



ECONOMIC ASPECTS OF CERTIFIED POLISH CULTURAL PRODUCTS IN LIGHT OF RESEARCH

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Abstract- The purpose of researching a number of Polish tourist-oriented, high quality products was to determine the key economic factors for cultural tourism improvement in Poland. The results of research studies, which can assist tourism enterprises further develop the highest quality products of cultural tourism, have indicated that modern day tourist's preferences are high-quality products. The studies have proven that the most important single factor influencing high quality products supply, was local authorities' support of the tourist-oriented organizations that have developed the brands (based on high quality) cultural products. The unique features of this research has been confirmed by A. Mikos von Rohrscheidt based on his studies performed from 2010 to 2014. These studies which are based on analyses of monographs and key scientific papers on cultural tourism published both in Poland and abroad.

Keywords- Cultural products, Market, Supply, Demand, Pricing strategy, Poland

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Introduction

Cultural heritage, i.e. culture values (which are usually priceless) left to us by previous generations, is a foundation for the development of cultural tourism. Cultural heritage encompasses both material culture (e.g. churches, castles, palaces and other historical objects) and immaterial culture (e.g. music, customs and traditions). These elements constitute a basis for engaging in cultural tourism, a term which the European Association for Tourism and Leisure Education (ATLAS) [1] defined in the second half of the 1980s. The association described cultural tourism as a form of tourism in which the interests of travellers revolve around a rich past of people and areas that is preserved and reflected in historical monuments, historical regions, traditional architecture and traditional craftwork [2]. This definition should be expanded to include human activity linked to the need to see how other people live, which satisfies people's curiosity and desire to see other people in their 'authentic' environment, as well as the desire to witness physical manifestations of their activity in art, craft, music, literature, dance, drinking, eating, play, language and rituals [3].

Cultural tourism is undergoing a dynamic development in the modern world, e.g. in Nova Scotia [4]. Tourist board representatives in tourist-generating countries are key agents in image formation. The views of such agents in the UK are presented in this paper to determine the agents' perception of cultural tourism as part of their country's product offer, the rationale behind the promotion of this tourism, and the agents' awareness of its consequences [5]. Cultural tourism has been observed to have a particular importance not only as a new market for growth, but also due to political reasons, as it is a means of producing favourable images of countries [5]. However, after observing the richness of cultural heritage in Poland and throughout the world during his numerous travels through Europe, Asia and Africa, the author is of the opinion that this potential is not exploited adequately, and thus cultural tourism is developing suboptimally.

One of the obstacles to the dynamic development of cultural tourism is that the factors influencing its development are not sufficiently identified, and, consequently, there is a lack of economic profits obtained by selling cultural tourism products on the market. Thus, the research hypothesis in this paper is as

follows: cultural tourism products will be produced in a better manner (they will be more adjusted to tourists' needs) and sold in greater numbers if the factors influencing key market elements, i.e. demand, supply and price-setting, are properly determined. Determining these factors will facilitate commercialization, i.e. the market approach to developing, promoting and selling cultural tourism products.

Analysis of the current state of research on cultural tourism shows that there is a significant number of studies discussing the fundamental issues of this subject matter, the history of cultural tourism, the methodology of studies on cultural tourism, and people engaging in this form of tourism. The most important foreign monographs on fundamental issues in cultural tourism published after 2010 include the following [6-10]. As far as Polish publications are concerned, there are only works published between 2008 and 2010 [11-15]. Economic issues concerning tourism are described in monographs entitled [16-17]. The Polish and international markets offer few publications on the history of cultural tourism and the methodology of studies on cultural tourism and cultural tourists. It can be observed that significant progress in studies on cultural tourists and the management of cultural tourism occurred in Poland in the period between 2012 and 2014. There are also a few foreign publications on economic aspects of cultural tourism [19-21]. Furthermore, articles concerning economic issues in cultural tourism are appearing on the Polish publishing market, e.g. in the *Cultural Tourism* online journal and publications related to the *Culture and Tourism* conference series organized in Lodz since 2006. However, there is still a lack of studies discussing the economic aspects of organizing and engaging in cultural tourism, which, according to studies by A. Mikos von Rohrscheidt [22], is a 'prolonging state of a significant insufficiency' in a crucial aspect of the analysis of cultural tourism. Thus, this paper partially fills that gap in economic theory, ordering the most important factors of supply and demand of cultural tourism. The article presents the results of empirical research cultural tourism products that were awarded a certification by the Polish Tourism Organization in 2003-2014.

