



Sports tourism: sport or type of tourism activity?

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АННОТАЦИЯ:

Sports tourism is a popular form of economic activity, that does not still have good theoretical framework and generally accepted definition. Various approaches to understanding this phenomenon were studied by the author of this article. The paper contains definitions of "sport tourism", proposed by foreign and Russian scientists, which were analyzed, and served as the basis for author's definition of sports tourism as a type of tourism activity within the framework of the concept of the experience economy. The relevance of this issue is determined by the growing popularity of sports tourism, as well as the lack of a unified definition of this term in Russian legislation. The aim of the work is to propose the author's vision of the term "sports tourism" in the context of experience economy. During the research the author has studied the etymology of the concept and various approaches to understanding this term in the world. To achieve this goal and fulfill fundamental tasks, methods of diachronic and contextual analysis of scientific works of domestic and foreign scientists were used. As a result of the work, the author proposed a comprehensive definition of the term "sports tourism", which corresponds to the Russian legislation in the field of tourism and sports, and also fits into the framework of four areas (4E: entertainment, education, esthetics, escaping reality) of the experience economy. The definition of "sports tourism" in the tourism framework is a complicated issue that will cause many discussions in the international scientific community, due to its complexity and intersectoral position. This article was first published in Russian in the scientific journal "Physical culture. Sport. Tourism. Motor Recreation" and now is translated into English for publication in an international peer-reviewed journal with open access.

КЛЮЧЕВЫЕ СЛОВА: sports tourism, definition, etymology of a concept, type of tourism activity

Спортивный туризм: вид спорта или туристическая деятельность?

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Introduction¹

Tourism is an extremely promising type of economic activity, accounting for 10.4% of global gross domestic product, according to the World Travel & Tourism Council report, published in a 2019 [28] (*WTTC, 2019*). The contribution of the sports industry to global GDP is no less significant.

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Despite of the fact that there are no data on global consumption of sports services, several examples can be given for countries and their associations. For example, in 2010, the share of sports in Canada's GDP was 0.3%, which is equivalent to \$4.5 billion [18] (*Clearinghouse*). According to an article published on the website of the European Olympic Committee in 2018, the contribution of the sports industry to the GDP of the European Union was 2.12%, about 279.7 billion euros [24] (*EOC*). And in Australia, this figure, according to information for the same year, was approximately 2% of GDP [17] (*Clearinghouse*).

Relevance

In the Russian Federation, both the sports and tourism industries are becoming increasingly important, as evidenced by the message of the President of Russia to the Federal Assembly in March, 2019 [8] (*Kremlin.ru*), ongoing summits and congresses on the development of

ABSTRACT:

Спортивный туризм — это популярная форма экономической деятельности, которая до сих пор не имеет хорошей теоретической базы и общепринятого определения. Автором данной статьи были изучены различные подходы к пониманию этого феномена. В статье приведены определения понятия "спортивный туризм", предложенные зарубежными и российскими учеными, которые были проанализированы и послужили основой для авторского определения спортивного туризма как вида туристской деятельности в рамках концепции экономики впечатлений. Актуальность данного вопроса определяется растущей популярностью спортивного туризма, а также отсутствием единого определения этого термина в российском законодательстве. Цель исследования — предложить авторское видение термина "спортивный туризм" в контексте экономики впечатлений. В ходе исследования автор изучил этимологию понятия и различные подходы к пониманию этого термина в мире. Для достижения цели исследования и решения фундаментальных задач были использованы методы диахронического и контекстного анализа научных работ отечественных и зарубежных ученых. В результате работы автором предложено исчерпывающее определение термина "спортивный туризм", которое соответствует российскому законодательству в области туризма и спорта, а также вписывается в рамки четырех областей экономики впечатлений, таких как: развлечения, образование, эстетика и уход от реальности. Определение "спортивного туризма" в рамках системы туризма является сложным вопросом, который вызывает множество дискуссий в международном научном сообществе из-за его сложности и междотраслевого положения. Эта статья была впервые опубликована на русском языке в научном журнале "Физическая культура. Спорт. Туризм. Двигательная рекреация", а теперь переведена на английский язык для публикации в международном рецензируемом журнале с открытым доступом.

KEYWORDS: спортивный туризм, определение, этимология понятия, вид туристической деятельности

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these sectors of the economy, including the First All-Russian Congress of Public Tourism Associations, Hospitality and Sports, held in March, 2020 [9] (*Kongress*).

