

## SPORTS TOURISTS WITH SOME FORM OF DISABILITY AND LOCAL DEVELOPMENT IN A TOURIST DESTINATION

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### **Abstract**

*The purpose of this research is to study the tourism of sports tourists with some form of disability and whether they can contribute to the local development of an area. This research makes a reference to tourism in general and then refers to the evolution of sports tourism and the categories we can categorize it. The last chapter analyzes the tourists who travel for some sporting activity and face some form of disability at the same time. The method of data collection was done by studying the international literature on the study topic. The results showed that people with some form of disability almost never travel alone, but with at least one other person. This leaves more money to a tourist destination and contributes more to the local development of an area. In addition, tourists with some form of disability try to travel frequently and also seek out during their vacations sporting activities that they can perform to improve their fitness and psychology.*

**Keywords:** *tourism, sports tourism, people with disabilities, local development.*

### **Introduction**

In recent studies related to tourism, we observe that it is one of the largest industries in the world. These results also show that in the 21st century we will have a rapid increase in the tourist phenomenon. The purpose of such a visit can be both professional and entertaining (WTO). In the modern age of globalization, we are seeing more and more businesses use their employees' travel to maximize the profits of a business. The reasons vary as it may be employee training but it may also be related to improving the company's network. Therefore, we note that travel is no longer just for leisure but also for business purposes.

The word tourism etymologically comes from the word 'tour' which has French roots and means moving people from one area to another. However, the roots of the word come from the Latin word *tornare*, which means movement with return (Theobald et al., 1994).

There are many attempts to define tourism until we reach today's definition. In particular, Pearce in 1982 began to divide tourism into categories. Pearce estimates that if we divided tourism and tourist journey into individual categories, we would be talking about: one category where the tourist destination has not yet been visited, followed by the tourist destination, the main part of the trip, the trip, the return but also a period of time after the trip. Then Mill and Morrison (1992) based on the above theory claim that everything related to this trip belongs to the tourist trip, but from the tourist trip we should not remove the procedures before, and after the tourist destination in which the tourist activity took place.

### **Tourism Globally**

Chadwick (1994) approaches tourism as an activity and emphasizes in temporary mobility rather than permanent mobility, arguing that a distinction should be made between temporary and permanent mobility. For Chadwick, tourism is inextricably linked to separation

from the immediate everyday environment, whether work or social. A trip must have the process of changing images. It must be able to fill the tourist with new images and calm him down. The detachment from the usual social environment brings a refreshment through tourism.

WTO then, wanting to give a definition, defines tourism as the number of activities of people moving to places outside their daily environment for less than a year and more than 24 hours. The reason for moving may be different and it may be for leisure, business or other reasons.

WTO has also defined the different types of tourists since 1995. Specifically, WTO believe that travellers are people who travel to more than two geographical destinations, while a visitor is someone who lives in an area for more than 24 hours and less than 12 months. Finally, the excursionist is presented as the tourist who stays for less than 24 hours in the same place.

Tourism has flourished since the 1970s. It can contribute to the economy of an area as it creates jobs that lead to new incomes as well as tax revenues that has an impact on economy. (Rural Tourism Guide for Local Government Bodies, 2008). The local development of a tourist area can have many advantages. Job creation is one of them. In Western countries we find high levels of unemployment. Tourism can provide solutions to this problem as its staffing needs are permanent and necessary for the entire tourism process. In addition, tourism leaves taxation for the state dealing with it. Something that can benefit the economy of the tourist inflow state.

Especially, there must be a unified policy framework for the private and public sectors, where in cooperation there will be a serious study where tourism development will take place in an area (Pavlopoulos, 2004). We must not forget that tourism is a complex phenomenon as each tourist is a separate personality with his own needs (Gibson, Yannakis, 2002). The uniqueness of each individual must be taken into account in tourism. A process that one tourist likes, another may hate. Before making a meaningful strategic process, it is a good idea to do research on the target group to which the tourist destination is headed. The ideal is to be able to harmonize the tourist destination with the tourists to whom it is addressed.

In terms of the place of tourism in the tourism industry, we are seeing a lot of development. Tourism has increased economically more than 16 times since the 1970s and this is mainly due to the increase in disposable income and leisure but also due to the transformation of developed countries into service countries (Kotler, 1999). It is also worth mentioning that if we exclude the export activities of the oil industry and the automotive industry that hold the lion's share, tourism ranks next. In tourism, the old continent (Europe) also has the highest rates of tourist traffic (Agorastakis, 2006). The easy internal movement between the countries of the European Union has also helped a lot in this. As a European citizen, it is very easy to move to another country in the European Union. This is helping these countries improve their tourism network.