Cultural tourism product: a literature review

A product is everything that is present on a market that gains attention, is purchased, used or consumed and fulfils a person's wishes and needs [23]. In the case of tourism, it can be assumed that anything that is exchanged on the tourism market is a product. Therefore, a tourism product is, e.g. accommodation in a hotel, dinner in a restaurant, a holiday, tour, canoeing, rented tourist equipment, a hiking trail or an organized cultural event. In the Polish literature on tourism, the term *product*, which to a large degree is made up of services, was initially disputed by linguists, as they believed that the term was reserved for material products only. Currently, the term is a significant tool in organizing the market approach to goods and tourism services [24]. It is also a key element in the promotion and development of tourism. In the economic and market arrangement, a tourist product is a crucial element that determines the success of tourism enterprises, including enterprises in cultural tourism.

The notion of a *tourist product* is interpreted variously in the subject literature. Most commonly, 'a tourist product is interpreted in two ways: in the narrower sense, it is understood as everything that a tourist buys, and in the broader sense, it is everything that a tourist does during a journey and at their destination (during their stay at the place, which is the goal of the journey)' [25]. An example of a tourist product in the narrower sense either is the purchase of transport and accommodation separately or as a package deal. M. Courtis [26] understands a tourist product to be the various goods and services offered by enterprises in the tourism industry. A tourist product is also referred to as a set of material products and services that a tourist uses and consumes during their journey [27]. The abovementioned definitions do not take into account tourism values, which are very important for the functioning of tourism as they are used by tourists during their journey and are often the main motivation for embarking on a touristic journey. According to A. Rapacz [28], a tourist product is a set of tourism values (natural and historical), and is, in a broad sense, a whole set of goods and services (apart from tourism values) that allow a tourist to arrive at a place with tourist attractions, stay in that place and use the attractions. In this definition, cultural values are included in the notion of historical tourism values. From a tourist's point of view, a tourist product encompasses all experiences, from the moment of leaving one's home to one's return [16].

For a tourist, the features of a product that affect the degree to which his or her needs are satisfied and the quality of services used to satisfy them are the most important. This is why a tourist product can be regarded as a set of elements, including goods, services and people's notions about them, purchased by tourists to satisfy their needs connected with engaging in tourism [29], and also includes participation in cultural tourism.

Cultural tourism products can be defined as 'by using the cultural tourism resource as basis, anything that can be defined as 'anything that can be offered to tourists for participating in cultural tourism to satisfy their cultural needs and wants' [sic]. According to Richards and Munsters [30] cultural tourism products must involve cultural values through the transformation process [31]. One of the definitions of a cultural tourism product was proposed by B. Mayer [32], who described it as the sum of sensations experienced by a tourist during and after the consumption of a cultural tourism product, assuming that elements connected to culture are the main motive of participating in tourism. A criterion distinguishing a cultural tourism product is that it attracts tourists who are interested in culture. Cities are an example of cultural tourism products. Such a product comprises many sub-products, including investments [33].

A product in cultural tourism is a unique composition of various goods, cultural attractions and related services that tourists can use during their journey and stay. A cultural tourist product is usually developed in relation to unique cultural values and cultural attractions. The core of this product, in relation to which a tourist offer can be designed, is usually a historical object, architecture, folklore, traditions, a cultural event or any combination of these items. K. Gralak [34] points out the use of the unique image of a place when a local immaterial culture, legends, customs and habits are made use of to create products.

A cultural tourism product integrates elements that attract tourists with a certain uniqueness and unusual anthropogenic values, but also allow tourists to satisfy needs related to travelling to and staying in a given area [35].

A cultural tourism product is a set of utilities creating a package of goods and

services that allows tourists to travel for cultural purposes. The most important element of a cultural tourism product is a destination's cultural property resources, which can be both material and immaterial and concern both the past and the present. This is characteristic for historical objects, museums, architecture and religious objects as well as folklore, legends and tales connected with a given area and the lifestyle of locals, etc. Seeing and experiencing these cultural products constitutes the main motive of travels that are conducted in order to become familiar with the culture of a destination.