It is not difficult to imagine what impact the symbiosis of these two industries could have on the economy. Their interweaving can be observed in the seemingly simple concept of “sports tourism”. However, this phenomenon causes a lot of discussion in the international scientific community concerning not only the definition of sports tourism, but also its various classifications [19, 21] (*Gammon, 2003; Gibson, 1998*), as well as socio-demographic and psychographic characteristics of sports tourists [16, 20, 22, 23, 26] (*Dolnicar, 2003; Gibson, 1998; Hamdan, et Yusuf, 2014; Matthew et al, 2019; Slak Valek, Shaw, et Bednarik, 2014*). Despite the fact that the first studies of this segment date back to the 70–80s of the last century, and a lot of scientific works have been published since that period, today there is neither final definitions nor unified global classifications of sports tourism have been adopted.

Goals and objectives. This paper examines the etymology of the concept of “sports tourism”, current approaches to understanding this term from the point of view of the foreign scientific community and Russian researchers. The author proposes the most comprehensive definition of sports tourism as a type of tourism activity within the framework of the increasingly popular concept of the experience economy.

Materials and methods of research. To formulate a suitable definition of the sports tourism phenomenon, the author studied scientific works of domestic and foreign scientists. Using the methods of diachronic and contextual analysis, the main current Russian and foreign definitions of the concept of “sports tourism” are identified from the point of view of different approaches to the object under study.

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First of all, considering sports tourism as an increasingly popular phenomenon in the Russian Federation, it is necessary to take into account the Russian legislative framework, namely: Federal Law dated November 24, 1996 No. 132-FZ (as amended on June 4, 2018) “On the Fundamentals tourism activities in the Russian Federation” [13] (*Garant.ru*), Federal Law dated December 4, 2007 No. 329-FZ (as amended on August 2, 2019) “On Physical Culture and Sports in the Russian Federation” [12] (*Garant.ru*) and “Strategy for the development of tourism in the Russian Federation for the period until 2035”, approved by

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ЦИТИРОВАТЬ СТАТЬЮ:

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Government order dated September 20, 2019 [10] (*Garant.ru*). The term “tourism”, as well as “sport”, has found its definitions in national legislation, however, there is no entirely clear definition of “sports tourism”. To shed light on this term, let us turn to the Russian scientists and their understanding of sports tourism.

In Russian practice, two approaches to defining the concept of “sports tourism” currently prevail: sports tourism is a type of sport, and sports tourism is a type of tourism activity. The majority support the first approach. Many of the authors in their works adhere to the definition presented in the rules of the sport “sports tourism” of the International Federation of Sports Tourism. In Part I of the Rules, approved by the decision of the IFST Council on November 24, 2018, sports tourism is “a sport based on competitions on routes that include overcoming obstacles categorized by difficulty in the natural environment, and on distances laid out in the natural environment and on artificial relief” [5] (*IFST*).

The same definition is presented in the works of the Russian scientists M.B. Birzhakov, N.P. Kazakov, Yu.D. Ovchinnikov, S.N. Talyzov [1, p. 99; 6, p. 117] (*Vetrova, et Orekhovskaya, 2018, p. 99; Ovchinnikov, et Talyzov, 2017, p. 117*). Moreover, there is a specialized organization engaged in the development of sports tourism as a promising sport — the Federation of Sports Tourism of Russia, which also operates with a similar definition. S.V. Cheremshanov in his scientific work gives definitions of two Russian scientists who also adhere to the position of “sports tourism is sport”.

According to A.V. Babkin, sports tourism is the departure of professional and amateur athletes to participate in sporting events [14, p. 142] (*Cheremshanov, 2012, p. 142*).

According to L.P. Shmatko, “sports tourism is travel to participate in various sports competitions” [14, p. 143] (*Cheremshanov, 2012, p. 143*).

R.A. Safonov and G.K. Avagyan note that “sports tourism is a sport of overcoming an extended segment of the earth’s surface, called a route” [11] (*Safronov, et Avagyan, 2015*).

Another group of scientists — T.I. Vlasova, A.V. Ivanov, V.A. Taymazov, Yu.N. Fedotov — considers sports tourism as “a sport in which competitive activity and preparation for competition are aimed at achieving the highest results” [2, p. 21] (*Vlasova, et al, 2008, p. 21*).

At the intersection of the two approaches lies the definition of the above-mentioned S.V. Cheremshanov, who, on the one hand, calls sports tourism a symbiosis of several types of tourism, and on the other, says that “competitiveness of participants” is an important characteristic of this type of tourism [14, p. 145] (*Cheremshanov, 2012, p. 145*), although this parameter is more characteristic of sports.

