

## EDUTAINMENT AS AN EFFECTIVE TECHNOLOGY IN PREPARING SPECIALISTS IN TOURISM INDUSTRY

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### ABSTRACT

This article attempts to highlight the importance of using edutainment technology in preparing highly qualified specialists in tourism field that have enough practical knowledge and skills to grow professionally in tourism industry.

**Keywords:** Tourism, education, entertainment, edutainment, attractions.

### INTRODUCTION

The tourism sector is one of the most significant economic activities in many countries worldwide. Its direct economic impact has substantial influences on their GDPs. Tourism's total contribution to the global economy has risen to 10,2% of global GDP (US \$7,6 trillion), not only outpacing the wider economy, but also growing faster than other important sectors such as financial and business services, transport and manufacturing. In total, nearly 290 million jobs were supported according to Travel & Tourism in 2016 (Travel & tourism economic impact 2017 world).

The government of Uzbekistan pays a vast deal of attention on the development of the tourist industry: the development of services defined as one of the top priorities of socio-economic growth of the country. Despite the existing tourism infrastructure, the volume, types, and quality of tourism services provided, and the distribution of available tourism capacities by regions, Uzbekistan's rich, varied tourism and recreational potential remains low. In fact, the direct contribution of Travel & Tourism to GDP in 2016 was UZS 2,002.6 bn (1.0% of GDP). This is forecasted to increase by 7.2% to UZS 2,147.3 bn in 2017. This primarily reflects the economic activity generated by industries such as hotels, travel agents, airlines, and other passenger transportation. The direct contribution of Travel & Tourism to GDP is expected to grow by 6.2% to UZS 3,924.8 bn (1.0% of GDP) by 2027. (Travel & Tourism, Economic Impact 2017, Uzbekistan)

Therefore, only on December 2, 2016, the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoev directed number of changes to push tourism sector as whole. Accordingly, Decree on "Measures to ensure the rapid development of tourism in the Republic of Uzbekistan", introduces the status of this strategic sector of the economy, sustainable development, structural change and the diversification of the economy, employment, and directs it into a powerful tool for improving the quality of life of the population.

For that reason, such kind of reforms, not only in Travel& Tourism, but also in other fields of the national economy, are required to develop the efficiency of entities and companies. In order to achieve this goal, it is essential to attract highly qualified specialists into the fields, so that they can work more efficiently by implementing latest technologies and innovations. Therefore,

this means that training skillful and qualified specialists in the field of tourism is one the main issues that has to be dealt with.

Practically in Uzbekistan, the system of continuing professional education is in its initial stage. Now there is no legal regulation of the participation of employers in the system of vocational training of personnel, there is no provision for government stimulation of business participation in the training of specialists in tourism business.

Therefore, at present, the training of specialists takes place more at the level of theory. Most of the times students lack practical skills. This article investigates the opportunities of using Edutainment education technology which has a number of methodological advantages and prospects and which can be an effective tool for developing practical skills of tourism students.

The aim of this paper is to determine the characteristics and methodological potential of technology Edutainment in preparing specialists in the field of tourism based on a review and analysis of the literature.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

**Edutainment** – Game-based learning and the form of the educational process in conditional situations, aimed at recreating and assimilating public experience in all its manifestations: knowledge, skills, emotional and evaluative activities. Nowadays, it is often referred to as edutainment, which means educational entertainment or education through entertainment.

Learning through Edutainment is meant to blend many elements together which are media, classroom environment, variety kind of activities and they supposed to cause happiness in play and learn. (Tiamyod Pasawano, 2014)

Amongst the numerous phenomena of sector convergence, *edutainment*, the convergence of education and entertainment, is especially interesting given its recent diffusion and also the importance of the two convergent sectors (King, 1993; Wolf, 1999).

Rob Donovan, a professor at the Australian University means by "edutainment" deliberate "combining social order with an entertainment mechanism" for the rapid achievement of certain goals set by society. The author believes that the "edutainment" is effective for obtaining more information by a large number of people in a short period of time. At the same time, the presentation of potentially complex topics takes place in an unserious manner, which allows you to remove unwanted pressure on the psyche.