When it comes to tourist accommodation, because a customer is happy when his expectations for the place where he chooses to go as a tourist are met, good quality accommodation combined with a good quality of tourist product lead the customer to pleasure (Bortel & Crompton et al.). 1997). According to Igoumenakis (1991), tourism is a phenomenon that is a set of actions and interactions between businesses, tourists, the management of the tourist destination and the host society. This shows how complex tourism is and how difficult it is for tourist destinations to be considered successful. Without business, there can be no tourism. There can be no tourism without tourists as well. But we must also take into account the local community of a tourist destination. If the local community benefits from tourism it is an ally of tourism in their area. However, if local communities do not benefit, they can create problems, which the tourist destination manager will have to deal with.

Tourism worldwide is growing rapidly. This is easy to see if we consider that from the middle of the 20th century until today the tourist arrivals are growing at an annual average rate of about 6.5% and this has resulted in an increase of up to 322% in world tourism in less than 60 years (WTO, 2010).

However, tourism offers a lot of positives but it certainly creates a lot of negatives. McIntosh et al. (1995) identify the pros and cons of tourism. In particular, he talks about increasing GDP, increasing government revenues, generating income, maintaining heritage, promoting peace, removing racial barriers, and more.

On the other hand, tourism, according to this research, causes excessive demand for resources, conflicts between populations receiving tourists, unbalanced economic development between states, commercialization of all kinds of art etc.

## **Sports Tourism**

Sports tourism and tourism in turn is a fundamental feature of sports (Hinch, 2001). After classification about the people who travel for sports reasons in the category of tourists, it seems that tourism and sports are inextricably linked (Moore, 1995). In 2001, in Spain, the World Tourism Organization and the International Olympic Committee acknowledged that there was a link between sport and tourism. In addition, the connection between tourism and sports leads to an understanding of the diversity of peoples and through it helps to maintain peace and reconciliation of peoples (Huescar, 2001).

Sports tourism, although it sounds like a modern phenomenon, has its roots in ancient Greece. The inhabitants of the then city-states travelled to other city-states to participate or to watch sporting events. Specifically, the first form of tourism over the years appears to be that of sports (Lytras, 2002).

Sports tourism is an economic, cultural and social phenomenon that is created by the relationship between human activity and location (Weed, Bull et al., 2004).

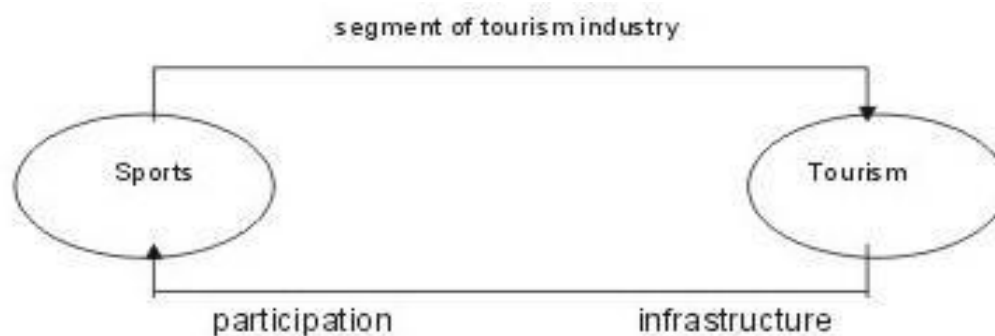
As far as tourists are concerned, during their vacations they appear to be involved in sports tourism for health reasons, because they find available facilities, special professional staff and because they have free time (Sfakianakis, 2000). The tourist on their vacation recognizes that he does not exercise as much as he would like in his daily life. This leads him to look for the sport on his vacation to make up for lost time. In addition, if the tourist meets specialized staff on a specific sport, he sees it as an opportunity to be taught by experts in the field and to be informed about its rules. But the most important of all reasons where a tourist is involved in sports, is because he has free time, something precious that it is hard to find nowadays.

Gammon and Robinson in 1997 recorded sports tourism and divided it into sports tourism and tourism sports. According to their research, sports tourism has as its point of reference the sports activity where it is the main reason for movement and the reason for this, the tourist in the second place will also deal with the rest of the tourist product. In this case belong people who participate or watch sports activities. In the second category, travel is the main reason for moving and sport comes second.