The elements that make up a tourist product in cultural tourism can be divided into basic components and additional components [Table-1]. Juxtaposing these elements allows a given city or region's attractiveness to tourists to be determined. Basic components directly influence the scope of tourist traffic (motivation for arrival), and additional components affect the development and competitiveness of a given tourist product, including a tourist's impressions and evaluation of the product. When creating a tourist product, it is necessary to pay special attention to the works of material and immaterial culture, which constitute panhuman and national goods. It is also necessary to adopt a comprehensive approach that allows for the use of historical objects along with their spatial context (landscape), which forms a particular frame for an object and increases the attractiveness of cultural tourism products.

Table-1 Basic components and additional components that make up a tourist product in cultural tourism

Basic components	Additional components
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> historical objects local tourist attractions objects of religious worship historical events, anniversaries legendary people, famous people industrial buildings cultural events, festivals, artistic events art galleries, museums, cemeteries current cultural offerings (events, movie theatres, museums, opera) regional cuisine and folklore 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> accommodation facilities catering facilities transport availability, roads, rail connections parking spots for bicycles and motorcycles amenities (e.g. playgrounds for families with children) system of tourist information, cultural information and attraction marking security system favourable social atmosphere image of a given place, condition of the natural environment and its cleanliness local attractions

Source: T. Jędrysiak, [Cultural Tourism]. PWE, Warsaw 2008, p. 127.

To create good products that are sought-after by tourists, it is necessary to create branded products, i.e. high-quality products that stand out against other, similar products, thanks to, e.g. excellent customer service. In Poland there is, in general, a shortage of branded tourist products on the cultural tourism market [36].

Materials and Methods

The study was carried out between 2013 and 2015 to determine the key factors influencing the supply, demand and price-setting of cultural tourism products. It involved investigating tourist products that have received a Certification of the Polish Tourism Organization (PTO), including products that have been awarded a Gold Certificate. In 2003–2004, PTO awarded 169 products with certificates, and seven products received a Gold Certificate (since 2008, the best Polish tourist product of the year has been selected and awarded a Gold Certificate). In order for the study to be representative, 64 products from 16 voivodeships (regions) in Poland were selected for the study. The study investigated four products from each voivodeship because this was the smallest number of products that the PTO certified in a single voivodeship throughout the entire process of certification conducted by the organization (Opolskie voivodeship). The criterion for selecting the research sample was the nature of a given product, i.e. its basis in cultural or national heritage. Another selection criterion was whether a product was representative of the six forms of cultural tourism proposed by the author, i.e. cultural heritage tourism, tourism in industrial and post-industrial objects, military tourism, museum tourism, religious and pilgrimage tourism and tourism of events (including cultural events).

The studied products include: *Palaces and Gardens of the Jeleniagóra Valley, Archeological Festival in Biskupin, Planetarium and Live Gingerbread Museum in*

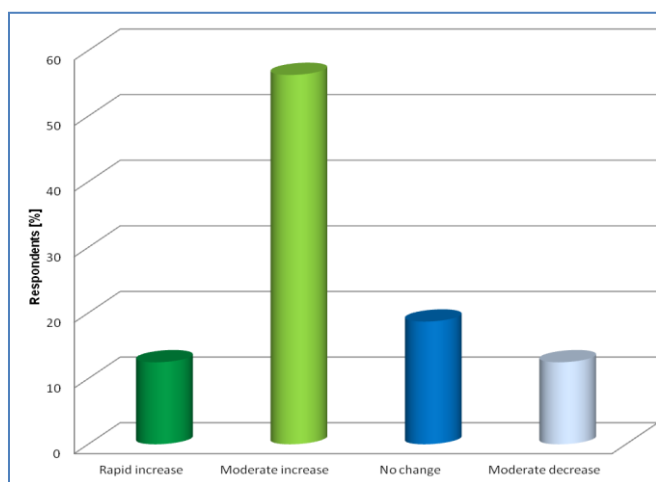
Toruń, Chełm Chalk Tunnels – a historical chalk mine, ‘Dwa Brzegi’ Film and Art Festival in Kazimierz Dolny, ‘Mazowsze Chopina’ Tourist Product, The Warsaw Rising Museum, JuraPark in Krasiejów, Former Cistercians monastery in Pelpin, The Elbląg Canal, Picnic Country in Mrągowo, Enactment of the Battle of Grunwald, Bahnbetriebswerk Wolsztyn, Świnoujście – island fortress.

