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Cultural entrepreneurship and development. Case study: fiesta de la Sal – Ibiza

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Abstract

This present paper examines the concept of cultural entrepreneurship and focuses on the "Fiesta de la Sal" in Ibiza as a case study. Its purpose is to present how cultural development arises from this specific action. The Salt Festival, the objectives of the organizers, the various activities that take place during the festival, the activities that promote cultural heritage, and enhance the local economy are some of the topics that will be examined in this study, as well as the benefits of cultural entrepreneurship, the characteristics of the cultural entrepreneur, the role of cultural development in promoting cultural heritage and creativity. The study also examines the festival's role in the cultural development of Ibiza and its contribution to the region's sustainable development.

Keywords: Fiesta De La Sal; Salt; Sustainable Development; Cultural Entrepreneurship; Festival.

1. Introduction

Cultural entrepreneurship is one of the most important drivers of development in modern societies. Utilizing cultural heritage helps create new employment opportunities, develop the cultural sector, and bring economic prosperity. Ibiza, known for its nightlife and beaches, has managed to highlight another aspect of its cultural wealth through the events of the "Fiesta de la Sal" (Salt Festival). This paper will study the case of the "Fiesta de la Sal" in Ibiza and analyze its contribution to cultural entrepreneurship and local development.

2. Cultural entrepreneurship

According to Kuratko (2017), entrepreneurship is defined as the evolutionary process of vision, change, and creation, which requires energy and passion for developing creative solutions and realizing innovative ideas.

Entrepreneurship is also the process of creating, developing, and managing a business with the aim of making a profit. It involves the ability to recognize opportunities, develop innovative ideas, and implement them in sustainable business models (Manola, 2022).

Entrepreneurship begins with the ability to recognize opportunities that may arise in the market. It includes understanding consumer needs, correctly predicting market trends, and filling gaps that may arise with new products or services. Innovation is a fundamental element of entrepreneurship as it involves the development of new ideas and solutions that can add value to consumers. Innovation is what can differentiate one venture from others.

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Entrepreneurs often take risks, as creating and running a business involves uncertainties and challenges. Risk management and adaptability are essential qualities that an entrepreneur must possess to overcome unforeseen obstacles and ensure the sustainability of their venture.

The success of a business plan requires strategic thinking and detailed planning, while entrepreneurs must set clear goals, develop business plans, and define the strategy they will follow from the start.

According to Dobreva and Ivanov (2020), cultural entrepreneurship can be defined as the activity of establishing cultural enterprises and promoting cultural and creative products and services that contain cultural value in the market but also have the potential to generate economic revenue.

Ratten (2017) argues that cultural entrepreneurship is characterized by the increasing recognition of the importance of the arts for the economic development of a region.

Specifically, cultural entrepreneurship involves the creation, management, and development of business activities related to culture and the arts. It incorporates innovation and creativity in the development, promotion, and distribution of cultural products and services. Additionally, its purpose is to ensure sustainability, as well as the cultural development of society. Cultural entrepreneurship aims not only for profit but also for the preservation and promotion of each place's cultural heritage.

Through cultural entrepreneurship, cultural heritage can be utilized. Elements of a region's local cultural heritage can be used to develop unique products and experiences. Cultural entrepreneurship creates jobs and new income, boosting the local economy. Cultural products and services can also attract tourists and investors, thus significantly contributing to the development of local communities (Klamer, 2011).

By showcasing and promoting cultural traditions, cultural entrepreneurship contributes to preserving cultural identity and enhancing social cohesion. Entrepreneurs must be alert to recognize opportunities that may arise (Kirzner, 1979). They must be creative regarding artistic content as well as in organizing discussions and handling finances. They must be communicative and able to persuade artists to collaborate with them, generate interest in art, attract people, and secure the necessary revenue. They must be prudent and demonstrate courage, hope, and faith in their actions (McCloskey, 2006).

3. Cultural entrepreneurship & cultural development

Cultural development refers to promoting cultural heritage and creativity as key elements for social, economic, and environmental sustainability. Cultural development incorporates cultural elements into development strategies to enhance social cohesion, create economic opportunities, and promote environmental protection (Maniou, 2023), (Maniou, 2024b).

