

Linguistic features of sport tourism

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Abstract:

This article is devoted to the discussion of the linguistics of sports tourism. Some aspects of sports tourism terminology are also considered in the article. This paper is based on the statements of eight experts from different research centres dealing with tourism (mainly sports tourism) accompanied by the authors' attempt to 'standardise' them by referring to the subject literature.

Keywords: sport, sports tourism, specialised tourism, active tourism, cultural tourism.

Introduction

The article is a summary of an inquiry concerning sports tourism conducted among several experts. In order to standardize the term 'sports tourism', the 'Turyzm/Tourism' journal editors asked specialists for a brief statement with regard to the following five questions:

1. Is there, in your opinion, such a form of tourism as sports tourism? What do you understand by it? Does it fit into currently functioning definitions of tourism?
2. What should be done and what skills (pre-dispositions) are required for sports tourism?
3. What measures can be used to define the scale, seasonality and other parameters of this form of tourism?
4. Does sports tourism require special infrastructure? If so, then what?
5. What is the future of sports tourism?

Materials and methods

In recent years, sports activity has been gaining in popularity all over the world. The same concerns sports tourism, especially if it takes the form of participating in large sporting events. Interest in sports tourism is the result of a growing need for intense emotions and impressions as well as an increasing amount of leisure time and higher incomes. This can be observed in the development of a range of active ways of spending free time, as well as the growth of leisure itself which has led to the development of many new forms of active tourism and sports disciplines, as well as their continuous modification. Over the years, research on these issues has led to the appearance of many concepts and classifications, however a specific terminological chaos in the literature on the subject can also be found – words defining outdoor tourism activity are used arbitrarily – terms are used interchangeably and the differences between them are not clear.

Results and discussion

The literature presents numerous definitions of sports tourism; one of the most popular and most frequently quoted is that formulated by H. Gibson who says that sports tourism signifies tourist trips involving a change in the everyday lifestyle, in order to participate in sports activity (active sports tourism), or to watch sporting events (event sports tourism/ fan-tourism), or to visit sports attractions (nostalgia/ sentimental sports tourism). This definition encompasses both, active and passive participation. It is also worth referring to the definition formulated by J. STANDEVEN & P. DE KNOP, according to which sports tourism includes all forms of active and passive engagement in physical activity, both occasionally or regularly, which is undertaken for non-commercial or non-business purposes, and which requires travelling outside the place of permanent residence and work.

Thus, sports tourism is a form of tourism in its wider sense, and it is distinguished as a separate type on the basis of its connection with sport, both as regards actually doing it (engaging in physical activity, active participation in a given discipline either as an amateur or professionally), and attending sporting events as a spectator (e.g. fan-tourism). Sports tourism differs from active tourism in that emphasis is put on the activity (sports discipline) itself, while the aspect of travel is mostly limited to reaching the journey's destination (BOŃCZAK 2013, p. 58). To sum up, as

A. Niezgoda claims, *'(...) the term 'sports tourism' can be applied to a form of tourism distinguished on the basis of the travel motivation criterion. Thus, it regards the behaviour of consumers who consider sport to be a motivation to go on a tourist trip'*.

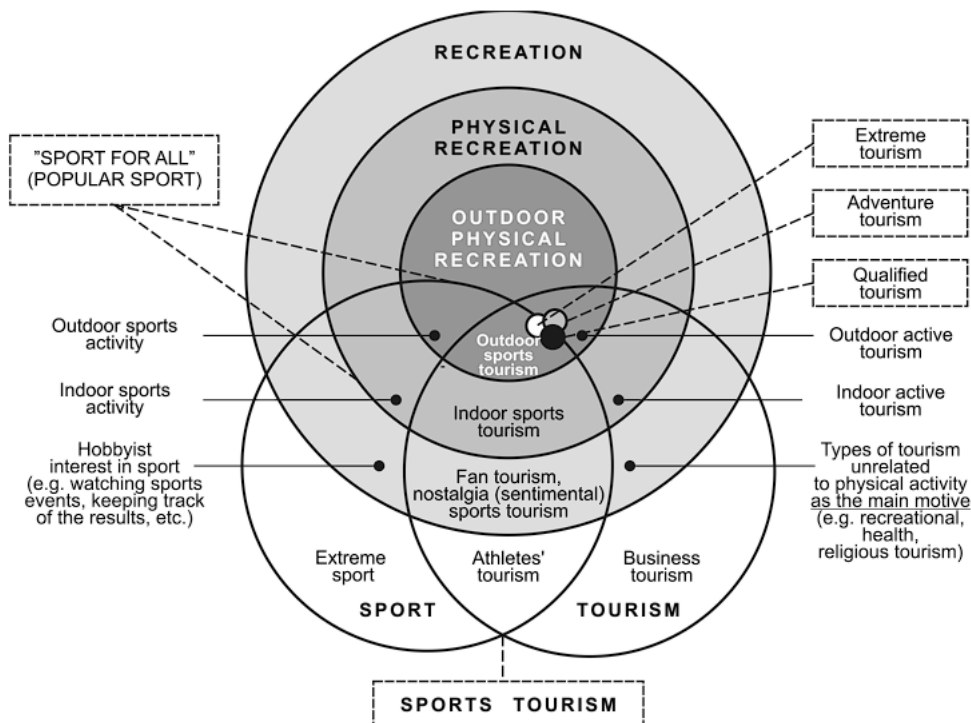
W. Alejziak started from explaining concepts such as physical culture, physical education, sport and recreation. In this way, he stressed that apart from the traditional understanding of sport (extreme sports understood as a form of human activity aimed at achieving the best possible results through regular training), the literature on the subject also features the expression 'recreational sports' – a type that *'(...) involves those kinds of physical activity undertaken only in free time, for fun or self-improvement which at the same time are safe, can be practiced throughout a person's life, giving pleasure and compensating for the deficiencies and hardships of the contemporary world.'* At this point, it seems important to stress that the phenomenon is often referred to as 'sport for all' or 'common sport'. This means both activity practiced at sport-recreational facilities (e.g. fitness classes), and outdoors (e.g. cycling in time off work).