The study used a diagnostic poll method based on a survey. The research tool was a questionnaire consisting of three parts with a total of 11 questions. The first part comprised questions concerning general information about a product. The second part (four questions) was devoted to the evaluation of the nature of and pricing strategy for a product. The next four questions concerned supply and demand. To evaluate how significant the influence of factors on the supply of and demand for the studied products was, a six-point scale (from 0 to 5) was used, where 0 meant that a given factor was unimportant and 5 meant that the factor had the greatest significance. The group of respondents comprised the owners of the studied products (places) and persons that the owners delegated to (managers or staff at these places).

The first part of the survey asked about the year in which a product was developed and the year in which its sale was launched. The second part of the survey concerned the supply of, demand for and pricing strategy for cultural tourism products. As far as the year of products’ development is concerned, the majority of them originate from the second half of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st century. The oldest researched product was The Trail of the Eagles’ Nests), established in 1950, and the Museum of Papermaking in Duszniki Zdrój, which entered the market as early as 1968 and was established inside of a paper mill in 1605. In the survey, the year of a product’s development and the year it was launched for sale were usually the same, albeit sometimes a few years’ difference occurred. This was probably caused by the need to polish a product and prepare it for the process of commercialization. In the case of products that consist of vast trails running through a few voivodships, the process of commercialization is the slowest.

Results and Discussion

The study asked two questions concerning the supply of cultural tourism products. The first question concerned the tendencies in the evolution of supply over the last five years, i.e. the increase and decrease in the number of individual offers prepared for the sale of a given product [Fig-1]. In the majority of cases (56.3%), the supply of the studied cultural tourism products increased at a moderate speed, and in 12.5% of cases, it increased rapidly. The supply remained constant over the last five years in the case of 18.6% of the products, and in 12.5% of cases it decreased at a moderate speed. No rapid decrease in the supply was observed.

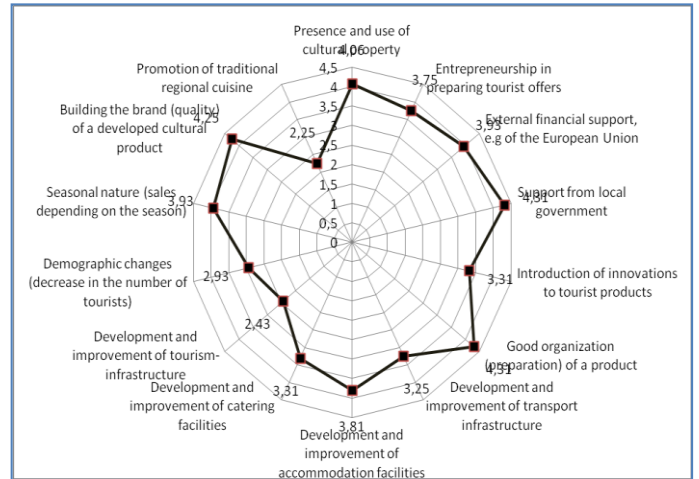


Source: Author’s own work based on the research.

Fig-1 Evolution of the supply of the studied products over the last five years

The second question concerning the supply was to determine the most important factors that, according to the owners and managers of the products, influence the supply of their products [Fig-2]. The distribution of answers was as follows: good organization (preparation) of a product – 4.31 on average; support from local

government – 4.31 on average; building the brand (quality) of a developed cultural product – 4.25 on average; presence and usage of cultural property for the development of tourism – 4.06 on average; external financial support, including assistance measures of the European Union – 3.96 on average; seasonal nature (sales depending on the season) – 3.94 on average; development and improvement of accommodation facilities – 3.81 on average; resourcefulness in preparing tourist offers (cultural products) – 3.75 on average.



Source: Author’s own work based on the research.

