

ASERS

Journal of Environmental Management and Tourism

Quarterly

Volume XIV

Issue 6(70)

Fall 2023

ISSN 2068 – 7729

Journal DOI

<https://doi.org/10.14505/jemt>

ASERS
Publishing

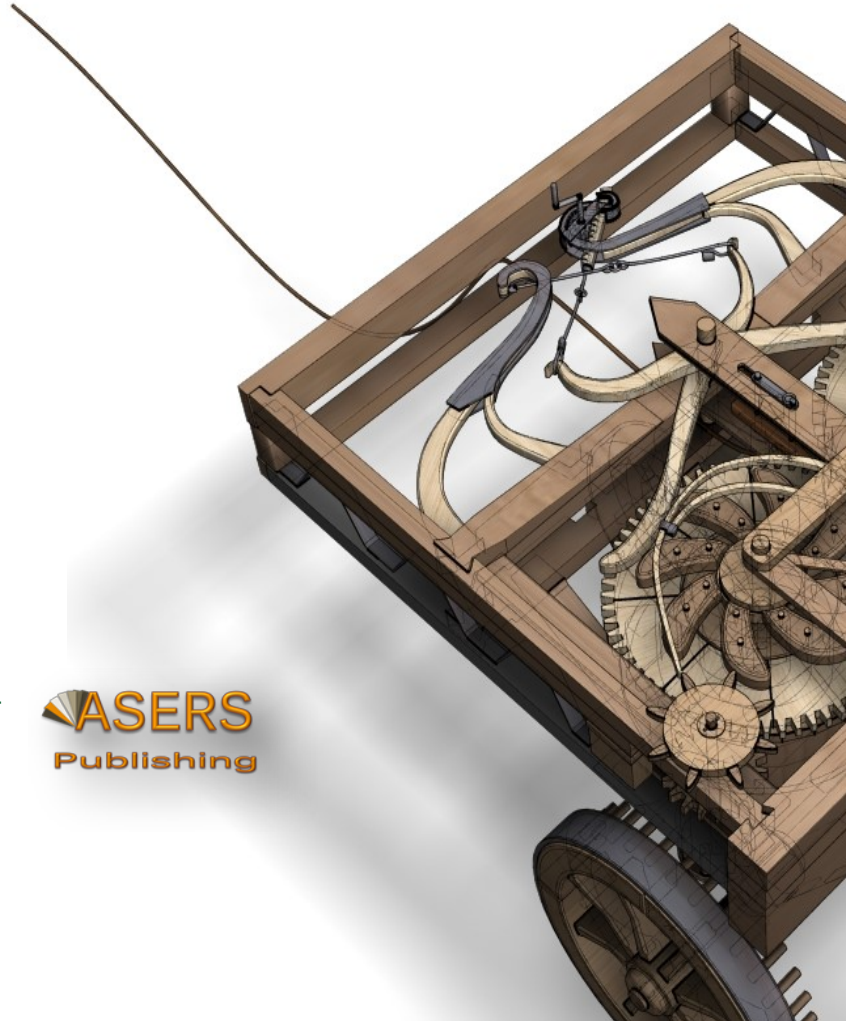


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ASERS Publishing

<http://www.aserspublishing.eu>

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Journal DOI: <https://doi.org/10.14505/jemt>

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Winter Issues 2023

Journal of Environmental Management and Tourism

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Journal of Environmental Management and Tourism is indexed in SCOPUS, RePEc, CEEOL, ProQuest, EBSCO and Cabell Directory databases.

Details regarding the publication in this journal are here: <https://journals.aserspublishing.eu/jemt/about>

Deadline for submission:	21 st October 2023
Expected publication date:	December 2023
Website:	https://journals.aserspublishing.eu/jemt
E-mail:	jemt@aserspublishing.eu

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Loans of Second-tier Banks and Their Impact on the Development of Tourism Industry

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Article info: Received 23 June 2023; Received in revised form 19 July 2023; Accepted for publication 28 August 2023; Published 29 September 2023. Copyright© 2023 The Author(s). Published by ASERS Publishing 2023. This is an open access article distributed under the terms of CC-BY 4.0 license.

Abstract:

Second-tier banks, often referred to as regional or local banks, play an important role in providing financial support and resources to various economic sectors, including tourism, as well, having both direct and indirect impacts on the growth and sustainability of these. The increasing contribution of the tourism industry to economic development necessitates a growing need for cooperation between different sectors - public, private and community - at all levels of service production, as it is a necessity for agreement and mutual complementation, considering the available opportunities and resources. Effective non-performing loan (NPL) management and support for the development of the tourism industry are important factors in ensuring the stability and sustainable growth of the tourism sector in the Republic of Kazakhstan. The impact of tourism on consumer lending is expressed in expanding the availability of tourism services, stimulating the development of the tourism industry and innovative financial solutions. This provides tourists with the opportunity to implement their travel plans, and also contributes to the development of the economy and the financial sector as a whole.

Keywords: tourism industry; credit resources; tourism; economic sustainability.

JEL Classification: G21; Z32; R11.

Introduction

The growth of international travel and domestic tourism is driving demand for a variety of tourism services, including accommodation, transportation, food and entertainment. However, the implementation of many tourism

plans can be hampered by a lack of own financial resources. In recent years, consumer lending has become increasingly popular among vacationers and travelers. Providing loans for the purchase of travel services and goods such as flights, tours, hotel rooms and additional services allows tourists to spread their spending over a longer period of time. This makes it possible to realize the dream of a trip, despite financial constraints.