This approach seems to explain the semantic complications of sports tourism, mentioned by S. Bo-siacki: ‘(...) *Is a person who spends their holidays at the seaside, goes jogging, cycles for pleasure or plays tennis a traditional recreational tourist or perhaps a sports tourist?*’ The important elements here seem to be this person’s purpose and motivation, as well as the way the sports activity is undertaken.

All the experts taking part in the debate stressed the fact that sports tourism has both an active and a passive form as regards involvement. The most frequently mentioned types of activity undertaken as a part of sports tourism included trips made in order to:

- watch sporting events (fan tourism),
- visit sports facilities (so-called nostalgia sports tourism),
- participate in sporting events as competitors,
- do various forms of sports activity.

A similar classification of sports tourism was pre-sented by B. BOŃCZAK (2013, p. 56) and J. MOKRAS- GRABOWSKA (2015, p. 15), who distinguished (Fig. 1) outdoor and indoor sports tourism (active sports tourism, meaning various sports disciplines), fan tourism (watching sporting events), nostalgia sports tourism (visiting sports facilities, both modern and historical) and the tourism of sportsmen and women (competitors travelling to sporting events).



A slightly different point of view is represented by A. Pawlikowska-Piechotka, who identifies mass ‘hard’ sports tourism (organized groups of fans), ‘soft’ sports tourism (individual trips) and nostalgia tourism among all the trips made in order to passively participate in sporting tourism. In turn, among trips made to actively participate in sporting events, she distinguishes active sports tourism (undertaking a given sports discipline) and sports adventure tourism (traveling to remote,

hard to reach parts of the world, expeditions to the ‘unknown’). It is worth pointing out that A. Pawlikowska-Piechotka combines adventure tourism with high mountain climbing, hiking and lone sailing (e.g. climbing mountain crowns, breaking sailing records). It must be stressed, however, that activities of this type are also ascribed to forms of specialised, adventure or extreme tourism. This is because the essence of adventure tourism is experiencing a ‘trip into the unknown’ (exploration). It is characterized by an emotional aspect (for instance connected with higher risk) as well as the spiritual and aesthetic experiences based on contact with different natural and cultural environments. However, adventure tourism is often organized by professional tour-operators and therefore does not require such profound psycho-physical preparedness as specialised tourism. In turn, extreme tourism (risk tourism) means extreme forms of recreation (extreme sports), focused on gaining a strong emotional experience. This is often accompanied by physical exhaustion as well as a high risk of damaging one’s health or even losing one’s life. In this type of tourism, risk is the key element (MOKRAS-GRABOWSKA 2015, p. 29).

As this discussion implies, establishing fine lines between individual forms of active tourism (sports, specialised, adventure, extreme) is very difficult (sometimes even considered impossible) and greatly depends on the psycho-physical preparedness of tourists, their tourism awareness and professionalism. Many activities may be undertaken in a milder form (active tourism e.g. lowland/mountain hiking), but some of them are only a form of specialised tourism, while others mainly serve the purposes of adventure tourism (e.g. ballooning) or extreme tourism (e.g. canyoning). A widening spectrum of tourist and sports activities can be found related to new trends, fashion and development.

Another type, which is thought controversial, is nostalgia sports tourism. The objects of interest in this case are both historical sites (e.g. ancient stadiums) and contemporary monumental sports facilities, especially the seats of famous clubs (e.g. the Manchester United, FC Barcelona, or Real Madrid stadiums), as well as museums of sport and sports clubs, commemoration and exhibitions devoted to sportsmen and women, Olympic Games preparation centres, training facilities, Olympic Villages, ‘halls of fame’, sportsmen’s homes, or cemeteries where the famous are buried.

Conclusion

The inquiry has shown an incoherent picture of sports tourism. Despite the adopted definition presenting sports tourism as involving a change in everyday life routine in order to participate in sports activity (active sports tourism), as well as to watch sporting events (event sports tourism/fan tourism), or in order to visit sports attractions (nostalgia/sentimental sports tourism), there are many interpretations of this phenomenon, as well as controversies. While the view that a participant in sports tourism may be active or passive (spectator, supporter) is acceptable, the details vary significantly.

Sports tourism is regarded as one of the most dynamically developing forms of tourism, but at the same time a debate continues whether it should be distinguished at all. What should be stressed is the question of various classifications of sports tourism, to which the experts participating in the inquiry refer to (active and passive participation in sports disciplines), as well as the fact that it is very difficult to ascribe a given activity to a specific type.

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