aspirations, and cultural values of the community [30]. The government plays an essential role in establishing the legal and regulatory frameworks that facilitate CBT [19]. Moreover, the government’s role in policymaking can help protect local resources, ensuring that tourism does not overrun the community’s environmental or social fabric [44]. On the other hand, the involvement of the private sector can provide essential expertise and capital to enhance the marketability and scalability of CBT products [39]. The private sector collaboration can help local communities develop tourism products that meet the needs of global tourists while remaining true to local culture and sustainability practices. However, the private sector’s involvement must be carefully managed to prevent the dominance of profit motives over the community’s well-being [42].

Given the interconnected nature of tourism, it is crucial that CBT development does not occur in isolation but instead through strong, effective partnerships. Local authorities play a critical role in establishing the regulatory framework, connecting tourism initiatives with other relevant development efforts, and encouraging a supportive environment for sustainable growth. Moreover, effective community engagement is central to the success of CBT, cultivating local ownership and participation throughout the process [27]. When communities are actively involved, it leads to greater responsibility and commitment to the project, as well as a broader distribution of tourism benefits within the community. This, in turn, enhances the quality and authenticity of tourism products and experiences, ensuring they remain aligned with local values and sustainable practices [51]. The effectiveness of this collaborative approach is illustrated by the case of Bhutan, where the government, private sector, and local communities have successfully worked together to create a sustainable tourism model that promotes both cultural preservation and economic development [31]. In particular, community-government-private sector partnerships (CGP partnerships) are seen as a model that encourages innovation in product development. Such partnerships ensure that tourism products meet the needs of both visitors and local stakeholders. For instance, in the case of indigenous tourism in New Zealand, CGP collaborations have led to the creation of culturally immersive tourism products that benefit both the community and the tourism sector [46]. For CBT to be truly effective, each stakeholder must contribute their knowledge, expertise, and resources, with a shared commitment to the community’s long-term well-being [5].

Current Landscape of Community-Based Tourism in Azerbaijan

Azerbaijani government has introduced several strategic documents to guide tourism development, emphasizing sustainability and community involvement. The Azerbaijan Tourism Strategy 2023-2026 presents a strategic and holistic framework for tourism development over four years, emphasizing nine pillars, including Destination Development, Heritage and Communities, and Tourism Products and Experiences. The vision is to position Azerbaijan as an accessible, sustaina-

ble, and quality tourism destination offering unique experiences to both domestic and international tourists. This strategy aligns with the country's broader socio-economic development plans and the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) [4]. The Strategic Road Map on the National Economy and Key Sectors of the Economy (2017-2020) serves as guidelines for preparing strategic plans across various economic sectors, including tourism [18]. Institutional support is further evidenced by Azerbaijan's membership in the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC). The State Tourism Agency's collaboration with GSTC underscores a commitment to integrating global sustainable tourism standards at the national level, encouraging local stakeholders to embark on sustainability journeys, and positioning Azerbaijan as a preferred sustainable tourism destination [15].

One of the critical challenges in the expansion of CBT in Azerbaijan is the lack of community interest and motivation, particularly in some rural areas. Many local residents perceive tourism as an unstable income source due to seasonal fluctuations and limited marketing strategies [54]. Additionally, the high rate of migration from rural to urban areas weakens community engagement, as younger generations often relocate in search of better employment opportunities, leaving behind an aging population less inclined to engage in tourism-related activities [29]. Furthermore, there is a lack of training and awareness programs designed to equip local residents with the necessary skills for successful tourism operations. The absence of structured capacity-building initiatives results in low service quality, limited entrepreneurial capabilities, and a lack of understanding of international tourist expectations [17]. Government-led initiatives often adopt top-down approaches that limit local involvement, restricting the ability of communities to take ownership of CBT projects. This overreliance on centralized planning results in projects that do not align with the socio-cultural context of rural communities, leading to low participation rates [12]. A significant barrier to CBT growth in Azerbaijan is the limited tourism infrastructure in rural areas. Poor road networks, inadequate accommodation facilities, and insufficient transportation options make it difficult for tourists to access CBT sites. The absence of innovative and experience-driven tourism products results in limited tourist engagement, reducing the competitiveness of Azerbaijan's rural tourism sector [53]. The commercialization of traditional practices has led to the trivialization of cultural values, where certain local customs are staged rather than authentically preserved. Additionally, the expansion of tourism in some rural areas has contributed to the acceleration of social inequality, as economic benefits are often concentrated among a small group of individuals rather than being equitably distributed within the community [55]. All these challenges are illustrated in the below fish model, highlighting the key barriers to CBT development in Azerbaijan (Figure 1).