The influence of tourism on consumer lending is manifested in several aspects. Firstly, the development of the tourism industry contributes to the growth of the supply of financial services related to consumer lending. Banks and financial institutions are actively developing specialized lending programs, offering tourists convenient conditions for paying for their travels. Tourists can choose between different types of loans such as credit cards, installments and other financial products that provide flexibility and convenience in paying for travel expenses. Secondly, consumer lending stimulates the development of the tourism industry, as it expands the availability and access to tourism services for a wide range of people. Many travel companies and businesses offer special financial packages and promotions with low interest rates or deferred payment to attract more customers and increase sales. Tourism enterprises can also cooperate with financial institutions to offer their customers special credit conditions. The third aspect of the impact of tourism on consumer lending is the stimulation of innovation in the financial sector. The development of tourism requires continuous improvement of financial instruments and services in order to meet the needs and preferences of tourists. Financial institutions and technology companies are developing new digital solutions and payment systems that make it easier to get loans and manage finances while traveling.

Thus, the impact of tourism on consumer lending is expressed in expanding the availability of tourism services, stimulating the development of the tourism industry and innovative financial solutions. This provides tourists with the opportunity to implement their travel plans, and also contributes to the development of the economy and the financial sector as a whole.

Second-tier banks can offer financial services to smaller businesses, start-ups, and local enterprises that may have difficulty accessing loans from larger, national banks. This inclusivity can benefit smaller players in the tourism industry, such as local tour operators, guesthouses, and small-scale attractions. These financial institutions offer loans to local entrepreneurs and SMEs looking to establish or grow their tourism-related businesses, contributing to economic diversification and local employment. Providing loans that cater to the unique needs of the tourism industry, they contribute to economic growth, job creation, infrastructure development, and regional prosperity. Their local focus and understanding of the tourism landscape enable them to be valuable partners in driving the success of tourism-related ventures.

4. Literature Review

Under the influence of globalization and integration of the world economy, as well as the deepening of economic, political, cultural and social interaction, tourism acts as a form of foreign economic activity. In this regard, there is a need to assess the sustainability of the development of regions and create a system of indicators that affect the development of tourism. Such a system of indicators serves as a tool for unifying and systematizing tourism management processes.

Researchers, such as Abozhina (2018), are actively paying attention to the issues of revolutionary development of the hospitality industry, which give us an understanding that the renewal of traditional service sectors, the introduction of trade and purchasing procedures with related financial and logistical operations, as well as changing consumption patterns under the influence of information technology and digital transformation of economic processes create the basis for the formation of new markets, conditions and approaches to analysis, forecasting and management decisions. Digital platforms are becoming key channels of interaction with customers and transactions, as well as a means of developing innovative business models, including tourism.

Innovation analysis in the tourism industry addresses a variety of challenges related to both improving the satisfaction of the cultural needs of the population and enabling the innovation of business entities (Hao and Liu, 2018).

Musavengane (2019) are among the authors who gave birth to the concept of responsible tourism, which is extolled as a sure way for tourism to be not only profitable but also sustainable. In their research, scholars focus on aspects such as the specialization of national economies and the prevalence of transnational corporations, entrepreneurship and business development and growth. They discuss the impact of these factors on attracting managers, representatives of large corporations and small private businesses who are looking for new promising partnerships and niches to develop their businesses, including tourism (Myratdurdyev and Doroshenko 2018). Features of the emerging market of apartments as part of the hotel services market are analyzed in the works of Tanina *et al.* (2020), and others. The efficacy of implementing management decisions

targeted at the advancement of the tourism industry is intricately tied to the state of hotel development, the quality of infrastructure, and the level of service excellence within specific regions of the country.

In accordance with the legislation of the Republic of Kazakhstan dated June 13, 2001 № 211-II 'On tourism activity in the Republic of Kazakhstan' (as amended and supplemented as of 04.07.2021) tourism includes two main types – inbound and outbound tourism (with amendments and additions as of 04.07.2021) tourism includes two main types – inbound and outbound tourism. Thanks to advances in transportation and technology, as well as improved living conditions, it is possible to change consumer patterns and priorities of people, including in developing countries. Tourism creates linkages between different sectors of the economy and its development contributes to the spread of economic impact.

Li *et al.* (2019) in their study remark that the provision of tourism resources is the basis and potential for tourism development. Optimal distribution of financial resources can guide the optimal distribution of social resources and increase the efficiency of resource use.

The role of the digital economy in economic transformation is becoming more and more noticeable (Chen *et al.* 2023 and Tian *et al.* 2021). Financial products that combine online standardization and regional customization can provide a more convenient payment method, more efficient workflow, and lower cost credit products for consumers and service providers in the industry chain (Huang and Hao 2021).

Modern financial institutions and Internet companies are actively introducing advanced technologies such as big data, IoT, cloud computing, blockchain and artificial intelligence into their activities. These innovative technologies are being used to create new financial business models in tourism industry that include finance, payments and investments.

Combining digital technologies with opportunities for tourism industry, has an important role in the development of consumption and tourism management. They allow the use of related technologies to create profiles of potential tourists and develop financial products and services based on traveler preferences. Talking about digital technologies we have to evidenced also the fact that data-driven enhance sustainable travel experience providing valuable insights that empower travelers, communities, and decision-makers to work together, make informed decisions, develop targeted strategies, and drive positive change (Nicola-Gavrilă 2023). Digital finance covers the entire process of tourism consumption, increasing the efficiency of payments and enriching the travel experience. They also provide value-added services to customers, including installments, insurance, and tourism-related financial products. Through the provision of information services in the tourism industry, digital financial platforms help tourism companies reduce operating costs and avoid risks.