Scientists who support the approach “sports tourism is a type of tourist activity” include the authors of the article “Sports tourism as a separate sport”. Despite the title of the paper, S.V. Vetrova and E.V. Orekhovskaya in their work examine in detail the concept of sports tourism and argue that for sports tourism, as a type of tourism activity, competition, clearly visible within the first approach, is not a characteristic feature [1, p. 100] (*Vetrova, et Orekhovskaya, 2018, p. 100*).

Definition presented in the textbook “Fundamentals of Tourism”, published within the framework of the Federal Target Program “Development of Domestic and Inbound Tourism in the Russian Federation (2011–2018)”, can also be attributed to the second approach. The authors consider sports tourism as one of the main types of tourism according to the motivational-target principle and indicate that the goal of sports tourism is physical education and sports, maintaining physical fitness through participation in sports events and specialized classes under the guidance of instructors [7, p. 35] (*Pisarevskij, 2014, p. 35*). However, the authors do not talk about competition.

It seems that the abundance of definitions of sports tourism as a type of sports activity should finally convince readers that this phenomenon is a sport. However, this is a controversial issue. The difficulty of defining this concept from the point of view of tourism is due to the fact that the tourism industry and each type of tourism are usually classified as part of experience economy, due to the fact that a tourist trip offers experiences that lie in four areas of experience (entertainment, education, aesthetics, escape from reality), proposed by B. Joseph Pine II and James H. Gilmore back in 1999 [4, p. 128–129] (*Lebedeva, 2018, p. 128–129*). In this regard, it is possible to mix different purposes of a tourist trip (where physical activity will be prevalent in a particular case) and, as a consequence, different types of tourism. Taking it into account, let us turn to the origins of this concept — to the works of foreign scientists involved in the study of sports tourism.

Foreign approaches to defining the concept of “sports tourism” differ from the Russian ones. This is due to the fact that the foreign definitions of types of tourism are based on the consumer, the purpose of the tourist’s trip, as well as the factors that motivate the consumer to travel.

One of the first to formulate the definition of sports tourism was Heather J. Gibson, an associate professor in the Department of Tourism, Hospitality and Event Management at the University of Florida. In 1998, she defined sports tourism as a leisure activity associated with the departure of persons from the place of residence for the purpose of attending sport events, as spectators, visitors of sporting attractions or active participants in sports and entertainment events [15, p. 475; 20, p. 156–159; 21, p. 46–49] (*Di Palma, et al., 2018, p. 475; Gibson, 1998a, p. 156–159; Gibson, 1998b, p. 46–49*).

A team of scientists from Canada, Cambodia and Belarus, in their work, cite the definition proposed in 1999 by Joy Standeven of the University of Essex and Paul De Knop of the Free University of Brussels. Sports tourism, according to this definition, represents all forms of active and passive involvement of a traveler in sports activities, regardless of its level of organization, associated with temporary trips of citizens outside their permanent place of residence or work [25, p. 237; 26] (*Singh, Dash, & Vashko, 2016, p. 237; Slak Valek, Shaw, & Bednarik, 2014*).

At the beginning of this millennium, British scientist Sean Gammon from the University of Central Lancashire and his colleague Tom Robinson developed a model for defining sports tourism, which is based on understanding the main and secondary purposes of a tourist trip.

Based on the model, the authors proposed several definitions of the term “sports tourism”, one of them is travel, the main purpose of which is active or passive inclusion in competitive sports [19, p. 22–24] (*Gammon, & Robinson, 2003, p. 22–24*). The authors call this definition “hard”, since this is competition that attracts tourists. Another — “soft” — definition implies participation in sports activities, as recreational activities associated with playing favorite sports or sports hobbies and the absence of a competitive aspect.

Thus, foreign scientists also have not reached a consensus regarding sports tourism, however, their definitions are much broader and cover not only sports outside of their permanent place of residence, but also visiting sporting events, recreational and educational aspects.

Conclusion

It should be noted that sports tourism is a complex phenomenon that will cause a lot of discussion as it develops. However, accumulating approaches to the definition of sports tourism, as well as taking into account the Russian legislation, we can give the following explanation of this phenomenon. Sports tourism is temporary trips (travels) of citizens from their permanent place of residence for the purpose of engaging in physical activity independently or with instructors, participating in sports and entertainment events, attending mass sports events as spectators, getting acquainted with the history of the development of various sports in the destination through visiting sports museums, halls of fame, headquarters of sports organizations and teams, including the competitive aspect as a secondary characteristic, without engaging in activities related to the generation of income. The proposed definition is fully consistent with the current Russian legislation in the field of tourism and the previously mentioned concept of the experience economy. ■

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