Fig-2 Factors affecting the supply of cultural tourism products

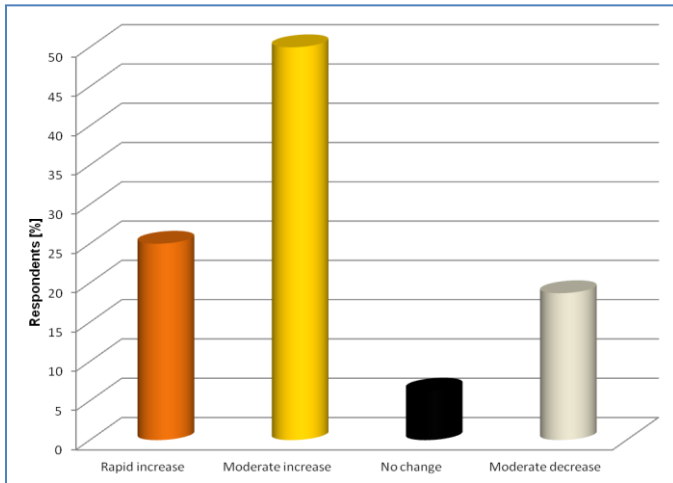
The factors that have the least influence on the supply of cultural tourism products are ‘development and improvement of tourism-related infrastructure’, such as banking services and hairdressing, etc. (2.44 on average), and ‘promotion of traditional regional cuisine’ (2.25 on average).

While assessing the results concerning the factors affecting supply, it should be pointed out that what is noticed most is the need for products to be well-prepared by their owners and managers, and emphasis on the quality and brand of a developed cultural tourism product. ‘Support from local authorities’ was found to be an equally important factor influencing supply, which proves that collaboration between entrepreneurs and local authorities is regarded as highly significant and works well. This is a very positive phenomenon, since, as is indicated in the subject literature (public-private partnership PPP) and shown by previous experiences in communes and voivodships, only a collaboration between numerous entities can be positive for the development of tourism¹. The fact that ‘building the brand (quality) of a developed cultural product’ is ranked highly is also satisfying. The author of the study stressed the importance of this factor several times in this section of the paper, demonstrating the numerous benefits of emphasising quality and brand both for tourism entrepreneurs and for tourists. It is slightly surprising that ‘promotion of traditional regional cuisine’ was considered to be the least significant factor for the supply of cultural products. Other studies conducted in Podlaskie voivodship among tourism entrepreneurs (including the owners of agrotourism farms) proved that regional cuisine is the greatest cultural attraction of a region [37]. It can be concluded that regional cuisine, and thus the old maxim ‘the way to a person’s heart is through their stomach’, is still not used to a sufficient degree as far as the supply of cultural products is concerned.

The demand for the researched cultural tourism products over the last five years was high [Fig-3]. It increased rapidly in the case of 50% of the studied products, and in 25% of cases, the demand increased moderately. For 6.7% of the products, the demand remained constant, and in 18.7% of cases, the demand decreased at a moderate speed. No rapid decrease in demand was observed. In conclusion, it can be said that the demand for the studied cultural tourism products over the last five years increased even more rapidly than the supply because the total amount of

¹Emphasis on collaboration between entities was also confirmed by mentioning this factor as an additional factor in the questionnaire (blank space to fill out). In addition, the study revealed the need to create clusters.

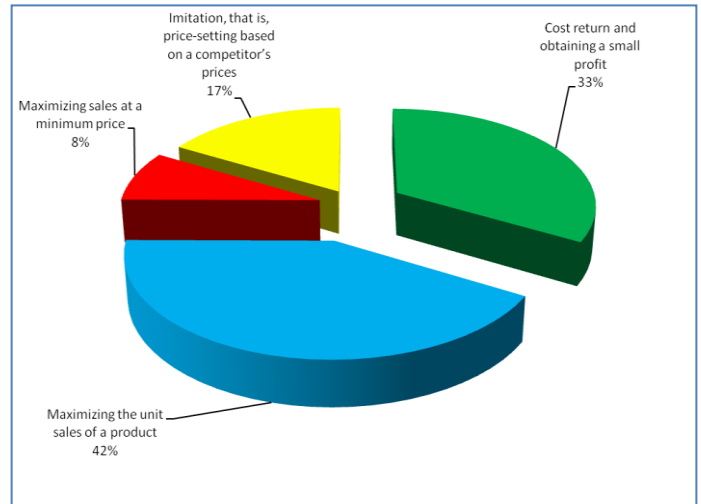
responses that declared a 'moderate increase' and 'rapid increase' was 75%. Among the 12 researched factors [Fig-4], the following ones were considered to have the greatest influence on the demand for the studied cultural tourism products: promotion of cultural tourism products – 4.12 on average; the personality of tourists (their perception, motives, emotions and attitudes) – 3.96 on average; tourists' greater demand for high-quality service and brand products – 3.75 on average. The respondents considered the following factors to be less important: tourists' level of education (growing awareness and improving manners due to education) – 4.62 on average; reference groups (including peer environment) and opinion leaders – 4.56 on average; introduction of new technologies facilitating informatization and improving communication – 4.25 on average; Tourists' income levels (level of affluence) – 4.25 on average.