Here, by right, the effective use of financial resources in general, including credit resources, requires great attention. Therefore, the effect of the financial tool is undoubtedly associated with the formation and orientation of the use of financial resources on the basis of numerous methods that affect the risks. Tourism, by and large, involves huge financial resources in its development from various sources that are prioritized like budget funds, bank loans, attracted investments, insurance, stock market funds, etc. (Kurmanalina *et al.* 2023)

Most travel companies are small and medium-sized businesses and often lack the collateral required for credit checks against traditional financial standards. Therefore, they experience difficulties in obtaining financing for their business activities. Currently, digital finance is able to accurately analyze risk and provide loans to customers using big data and financial models. This responds to the financial needs of tourism companies and encourages more tourism practitioners to join in innovation to improve the efficiency of the tourism industry.

Currently, the tourism business model is at the stage of integrating scientific and technological achievements, creativity and tourism. Cloud computing, big data and other new technologies are playing a key role in providing high quality information and reducing the cost of obtaining the necessary information for tourism innovation. The continuous reduction of marginal costs allows you to combine various aspects of tourism activities and make optimal decisions in the field of distribution (Jing and Sun 2019).

Digital finance facilitates the simplification of financial relationships between providers of various types of services, such as food, hotels, transportation, travel, shopping and entertainment. They also contribute to continuous innovation on the part of suppliers and the provision of diverse and personalized services to customers in real time.

In addition, tourism can stimulate the development of micro and small businesses in the tourism sector. Microfinance and small business programs can be aimed at supporting entrepreneurs who want to start or develop their own business in the tourism sector, such as opening a hotel, restaurant or travel agency. Thus, tourism has a positive impact on the development of lending programs, providing opportunities for financing various aspects of the tourism industry and stimulating entrepreneurial activity in this area.

The possibility to turn the young market of tourist destinations in Kazakhstan into a strong and profitable enterprise, capable of exporting its services, is quite realistic under the condition of strict compliance with market rules, providing acceptable management and control, thus creating a unique opportunity to pay attention to the possibility of ensuring the reputation of the RK in the world market of tourism industry.

However, the successful transformation of Kazakhstan into a tourist destination requires effective management and control. This includes creating a favorable business environment for investors in the tourism industry, developing marketing and promotion strategies, and establishing proper standards and certifications to ensure the quality of services. In addition, it is important to ensure a balanced development of tourism, taking into account the needs and interests of the population, developing the financial market and tools through which lending programs and operations related to this industry will be developed. Given these factors, Kazakhstan can effectively use its potential and strive to develop tourism as an economic growth factor. Market management and compliance with the rules will allow the country to create a solid foundation for the development of the tourism industry, attract more investment and improve its reputation in the international arena.

Thus, the impact of loans on the development of the tourism industry of the Republic of Kazakhstan (RK) has a significant impact on its dynamics and prospects. Loans from second-tier banks can be used to invest in the creation, modernization and development of tourism infrastructure, including hotels, resorts, entertainment venues and other facilities. This contributes to improving the quality and diversity of offerings for tourists. Loan financing supports small and medium-sized enterprises in the tourism sector, including tour operators, travel agencies, restaurants and other services. This contributes to job creation, diversity of the tourism product and increased economic activity. Loans can support innovative ideas in tourism, including the introduction of new technologies, the development of interesting tourist routes and the formation of unique tourist products.

5. Financing Tourism-Related Businesses

Borrowing from second-tier banks, commonly referred to as commercial banks, can wield a substantial influence on the advancement of the tourism sector. Tourism-related businesses, such as hotels, resorts, travel agencies, and entertainment venues, often require significant capital investments for expansion, renovation, or launching new ventures. These businesses identify their financial needs to enhance their offerings and competitiveness in the tourism market, obtain upgraded facilities, services, and improved marketing strategies. All these can lead to increased visitor satisfaction, longer stays, and higher occupancy rates. This, in turn, positively impacts the local economy and the overall tourism ecosystem. As tourism-related businesses grow due to loan-supported investments, they contribute to the overall economic health of the region. Increased spending on accommodations, dining, shopping, and entertainment creates a ripple effect that benefits various sectors of the local economy.

However, it should be noted that the use of loans requires a responsible approach to avoid overspending and non-payments, which can negatively affect the financial stability and sustainability of the tourism industry.

Consumer lending can affect tourism in the Republic of Kazakhstan in the following ways:

- Contributes to the development of domestic tourism;
- Promotes the development of external tourism;
- Development of infrastructure.

Consumer lending can stimulate an increase in the purchasing power of the population and an increase in living standards, which, in turn, can lead to an increase in demand for tourism services within the country. Thanks to the availability of loans, people can afford to pay for travel, accommodation, excursions and other travel services. According to the findings from the year 2022, the collective count of tourists who explored the resort regions of Kazakhstan reached a sum of 2,728,600 individuals. This figure represents a notable surge of 34.6% in comparison to the analogous period in 2021, during which there were 2,027,300 visitors. On average, each tourist who journeyed to the Republic of Kazakhstan expended approximately 27,086 Kazakhstani tenge on paid services. This computation was derived from information collected across 19 distinct resort zones.