Moreover, it plays a crucial role in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals adopted by the UN. It supports efforts to protect cultural and natural heritage, contributes to creating sustainable and resilient cities, and promotes inclusion and equality (Mitoula, 2023) (Tsalbasoglou & Maniou, 2023).

Cultural activities and creative industries can create jobs and strengthen the local economy while simultaneously promoting social cohesion and a sense of identity (UNESCO, 2010). Preserving and promoting cultural heritage enhances tourism and educational development, creating positive economic and social outcomes (Sergopoulos, 2021) (Tsalbasoglou & Maniou, 2023).

Cultural development requires coordinated efforts from governments, international organizations, and local communities to protect and promote cultural heritage and integrate cultural elements into development strategies. These efforts must be participatory, respect local traditions, and promote cultural diversity and creativity as drivers of sustainable development (UNESCO, 2009) (UNESCO, 2013).

In conclusion, cultural development is the process of improving, enhancing, and promoting cultural resources and activities in a society. It includes creating, supporting, and developing cultural infrastructure and promoting cultural activities. Cultural development contributes to social cohesion as all citizens have access to diverse cultural experiences and activities. Finally, cultural development helps preserve and protect each place's cultural heritage (Manola, 2022a) (Manola, 2022b) (Ikonomou & al., 2024).

Entrepreneurship, and especially the cultural part of it, has changed radically in the last decade. This is so because of the widespread usage and penetration of digital technologies in all domains of life, of education, as well as in entrepreneurial life. The usage of digital technologies in education facilitates education itself but at the same time it produces citizens that rely more on ICTs for their daily life and for consumption of cultural products and goods. The ICTs today are the vehicle for acceleration of all the aspects of citizens life including education, culture and entrepreneurship [27-39]

4. Case study: fiesta de la sal - ibiza

The "Fiesta de la Sal" in Ibiza is an annual cultural festival that celebrates the island's long and rich history of salt production. Salt production has played a crucial role in the economic and social development of Ibiza for centuries. This festival is an opportunity to honor this tradition and highlight the cultural and historical values associated with salt production.

Salt played a significant role in the ancient world as a food preservative, leading to the creation of salt flats by the Phoenicians, who were major producers of salted fish, an activity that continues to this day (Manola, 2023). Salt was the main source of wealth for Ibiza, and the revenue from it formed the basis of the economy, funding the construction of walls and towers for the defense of the entire island.

4.1. History of salt in ibiza

Salt production in Ses Salinas can be traced back to 540 BC when the Carthaginians occupied the island. In 122 BC, it came under the control of the Roman Empire until the island was conquered by the Vandals and Byzantines. A Roman soldier's salary partly consisted of salt, called "salarium argentum," meaning "salt money," from which the modern English word "salary" is derived. For many years, the techniques of salt production in the Salinas flats remained almost the same until the Spanish "Reconquista" in 1235 AD. Significant changes in harvesting techniques increased the quantity of salt production. Up to 25,000 tons of salt were produced annually in Ibiza. Since salt was the most common means of preserving food, its production on the island was highly valued. The harvesting was usually done in the scorching heat of July and August. Once seawater evaporated, sea salt was left behind and collected. Men from all over the island came hoping to find work. Huge baskets filled with salt were carried on the head of each worker and transported to boats or barges, which then distributed it worldwide. Conditions in the salt flats were notoriously harsh for many years, changing only when the process was industrialized a few hundred years ago. The Parque Natural de Ses Salinas was declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1999. The natural park hosts rich fauna, such as flamingos, various hawk species, waders, waterfowl, herons, and starlings (Maniou & al., 2024a) (Vlachos, 2023).

4.2. The salt festival

Every October, the salt flats of Ibiza transform into an exciting setting for the "Fiesta de la Sal" (Salt Festival), a unique tourist and cultural event dedicated to celebrating the cultural heritage and traditions associated with the traditional salt harvest. The event, held in the natural park Las Salinas, promises a rich variety of activities paying tribute to the traditional practices linked to this ancient activity. It also highlights the remarkable natural environment in which the salt flats operate. Participants can engage in various activities in the Salinas de Ibiza, such as salt harvesting, children's games, interactive visits, traditional dances, tastings, a crafts market, exhibitions, and concerts (Maniou & al., 2024a).