Source: Author's own work based on the research.

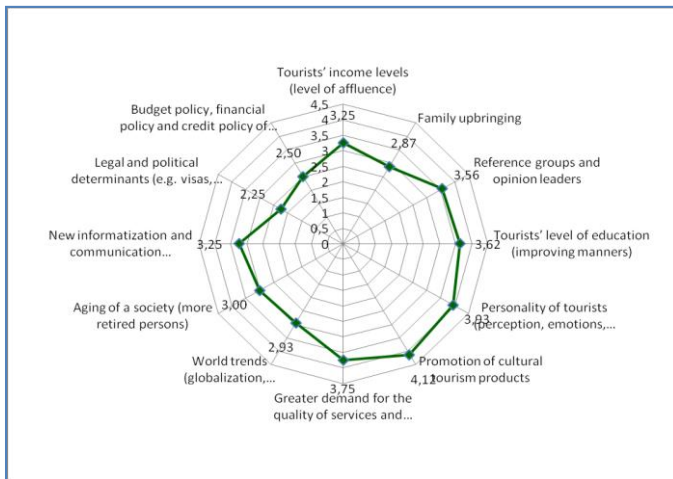
Fig-3 Evolution of the demand for the investigated products over the last five years

cultural tourism products are not well-promoted, tourists will also experience losses from the lack of immaterial benefits (e.g. contentment and satisfaction). The study also asked about an important economic factor that is connected to price. The following question was asked: 'What kind of pricing strategy (price-setting) do you use for your product?' The owners of the products applied all kinds of pricing strategies [Fig-5]. The most frequently used strategy was that of 'maximizing sales at a minimum price' (42% of respondents). The 'cost return and obtaining a small profit' strategy ranked second (33%). The next type of pricing strategy was that of 'imitation, that is, price-setting based on a competitor's prices' (17%), and the last one was called 'maximizing the unit sales of a product' (8%). Markdown was used only in the case of two researched products, and it concerned both seasonal sales and discounts for families.



Source: Author's own work based on the research.

Fig-5 Pricing strategies used for the studied cultural tourism products



Source: Author's own work based on the research.

Fig-4 Factors influencing the demand for cultural tourism products

The factors that (according to the respondents) have the least influence on demand in cultural tourism are the following ones: financial policy and credit policy of a given state, and legal and political determinants (e.g. permits, visas and vouchers).

While evaluating the obtained results concerning the factors that influence the demand for cultural tourism products, it should be emphasized that promotion placed highest in the rankings. This opinion is justified; it is pointless to develop even the best cultural tourism product if it fails to sell because tourists are not informed of its existence. Unsold products generate losses because their preparation requires expenditures, time and considerable mental and physical work. These losses are not compensated for either in the material sense or through immaterial benefits such as an entrepreneur's sense of satisfaction. If

As far as the results related to the application of pricing strategies are concerned, the fact that the pricing strategy of 'maximizing sales at the minimum price' received the highest ranking should be evaluated positively (especially from the point of view of tourists). Such an approach to price-setting is also beneficial for entrepreneurs, who compensate a smaller profit per unit with volume of sales. On the other hand, the near lack of markdowns is unsatisfactory. Small discounts always have a very positive influence on tourists' opinion of tourism entrepreneurs, even if tourists are not entitled to a discount at a given moment because, e.g. they buy a product only for themselves and not for a whole family. Research shows marked differences (apparent) between the rates of evolution of demand and supply of cultural tourism products, eg. in the promotion. During interviews with respondents also indicated a very important role in the promotion of supply, but according to the literature promotion is primarily a demand factor. Good preparation of the product and its promotion – being identified as crucial. But sometimes, for some unforeseen reasons, such as fear of traveling to tourist destinations (eg. terrorism), suddenly falling demand for sharp way. As a result, in a short period of time followed economic losses in the airlines and hotels. In the long term they do not develop investment in infrastructure, and tourism businesses (especially small ones) may cease exist.