Significant disparities were observed in the expenditures across various resort areas:

- Shchuchinsko-Borovsky Resort Zone: This locale demonstrated particularly substantial spending levels, with each person expending an average of 50,067 Kazakhstani tenge.
- Baikonur Tourist Zone: In contrast, the Baikonur tourist zone recorded the lowest spending level, with an average expenditure of merely 4,387 Kazakhstani tenge per individual.

These statistics underscore the varied financial outlays associated with visiting different resort areas within Kazakhstan. Factors such as the amenities, attractions, and overall tourism infrastructure of each zone contribute to the differing spending patterns observed. The information gleaned from these figures provides valuable insights for both policymakers and stakeholders, enabling them to tailor strategies and investments to optimize the economic impact of tourism in each respective region (Table 1).

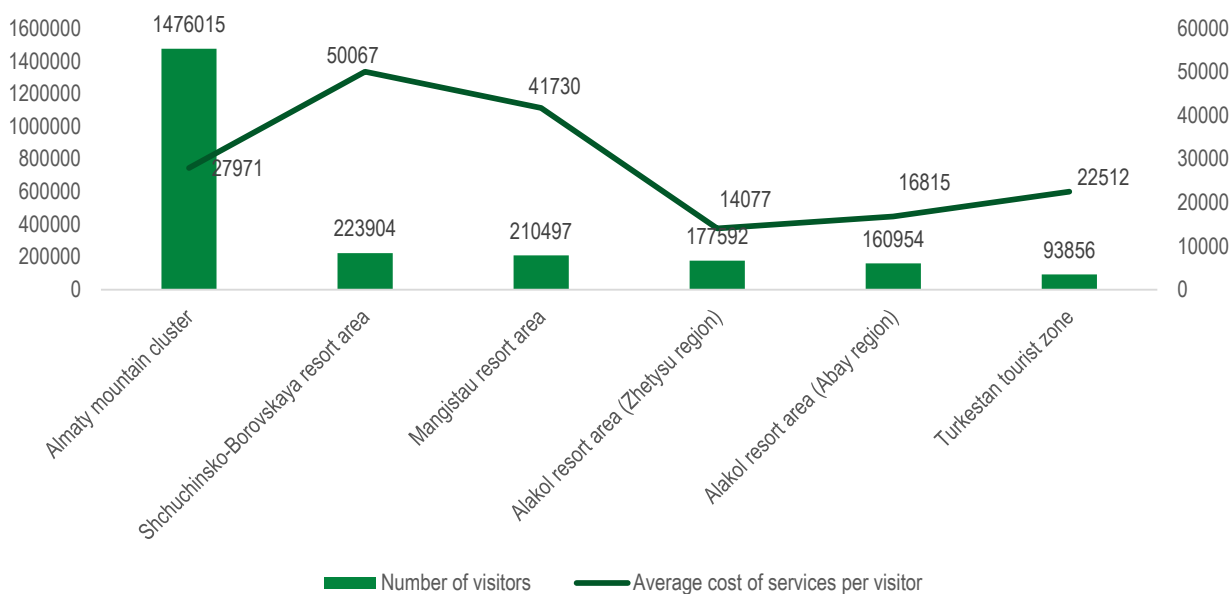
Table 1. Tourism development indicators, Republic of Kazakhstan, 2020-2022

Indicator	01.01.2021	9 months 2021	01.01.2022
Visitors served, thousand people	1,683.0	2,027.3	2,632.9
Volume of rendered services, million tenge	33,582.1	42,764.9	58,021.4
Number of placements, units	1,467	1,573	1,575
Number of rooms, units	38,417	40,002	39,690

Source: <https://bizmedia.kz/>

The average cost of services provided by resort areas amounted to 27,086 tenge per visitor. The graph showing the top resort areas by the number of visitors by the end of 2022 is presented in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Top resort areas by visitors at the end of 2022



Source: <https://bizmedia.kz/>

During the span from 2019 to 2021, the allocation of state funds toward priority development projects through the Credit and Financial Leasing Mechanism garnered considerable significance, totaling a substantial sum of 16,732.8 million Kazakhstani tenge. This financing was executed by means of entering into credit and leasing agreements. The distribution of state financing across these three years is as follows: 2019: Seven projects were successfully executed, collectively amounting to a value of 10,109.1 million tenge; 2020: The following year witnessed the implementation of eleven projects, with a cumulative worth of 4,243.7 million tenge; 2021: In this year, state funding supported the realization of seven projects, aggregating to a total of 2,380.0 million tenge. These investments are indicative of the government's strategic commitment to fostering economic development through the facilitation of key projects. The Credit and Financial Leasing Mechanism serves as a conduit for channeling financial support into various sectors, thereby contributing to the nation's growth, innovation, and enhanced economic opportunities.