In line with the definition provided by the UN Tourism, a tourism product is a blend of both tangible and intangible components. These include natural, cultural, and man-made resources, attractions, facilities, services, and activities that are centered around a particular focal point. This combination forms the core of a destination's marketing mix and is designed to generate overall visitor experience, which can include emotional responses for potential customers. A tourism product is not only priced but also sold through various distribution channels and follows a life cycle [51]. However, in the context of CBT, tourism products are not limited to these conventional elements. Instead, they are multifaceted and involve the immersion of the visitor into the local culture, environment, and community life [13].

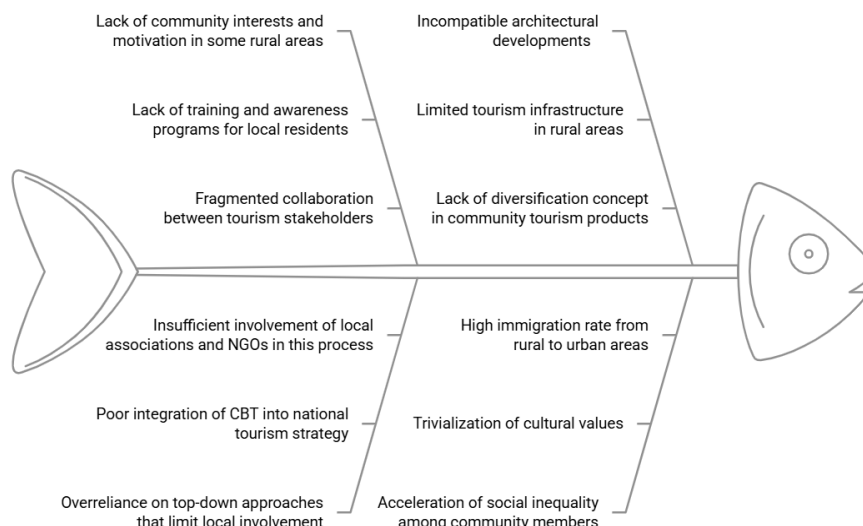


Fig. 1. Fish Model – Challenges for Community-based Tourism in Azerbaijan

Understanding Tourism Products in a Community-based Tourism Context

In a CBT context, the tourism product must be experiential. The key to tourism in CBT is the creation of “experiences” that engage tourists in a meaningful and authentic way, transforming their perception of the destination and connecting them to local customs, practices, and the community [38]. These experiences are deeply rooted in the physical environment, local culture, and the service interactions between visitors and hosts, and they contribute to the construction of the product itself. Thus, the experience provided in CBT is multi-dimensional, mixing tangible elements like local services (e.g., homestays, food) with intangible elements like social and cultural interaction (e.g., storytelling, community events) [7].

CBT products need to deliver an authentic experience to differentiate themselves from mass tourism offerings [50]. The experience should be immersive, where tourists engage directly with the local community, learn about local customs, and participate in activities that are part of everyday life. Therefore, understanding the role of experience, service, and culture is critical when analysing the design and delivery of CBT products. The authenticity of experiences in tourism products is vital in attracting tourists who seek “genuine and local” experiences [10]. In CBT, authenticity is not just about offering traditional customs or heritage; it is about representing the lived experiences of local communities, where the practices and interactions are not staged for tourists, but rather an integral part of the local way of life. Tourism products should reflect an honest portrayal of a community’s culture and history [33].

Local identity plays a critical role in the uniqueness of CBT products. The local identity is a powerful tool for differentiation in tourism [20]. In CBT, the tourism product is deeply embedded in the identity of the community, where the local population becomes both the producer and the consumer of the tourism product. This direct involvement of the community in the creation and management of the tourism product helps preserve and promote local heritage, while simultaneously offering tourists an authentic experience. Community involvement is also a fundamental component of CBT products. This participatory approach ensures that the benefits of tourism are shared equitably, and that the community has control over how tourism impacts their lives [48].

Sustainability is another principal element of a CBT product, ensuring that tourism development does not degrade the environment or culture, but instead contributes to the long-term well-being of the community. In the context of CBT, sustainability encompasses not only environmental concerns but also social and economic aspects. Sustainable CBT products should promote environ-

mental conservation, preserve cultural heritage, support local economies, and ensure equitable benefit-sharing among the community [9]. Sustainable CBT products often include strategies for conservation, such as limiting visitor numbers, using eco-friendly infrastructure, and promoting the responsible use of local resources [22]. The ability of CBT to maintain its sustainability hinges on its adaptability to local conditions. The community must remain at the centre of the development process, ensuring that the product reflects the realities of the area and the aspirations of the local people. Without this participatory approach, the sustainability of the CBT product may be jeopardized.