Conclusions

Attempts to develop branded products of cultural tourism are successfully undertaken in Poland. The annual competition for the best branded tourist product, organized by the Polish Tourism Organization since 2003, is the most important initiative in this respect. The purpose of the competition is to determine and promote the most attractive, innovative and tourist-friendly cultural tourism products. The winners are awarded the Certificates of the PTO, which are a ticket to multifaceted promotional and marketing activities carried out in Poland and abroad.

While evaluating the results of this study, which investigated the factors that influence the demand for cultural tourism products, the fact that promotion

received the highest ranking. Such results seem to be understandable and satisfactory as the effort made to develop even the best cultural tourism product is wasted if the product does not sell due to tourists' lack of knowledge about it. An unsold product generates losses because its preparation requires expenditures, time and considerable mental and physical work; these losses are not compensated for either in the material sense or by immaterial benefits such as an entrepreneur's sense of satisfaction. If cultural tourism products are not well-promoted, tourists also experience losses from the lack of immaterial benefits (e.g. contentment and satisfaction).

However, a product should be, above all, well prepared, and this is why the high ranking of quality and brand, i.e. third, is satisfying. Owners and managers of cultural tourism products notice a greater demand among tourists for high-quality services and branded products. Owners and managers themselves also try to take special care to develop products of the highest quality and build a brand, which was indicated by the study addressing the factors influencing supply. The factor that placed second was 'tourists' personalities (their perception, emotions, attitudes and motives)'. A tourist's personality is shaped by other factors that also ranked highly. These are education (fourth position), reference groups, including peers and opinion leaders (fifth position), and family upbringing. However, the influence of family on the demand for cultural tourism products is ranked quite low, i.e. 10th. This may be caused by the fact that cultural tourism started developing as late as at the end of the 20th and beginning of the 21st centuries. Therefore, no tradition concerning cultural tourism is being passed on from generation to generation in families. Up until the turn of the last century, tourism in Polish families was associated with and taken up in the form of leisure, i.e. trips to the sea and mountains. However, cultural tourism, which involves becoming familiar with a cultural heritage (sightseeing), was mainly practiced during school trips. According to the respondents, the factors connected with legal and political determinants, as well as with budget policy, financial policy and credit policy in a given state, have the least influence on demand in cultural tourism. This attitude seems to be perfectly justified, because what tourists consider to be most important is a product itself, especially the brand and promotion of the product, that is, whether information about the product has successfully reached them.

Concluding the conducted study, it can be stated that the supply of cultural tourism products on the market has increased systematically over the last five years (68.8% in total), and the fact that demand remained constant in some cases (during the worldwide crisis in recent years) should be considered some sort of success. The study observed a high marketing awareness among the owners and managers of the products because the promotion of a tourist product ranked first among the analysed factors. The high ranking of the factor called 'support from local authorities' proves that collaboration between entrepreneurs and local authorities is considered to be very important, and it brings hope that tourism will be more successfully developed (achieving better synergy). The high ranking of the factor 'building the brand (quality) of a developed cultural product' is also satisfying because the numerous benefits that both tourists and the people who develop products attain from this [38]. Tourists gladly buy a given product again and recommend it to their family and friends.

Based on the fact that the 'promotion of traditional regional cuisine' placed last among the factors affecting the supply of cultural products, it can be assumed that traditional regional cuisine is not used in the supply of cultural products. Therefore, the old principle that 'the way to a person's heart is through their stomach' is not used adequately. These results are different from those obtained in the study conducted by the author in Podlaskie voivodeship from 2009 to 2012. That study, which was carried out among tourism entrepreneurs (including the owners of agriculture farms), proved that it is precisely regional cuisine that constitutes the greatest tourist attraction of a given region [37].

Concluding the study concerning the application of pricing strategies, the top placement of the strategy called 'maximizing sales at a minimum price' should be evaluated positively (especially from tourists' point of view). Such an approach to price-setting is also beneficial for entrepreneurs, who compensate a smaller profit per unit with volume of sales. On the other hand, the near lack of markdowns is unsatisfactory. Small discounts always have a very positive influence on tourists' opinions of tourism entrepreneurs, even if tourists are not entitled to a discount at a

given moment because, e.g. they buy a product only for themselves and not for a whole family.

Studies that determine and partially forecast the key economic factors for cultural tourism products constitute a foundation for entrepreneurs of tourism who produce and sell cultural tourism products in Poland. The method and the results of research could be applied to other countries where cultural tourism is also quite important.

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