Consumer lending can encourage people to travel abroad, as they can use credit funds to pay for travel services abroad. This can contribute to the growth of inbound tourism and the development of the tourism

industry in the country. Table 2 presents data characterizing the volume of services provided by accommodation places in the regional aspect of the Republic of Kazakhstan (Table 2)

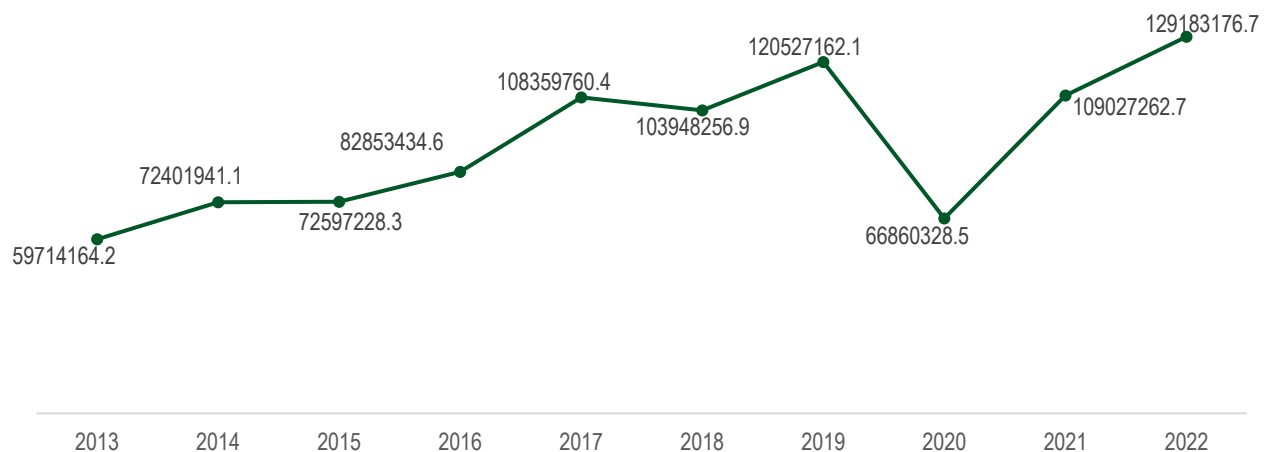
Table 2. Volume of services rendered by accommodation places by regions, Kazakhstan, thousand tenge

Region	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Akmola				-	3,552,517.9
Aktuibinsk	6,314,471.2	7,527,645.2	6,421,629.3	10,522,812.7	12,843,773.9
Almaty	2,038,369.1	2,178,368.8	1,100,896.2	2,243,015.4	2,254,754.2
Atyrau	9,783,415.5	9,722,946.4	5,321,254.4	8,441,135.9	5,371,264.6
West Kazakhstan	7,530,273.5	8,124,163.0	3,233,350.2	1,674,958.5	3,625,910.1
Zhambyl	2,701,254.7	3,154,681.9	1,987,619.9	3,165,256.7	2,681,374.0
Zhetysu					3,733,882.4
Karaganda	4,932,393.4	2,975,895.8	4,626,332.6	3,951,061.2	4,310,831.4
Kostanay	1,837,835.9	980,248.1	1,841,118.0	1,824,916.8	1,727,232.8
Kyzylorda	1,084,746.7	723,520.1	1,100,200.4	896,456.7	975,472.8
Mangistau	5,136,245.4	4,378,018.1	7,250,133.2	9,020,258.7	4,923,660.8
South Kazakhstan	3,367,502.4	1,344,993.3	2,369,328.3	2,740,650.7	2,130,571.5
Pavlodar	1,248,953.5	681,780.6	1,399,319.5	1,240,148.4	1,138,760.3
North Kazakhstan	4,932,393.4	2,975,895.8	4,626,332.6	3,951,061.2	4,310,831.4
Turkestan					3,965,004.7
Ulytau					271,575.9
East Kazakhstan	6,338,781.3	3,307,944.0	5,618,167.8	3,815,796.9	5,889,224.5
Astana city	26,114,387.0	11,564,321.7	10,289,103.1	23,649,859.3	22,829,527.6
Almaty city	32,293,595.3	16,806,510.6	7,908,836.2	37,040,234.8	25,710,759.7
Shymkent city	3,260,534.6	4,128,738.6	3,746,073.5	5,232,079.1	5,331,592.9

Source: <https://www.stat.gov.kz>

In general, the situation in Kazakhstan is as follows (Figure 2).

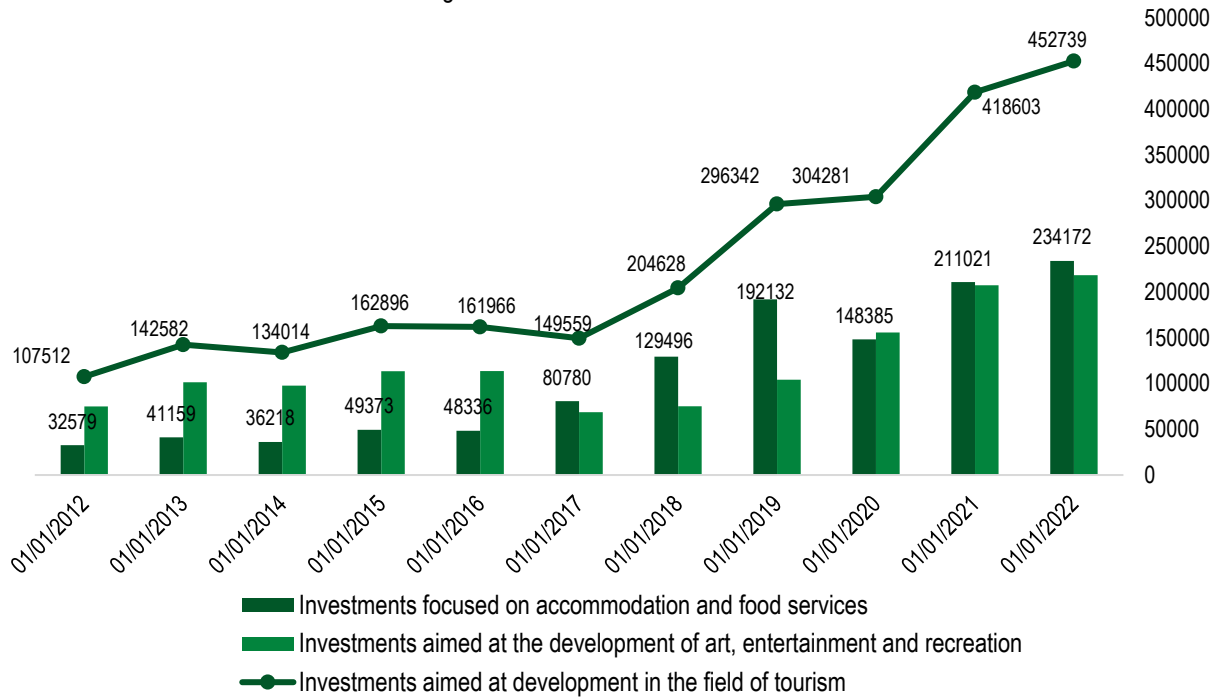
Figure 2. The volume of services provided by accommodation places, Republic of Kazakhstan, thousand tenge