The CBT Product Wheel, as conceptualized, encapsulates the interplay between tourist experiences and community well-being, highlighting core attributes such as cultural exchange, economic empowerment, and sustainability. The proposition of CBT lies in offering tourists authentic, hands-on experiences while ensuring the preservation of local traditions and capacity-building for host communities [14]. The framework emphasizes dual-value creation, wherein tourists gain experiential learning and emotional fulfilment through village homestays, cultural workshops, folklore storytelling, and agritourism, while local communities experience economic upliftment, strengthened social cohesion, and skill development [55]. Moreover, CBT strengthens resilience, empowerment, and pride among community members by integrating local entrepreneurship and traditional knowledge systems into tourism offerings [34]. Furthermore, the experiential highlights within the CBT Product Wheel underscore the role of local prosperity, inclusivity, and collaboration, which are key components of sustainable tourism development [41]. Through ensuring that tourism practices enhance rather than exploit local resources, CBT aligns with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly in promoting decent work, economic growth (SDG 8), and cultural heritage preservation (SDG 11) [52]. As shown in Figure 2 below, the illustration represents the CBT Product Wheel, highlighting its key components and structure.



Fig. 2. Community-based Tourism Product Wheel

Diversification and Innovation in CBT Products

Traditional forms of CBT have predominantly emphasized basic tourism offerings such as homestays, consumption of local cuisine, and the sale of artisanal handicrafts. These foundational elements remain integral to CBT frameworks; however, emerging trends indicate a growing tourist demand for more experiential forms of engagement [9]. This evolving preference reflects a broader



shift towards experiential tourism, wherein cultural, environmental, and social components are integrated to facilitate authentic and participatory interactions between visitors and host communities. The authentic experiences, in which the tourist becomes involved in the local culture and community life, are a critical aspect of tourism experiences today [11]. This might include cultural rituals, local agricultural practices, or participating in the preservation of local traditions [1].

The concept of CBT 2.0 refers to the next generation of CBT products, which are characterized by a focus on high-value, experience-driven products that appeal to modern travellers' growing demand for adventure, learning, and interactivity. The integration of new experiences such as eco-tourism, adventure tourism, and educational travel is essential to the growth of CBT in the 21st century [45]. In CBT, co-creation allows for a more personalized and interactive experience, where tourists become integral to the tourism product's development. The concept of co-creation is particularly important in CBT because it empowers local communities by giving them an active role in shaping their tourism offerings. One example of sustainable co-creation is the involvement of tourists in conservation efforts or community-led environmental initiatives. In these experiences, tourists do not simply observe local practices but actively participate in sustainable tourism activities such as tree planting, wildlife monitoring, or promoting environmental awareness [35]. The development of innovative tourism products is crucial for the success of CBT initiatives, as it attracts visitors while ensuring that local communities are the primary beneficiaries of tourism activities [6].

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

To ensure a participatory and inclusive approach in the development of CBT products, this study adopted the workshop methodology as its primary qualitative research approach. The participants of the workshop were carefully selected to ensure a diverse representation of key stakeholders involved in the development of CBT in Azerbaijan, including local community members, tourism practitioners, and industry experts.

Workshops are particularly valuable in CBT research as they provide a dynamic environment that triggers active participation, enabling individuals to exchange experiences, co-create innovative solutions, and contribute to the formulation of practical strategies and this methodology is well-suited to the community-centric nature of CBT. Unlike traditional surveys or interviews, workshops facilitate collective brainstorming and real-time feedback, leading to the context-specific solutions [23, 43]. The primary objectives of the workshop were to identify and prioritize key factors influencing the success of CBT products; examine their impact on tourist satisfaction; encourage collaboration in product co-design among stakeholders; encourage active participation from local communities and industry actors; and propose innovative CBT products suited to the unique context of Azerbaijan.

The workshop was organized on the 8th of February 2025, with the participation of nine individuals, including local community members, tourism professionals, and industry experts, alongside one facilitator. The facilitator for this session was the author, who guided the discussions and activities throughout the day. At the beginning of the workshop, the facilitator (the author) delivered an introductory presentation that provided an overview of the findings and discoveries related to the topic. Participants engaged in various interactive activities designed to stimulate discussion, idea generation, and collaborative problem-solving. All participants were fully informed about the workshop's goals and structure before the event.