The festival is co-organized by the municipal council of Sant Josep, the council of Eivissa, and the natural reserve Ses Salines d'Eivissa, aiming to honor the people who worked in the salt flats. It hosts a variety of activities throughout the day to raise public awareness about the traditions surrounding the manual salt harvest. The initiative aims to reduce the seasonality of the tourism industry while introducing an additional attraction for both residents and visitors, connecting tradition and culture with tourism through activities related to the area's customs and traditions. It also allows visitors to approach the natural reserve from a different perspective.



Source: WIKIPEDIA

Figure 1 Pequeños Trenes - Salinas de Ibiza y Formentera,

4.3. Festival activities

The festival begins at Era de l'Antic Munt de Sal, a threshing floor next to the old salt mountain, reminiscent of the ancient tradition that called salt producers from across the island to come and work for salt extraction.

The tower Torre de sa Sal Rossa, guarding the ancient salt pier, offers guided tours that include historical reenactments of guards, salt workers, and pirates. A central event of the festival is a representation depicting manual salt extraction by a group of workers using authentic tools of the era and wearing traditional attire. Salt extraction was manual until 1955, when the company "Salinera Española" began mechanizing the process. Visitors can witness a highly realistic portrayal with commentary from a former salt producer (Manniou & al., 2024a).

The Parc Natural de ses Salines d'Eivissa is the natural sanctuary with the widest and most valuable biodiversity in Ibiza. Morning tours starting from the Interpretation Center (Centro de Interpretación) allow for full enjoyment of the unique nature.

Traditional uses of salt are presented, such as its preservation for olives, meat, and dried fish. Additionally, visitors can taste a traditional dish, known as huesos con col. At noon, local restaurants also participate in the event with a special menu featuring characteristic dishes made with seasonal products where Ibiza salt plays a starring role.

Furthermore, the traditional music ensemble of Sant Jordi performs a traditional Ibiza dance, while the parish priest reenacts the Christian ritual of Salpassa, touring the homes of the area, leaving blessings and salt at the doors for protection.

At the exhibition space La Nave, audiovisual material from speeches and conferences is presented, featuring former salt producers and historians explaining the unquestionable significance and heritage of the salt production industry imprinted on the island.

Finally, the public can visit the Pou des carbó, a well providing water since 1785 and used in salt production.

5. Fiesta de la sal - cultural entrepreneurship & local development

The "Fiesta de la Sal" is an excellent example of cultural entrepreneurship. The benefits of this cultural business initiative are social, economic, and environmental. Through the festival, Ibiza's cultural heritage and history are promoted, while economic opportunities are created for the island's entrepreneurs. Specifically, through events, exhibitions, and historical reenactments, the "Fiesta de la Sal" contributes to the preservation and dissemination of the area's history and cultural heritage. The festival attracts visitors from Spain and around the world, increasing tourist traffic and, consequently, revenue for local businesses. It is also significant that it takes place every year in October, helping to address the seasonality of tourism in the area by providing an incentive for visitors to come to the island during a period of lower tourist demand. Moreover, the festival highlights Ibiza's salt and other traditional products, offering local producers the opportunity to present them to a wide audience, increasing their recognition and sales.

Additionally, many residents participate in the events, contributing positively to the local community. Furthermore, alongside the activities, the environmental significance of the island's salt flats is promoted, and the rich fauna found there is highlighted (Maniou & al., 2024a).

The Salt Festival enhances significant aspects of cultural development. It contributes to the preservation of Cultural Heritage by helping to protect the island's historical monuments, environment, and traditions. Additionally, the festival supports the region's creative activities by boosting the arts and cultural activities. Moreover, educational activities are promoted, aiming at understanding, and appreciating cultural heritage (MANOLA, 2022c) (Manola, 2023a).

6. Conclusions

Cultural development can significantly contribute to economic prosperity. Cultural tourism and the artistic sector create jobs and boost the local economy while simultaneously attracting investments and capital.

In conclusion, cultural development plays a crucial role in strengthening cultural identity and improving the standard of living. It enhances social cohesion, promotes economic prosperity, and creates a dynamic environment that encourages creativity and innovation. Through the preservation of cultural heritage and the promotion of cultural participation, societies can develop in a way that respects the past and considers the future.

Compliance with ethical standards

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Disclosure of conflict of interest

The Authors proclaim no conflict of interest.

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