Source: <https://www.stat.gov.kz>

An increase in consumer lending can stimulate investment in the development of tourism infrastructure such as hotels, restaurants, entertainment complexes and tourist facilities. Due to the availability of financial resources, entrepreneurs can implement projects to create and improve tourism infrastructure, which contributes to the development of the tourism sector as a whole (Figure 3).

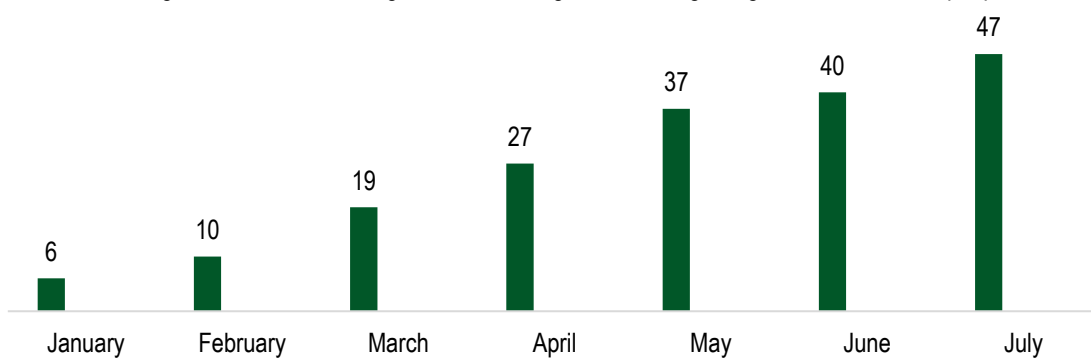
Figure 3. Innovative finance in tourism



Source: <https://www.stat.gov.kz>

According to the eQonaq information system, since the beginning of 2023, 195,149 foreign tourists have visited the country (Figure 4).

Figure 4. Number of foreign tourists arriving since the beginning of 2022, thousand people

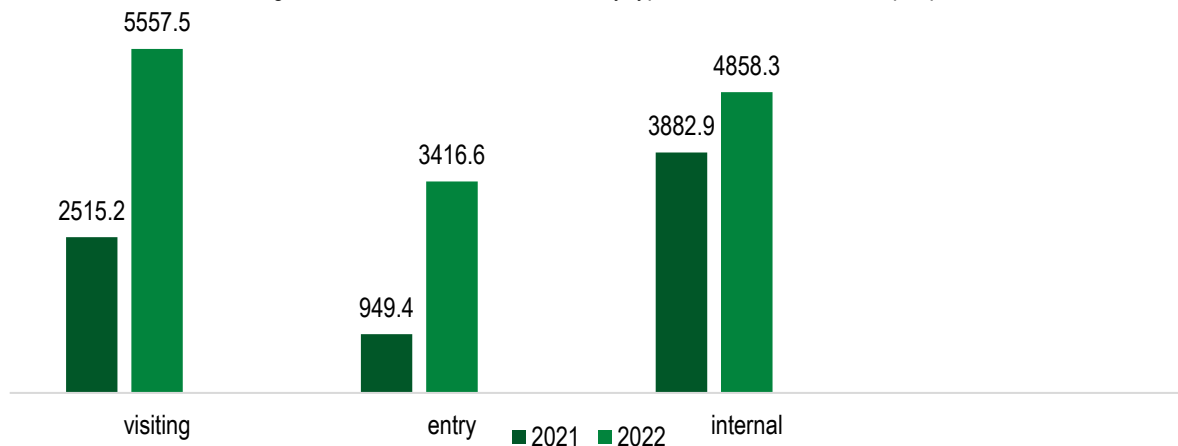


Source: <https://forbes.kz/>

The upswing in inbound tourism can be attributed to several key factors, with the most noteworthy being the amelioration of the circumstances surrounding the coronavirus pandemic. The removal of travel restrictions subsequently facilitated increased international travel, resulting in heightened inbound tourist numbers. In contrast, the phenomenon of outbound tourism within Kazakhstan exhibited remarkable growth during 2022. Over the initial nine months of the year, a notable 6 million citizens of the country embarked on international travels. This figure represents a substantial increase of 2.2 times in comparison to the same period in the preceding year.