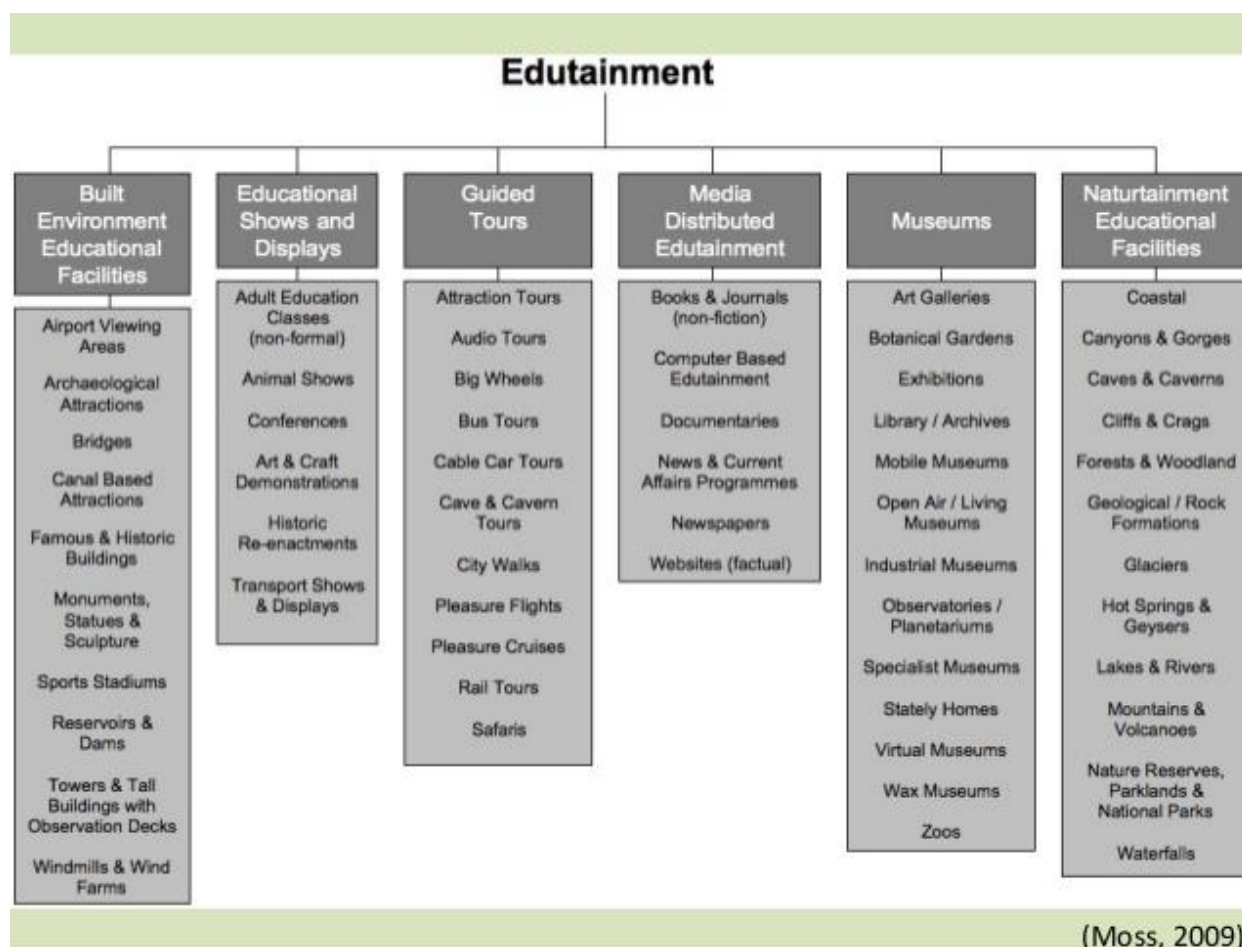
Edutainment is applied in order to teach learners how they should use their own knowledge, analyzing things that they learn, combining things that they perceive or evaluating things that they learn (Charsky, 2010).

## Research methodology

The principle of learning through entertainment was brilliantly embodied and developed in Disneyland, and then other theme parks in the world. Universal for both children and adults, it helps to attract adults to theme parks, to unite people of different ages and to strengthen the image of theme parks as family recreation centers. Thus, in Sea World parks ("Sea World"; USA) educational content is present in all entertainment programs: during the marine animal show, visitors can familiarize themselves with valuable scientific data on the behavior of dolphins, killer whales, and seals obtained during their training.

With the development of theme parks, excursions on them were gradually replaced by the organization of a full-fledged learning process in a new format, the opening of various training programs, the creation of specialized schools, the release of educational books, etc.

Technology of edutainment allows students to obtain necessary knowledge in relaxed atmosphere and by experiencing the whole process from the first hand. This technology has huge potential for enhancing practical skills of tourism students that can be acquired by paying a visit to tourist attractions. Tourism students will be able to learn a lot by visiting monuments, statues, famous and historic buildings. This educational process can be organized by using interesting games and activities at sights. According to Moss, technology of Edutainment includes in itself different activities such as educational shows and displays, guided tours, visiting museums, natural areas. (Fig.1)



### Analysis and Results

The opportunity to mix education with entertainment will ensure practical knowledge for tourism and leisure students since their physical presence at the attraction will equip them with this knowledge.

Based on the above mentioned it can be said that informal learning provides better results in teaching students to tourism as in informal method learning is not the sole and ultimate objective which should guide our activity but is included in a continuum of cultural leisure and tourism. Students who take part in informal learning usually keen on spending their time interestingly at tourist attraction outside the classroom environment.

It is also important to note is that tourism activities move in the environment of “edutainment”, with a part devoted to education and another to entertainment. It is becoming really difficult to get significant results in formal learning situations especially for tourism students who need practical skills.

By using technology of edutainment tourism students will be able to acquire practical knowledge and strengthen the theoretical knowledge that they obtained in the classroom.

## **CONCLUSION**

Taking into account the above mentioned effects of edutainment in teaching tourism related subjects it can be said that edutainment material is approached easier than traditional educational material. This teaching method has a good opportunity to make the learning process more interesting and effective as knowledge should be transmitted in an understandable, simple and interesting form, as well as in comfortable conditions. This means that it is essential to establish and apply more edutainment materials designed specifically for tourism students in the process of education.

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