WORKSHOP RESULTS

The workshop provided a dynamic platform for stakeholders to engage in meaningful discussions about the challenges and opportunities surrounding CBT product development in Azerbaijan. The discussions were structured around the PAR methodology, ensuring that every stakeholder had

an active role in identifying problems and proposing solutions. Key themes and thoughts highlighted by participants are the following:

1. *Community Engagement and Ownership*: One of the recurring themes throughout the workshop was the necessity of community ownership in CBT product development. Participants highlighted that while Azerbaijan has a wealth of cultural and natural assets, the lack of direct community involvement in product design has often led to underutilization of these resources. Several community members emphasized the need for capacity-building programs to empower local residents with the skills.

2. *Innovation in CBT Product Offerings*: A major discussion points centred on the need to diversify CBT offerings beyond traditional homestays and handicrafts. Participants collectively brainstormed tourism products that integrate adventure tourism, agritourism, and experiential learning. Ideas such as “Honey Village Edu-Trail”, “Silk Road Heritage Trails”, and “Interactive Carpentry and Weaving Workshops” emerged as potential flagship CBT products.

3. *Balancing Authenticity and Commercial Viability*: A concern raised during the workshop was maintaining authenticity while ensuring commercial viability. The workshop participants emphasized the importance of creating a tiered approach to CBT development that allows local communities to control the level of tourist interaction with their daily lives. This would ensure that tourism does not intrude upon, but instead enhances, local culture and traditions.

4. *Infrastructure and Policy Support*: Infrastructure gaps were identified as a primary bottleneck hindering CBT growth in Azerbaijan. Community representatives from rural areas pointed out deficiencies in transportation, accommodation, and digital connectivity. Industry experts stressed the importance of integrating CBT into national tourism policies and securing government support.

5. *CBT Product Co-Creation*: According to the workshop participants, successful CBT product development in Azerbaijan requires a structured yet flexible framework that balances innovation, sustainability, and local engagement. As a result of extensive discussions and collaborative brainstorming, the Temple Model emerged as a guiding structure for conceptualizing CBT initiatives. This model represents a holistic approach, outlining key pillars, strategic priorities, and interconnected considerations necessary for developing community-driven tourism. The figure 3 below illustrates the Temple Model:

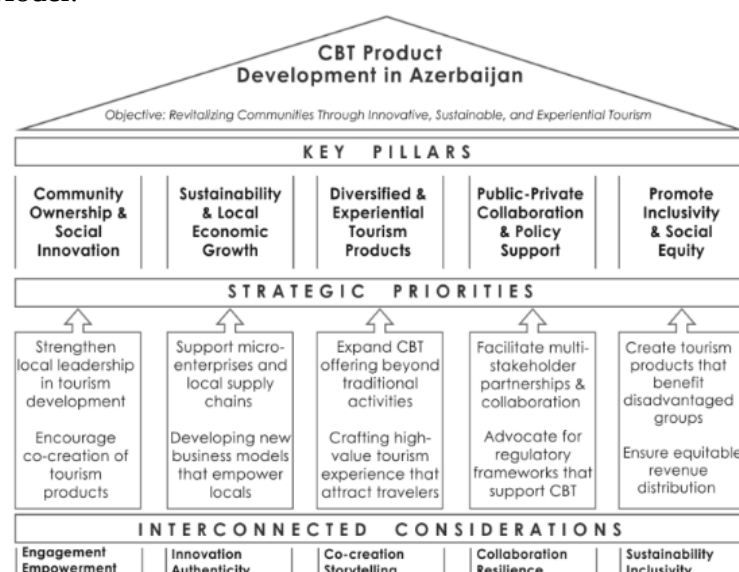


Fig. 3. The Temple Model: Framework for CBT Product Development in Azerbaijan



CONCLUSION

The findings underscore the importance of community empowerment and dynamic tourism ecosystems in stimulating long-term resilience and destination loyalty. Through positioning local communities as active co-creators of tourism experiences, this approach not only empowers local communities and increases a sense of ownership and pride but also ensures that tourism products are deeply rooted in local culture. Unlike the conventional models that focus primarily on static, location-based experiences, this research emphasizes the role of adaptive tourism ecosystems where communities actively shape and co-create dynamic tourism offerings. The integration of the Triple Bottom Line (TBL) with the proposed Temple Model and CBT Product Wheel offers a novel analytical lens through which CBT can be conceptualized not merely as a tourism typology, but as a locally innovation system that supports social resilience, cultural continuity, and sustainable entrepreneurship.