Concurrently, the number of domestic tourists within the Republic of Kazakhstan witnessed a significant surge of 25.1%. This upswing underscores the heightened interest and engagement of local residents in exploring their own country. The cumulative figure of domestic tourists for the year reached an impressive 4.9 million individuals, as illustrated in Figure 5. These trends reflect the dynamic shifts in travel patterns and preferences, highlighting the multifaceted impact of global events on the tourism industry. The interplay between inbound and outbound tourism, as well as the burgeoning interest in domestic exploration, contributes to the overall tapestry of tourism dynamics within Kazakhstan.

Figure 5. Number of visitors served by types of tourism, thousand people



Source: <http://www.stat.gov.kz>

Kazakhstan has a huge potential for the development of new tourist products and can take a significant place on the world tourist map, as it has all the necessary basic prerequisites: favorable geopolitical location, richness of natural and recreational resources, cultural and historical heritage. In this regard, new businesses are starting to emerge in the sectors of restaurant, sports, cultural, souvenir and trade business. This promotes extensive infrastructure development beyond the narrow scope of tourism, contributing to the growth of related industries and improving the economic situation of the regions. The increase in the number of tourists caused by consumer lending can contribute to the growth of the regional economy. Visiting tourists spend money on accommodation, food, entertainment and shopping, which creates additional income for local businesses and residents. This can contribute to the development of local communities and increase the level of well-being.

6. Provided Tourism Services based on Loans of Second-tier Banks

The prevailing trajectory of tourism development underscores its escalating influence on the global economy and on the economies of individual nations. Within this paradigm, tourism is acknowledged as a substantial sector within national economies, dedicated to fulfilling the distinctive requirements of individuals during leisure and journeys. A pronounced correlation exists between the progression of the tourism industry and broader economic, technological, social, and innovative advancements. In this landscape, hospitality entities are urged to intensify their endeavors to enhance the caliber of their offered services. This enhancement is firmly rooted in innovative management strategies that facilitate collaboration with various stakeholders and participants in the tourism ecosystem.

However, it must be taken into account that consumer lending can also have negative consequences, such as an increase in debt, financial difficulties for borrowers, and risks of non-payment. Therefore, it is important to ensure responsible lending, debt control and financial literacy of the population in order to prevent possible negative consequences.

Let us put forward a hypothesis that the growth in the volume of services in the field of tourism services may lead to the need to develop credit resources, which are important for the development of the tourism industry. To do this, consider the forecast values of such an indicator as the volume of services provided in the tourism industry, the results of which are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Forecast values of the indicator the volume of services provided in the tourism industry, 2023-2025

Forecast	2023	2024	2025
Trend	124,598,056.3	130,425,471.8	136,252,887.2
Growth	127,031,863.7	135,363,494.4	144,241,571.3
Prediction	124,598,056.3	130,425,471.8	136,252,887.2
Linear	124,598,056.3	130,425,471.8	136,252,887.2

Source: compiled by authors

The conclusions of the results of the calculations made are shown below in the Table 3.

Table 3. Regression statistics. Results

Multiple R	0.719468082						
R-square	0.517634321						
Normal R-square	0.457338611						
Standard error	18,064,861.13						
Obs.	10						
Analysis of variance							
	df	SS	MS	F	Significance F		
Regression	1	2.8016E+15	2.8E+15	8.584928	0.018998		
Remainder	8	2.61071E+15	3.26E+14				
Total	9	5.41231E+15					
Coefficient		standard error	t-Statistic	P-value	min 95%	max 95%	max 95,0%
Y-intersection	-11,664,263,331	4,012,560,897	-2.90694	0.019681	-2.1E+10	-2.4E+09	-2.4E+09
Variable X1	5,827,415.416	1,988,875.752	2.930005	0.018998	1,241,060	10,413,771	10,413,771

Based on the predictive results obtained using regression analysis, the hypothesis put forward by the authors was proved and several reasons were identified why this might be important, letting the industry to effectively respond to growing demand and improve its competitiveness.

- Allow investment in infrastructure, such as the construction and modernization of hotels, airports, transport networks and other facilities necessary to serve tourists. Credit resources can be used to finance such investments and provide the necessary funds for the development of tourism infrastructure;
- The growth in demand for tourism services can stimulate the development of tourism enterprises such as travel agencies, hotels, restaurants and entertainment companies. Loan resources can help these businesses expand their operations, improve service quality, purchase new equipment, or expand their customer base.
- Intense marketing and promotional activities to attract tourists. Credit resources can be used to finance marketing campaigns, advertising, participation in exhibitions and other activities aimed at attracting tourists.
- Develop new tourist destinations. Credit resources can be used to finance and develop new projects, such as the creation of tourist routes, the development of excursion programs or the organization of specialized events for tourists.

Conclusion

In conclusion, loans from second-tier banks play a critical role in the development of the tourism industry by providing financial accessibility, fostering local economic growth, supporting SMEs, facilitating infrastructure development, and contributing to the sustainability and resilience of the sector. The partnership between second-tier banks and the tourism industry is instrumental in achieving a well-rounded, dynamic, and sustainable tourism landscape. Finally, it should be emphasized that the role of loans from second-tier commercial banks is key in promoting the development of the tourism industry. They provide financial accessibility, help to stimulate local economic growth and support the development of small and medium-sized enterprises in this field.

Acknowledgments

The authors of this article confirmed the lack of financial support / conflict of interest to be reported.

Credit Authorship Contribution Statement

Ainur Myrzhaybayeva: the second-tier banks' lending and their impact on the development of tourism industry in the Republic of Kazakhstan is considered. The impact of tourism on consumer lending is expressed in expanding the availability of tourist services, stimulating the development of the tourism industry and innovative financial solutions. This provides tourists with an opportunity to realize their travel plans, as well as contributes to the development of the economy and the financial sector as a whole.

Kalamkas Rakhimzhanova: the relevance of the study aimed at the development of the tourism industry is substantiated. Tourism creates links between different sectors of the economy, and its development contributes to the spread of economic effects.

Ruslana Ichshanova: considered the research of foreign authors on the impact of tourism on the development of lending programs. Banks and financial institutions can develop specialized lending programs for tourism enterprises, helping them to expand their activities and improve the quality of services offered.

Arnagul Tishtykbaeva: it is revealed that due to its geopolitically favorable location, natural and recreational resources, cultural and historical heritage of the world level, Kazakhstan has the potential for the development of new tourism products and can become one of the major players on the world tourist map, as it meets all the necessary basic conditions.

Zagira Iskakova: description of the results of the study, which indicates the development of credit resources that can contribute to the growth and development of the tourism industry, providing the necessary funding for investment, enterprise development, marketing and improving the qualifications of personnel.

Anna Legostayeva: gives conclusions about the mechanism of management of problem loans of second-tier banks, which play an important role in the development of the tourism industry.

Declaration of Competing Interest

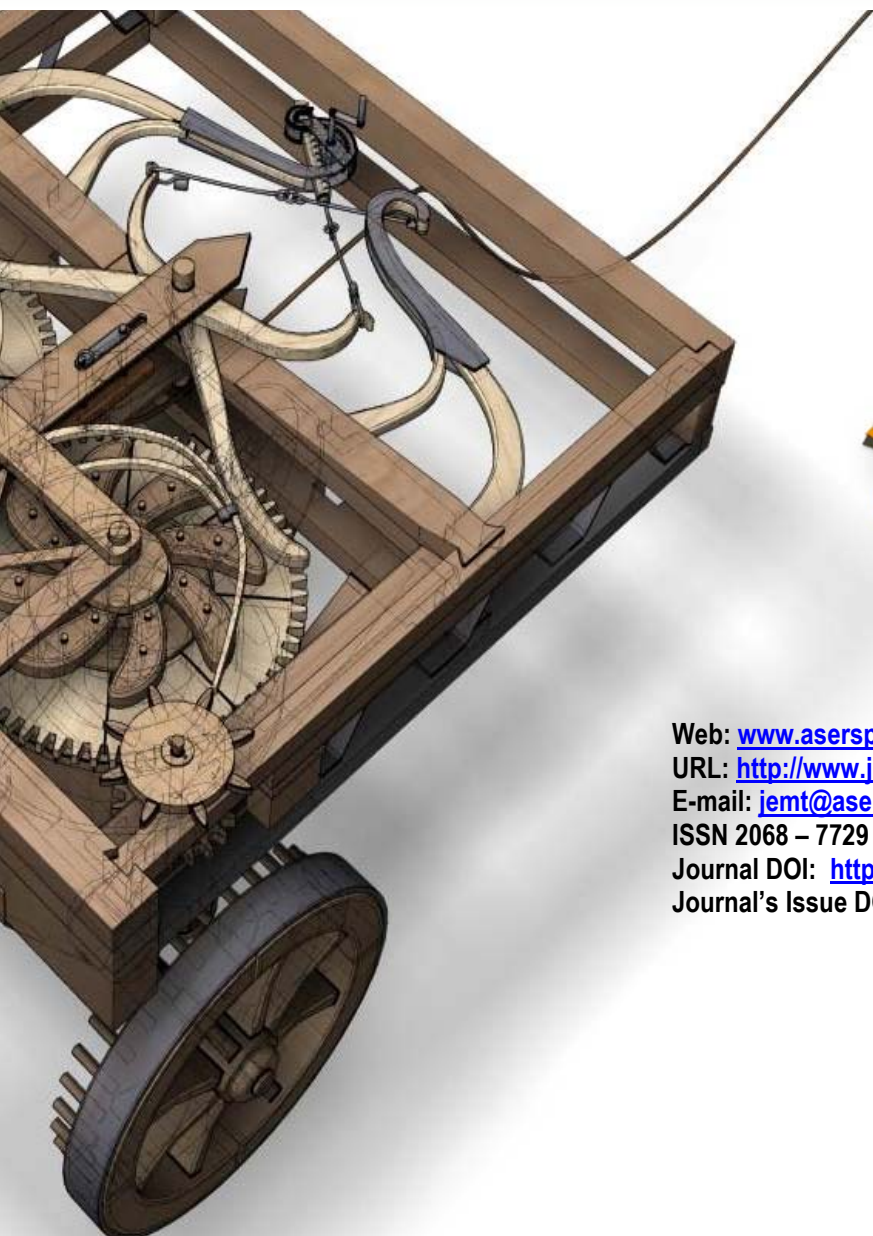
The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

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ISSN 2068 – 7729

Journal DOI: <https://doi.org/10.14505/jemt>

Journal's Issue DOI: [https://doi.org/10.14505/jemt.v14.6\(70\).00](https://doi.org/10.14505/jemt.v14.6(70).00)