A key theoretical contribution is the introduction of the experience ecosystem approach in CBT, which redefines community participation beyond service provision to include co-creation, co-governance, and co-benefit sharing. This perspective contributes to the growing body of literature that emphasizes the role of local storytelling, emotional engagement, and place-based identity in constructing meaningful tourist experiences. The study argues that community members should transition from passive hosts to active “experience architects”. From a managerial perspective, the study offers a revolutionary approach to CBT governance, experience design, and commercialization strategies. The research underscores the importance of collaborative governance and stakeholder synergy, highlighting that CBT success relies on multi-stakeholder engagement, including local communities, government entities, private investors, and non-governmental organizations. The proposed Eight-Step CBT Product Development Pathway provides a clear and replicable roadmap for practitioners, integrating key stages from community needs assessment to ongoing evaluation.

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AZƏRBAYCANDA İCMA-ƏSASLI TURİZM MƏHSULLARININ İNKİŞAFINA DAİR İNNOVATİV VƏ PRAKTİK YANAŞMALAR

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İcma-əsaslı turizm, xüsusilə Azərbaycanın kənd yerlərində inklüziv inkişaf üçün əsas strateji alət kimi getdikcə daha çox tanınmaqdadır. Ənənəvi turizm modellərindən fərqli olaraq, icma-əsaslı turizm konsepsiyası yerli icmaların turizmin inkişafında fəal rol oynamasını və onların rifahının yaxşılaşdırılmasını təşviq edir. Bu yanaşmada icma üzvləri sadəcə faydalanan tərəf kimi deyil, eyni



zamanda turizm məhsullarının planlaşdırılması, hazırlanması və təqdim edilməsində əsas aktorlar kimi çıxış edirlər. Bu tədqiqatın əsas məqsədi, Azərbaycanın kənd turizmi üçün uyğun, innovativ və praktik icma-əsaslı turizm məhsullarının diversifikasiyası üzrə strategiyaların hazırlanmasıdır. Tədqiqatda keyfiyyət tədqiqat metodundan (vörkşöp formatlı) istifadə olunmuşdur. Vörkşöpa əsas maraqlı tərəflər – yerli icma üzvləri, turizm mütəxəssisləri və dövlət qurumlarının nümayəndələri cəlb olunmuşdur. Tədqiqatın nəticələri göstərir ki, əgər yerli icmaların səlahiyyətləndirilməsi, bilik və bacarıqlarının artırılması, həmçinin inklüziv idarəetmə mexanizmləri təmin olunarsa, icma-əsaslı turizm Azərbaycanın kənd ərazilərinin sosial-iqtisadi inkişafında əsas sütunlardan birinə çevrilə bilər.

Açar sözlər: *İcma-əsaslı turizm, kənd turizmi, yerli icmalar, turizm məhsullarının diversifikasiyası, Azərbaycan.*

ИННОВАЦИОННЫЕ И ПРАКТИЧЕСКИЕ МОДЕЛИ К РАЗВИТИЮ ПРОДУКТОВ ТУРИЗМА НА ОСНОВЕ СООБЩЕСТВ В АЗЕРБАЙДЖАНЕ

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Туризм на основе сообществ все чаще признается ключевым стратегическим инструментом инклюзивного развития, особенно в сельских районах Азербайджана. В отличие от традиционных моделей туризма, концепция туризма на основе сообществ поощряет местные сообщества играть активную роль в развитии туризма и повышении своего благосостояния. При таком подходе члены сообщества являются не только бенефициарами, но и ключевыми участниками планирования, разработки и поставки туристических продуктов. Основная цель данного исследования разработать стратегии диверсификации туристических продуктов на основе сообществ, которые являются актуальными, инновационными и практичными для сельского туризма в Азербайджане. В исследовании использовался качественный метод исследования (формат семинара). В семинаре приняли участие ключевые заинтересованные стороны члены местного сообщества, специалисты по туризму и представители государственных органов. Результаты исследования показывают, что если местные сообщества будут наделены полномочиями, их знания и навыки будут расширены, а также будут предоставлены инклюзивные механизмы управления, туризм на основе сообществ может стать одним из основных столпов социально-экономического развития сельских районов Азербайджана.

Ключевые слова: *туризм на основе сообществ, сельский туризм, местные сообщества, диверсификация туристических продуктов, Азербайджан.*