Then, two years later in 1999, Standeven & De Knop accepted the separation of previous researchers but tried to analyze in more detail the separation of the Athletic Tourist. So they decided that there were going to be four more charges. These are :

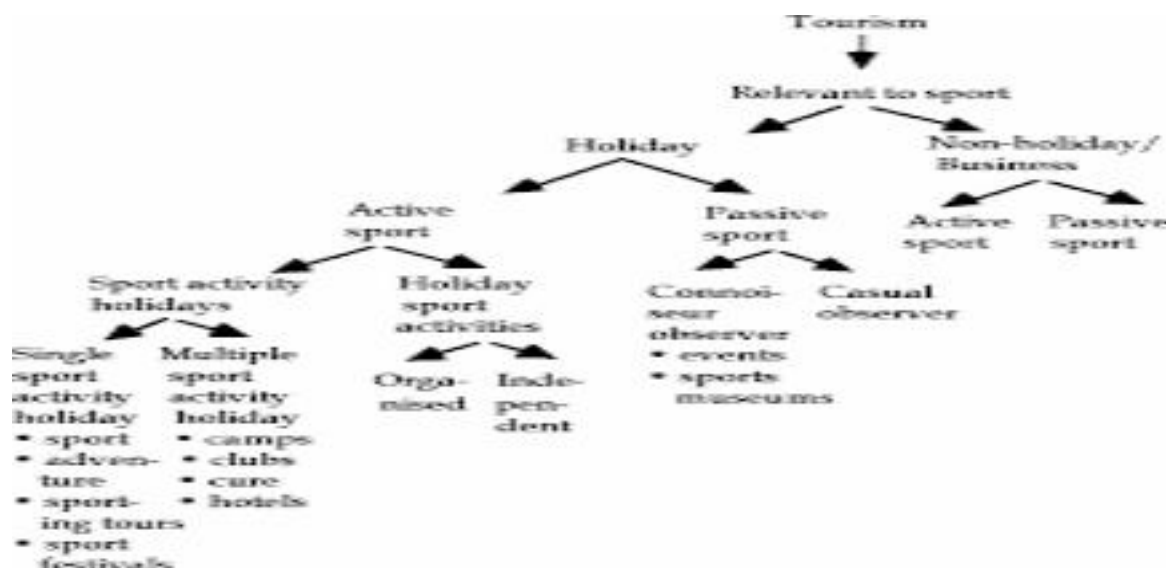
- a) Sports involvement (active or passive with sports activity),
- b) Participation in organized sports or accidental sports activities
- c) The degree of professionalism of the tourist's trip and
- d) The distance from the place of residence.

## Relationship between Sports and Tourism



Source: Standeven & De Knop 1999 p. 5.

## Tourism relevant to sport (Standeven & De Knop (1999))



According to Gibson (1998), sports tourism should be divided into three categories,

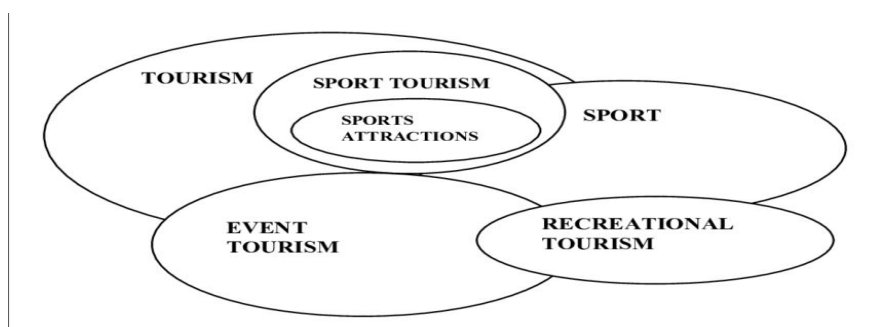
- The monitoring of a sporting event.
- The visit to a sports spectacle.
- Active participation

While Kurtzman 7 years later (2005) estimates that 5 categories of separation of sports tourism are ideal:

- Sporting events
- Sports spectacles
- Sports excursions
- Sports shelters
- Cruises

Kurtzman before reaches in these five categories, he had created the model of sport tourism with Zauhar.

### Kurtzman and Zauhars model of sport tourism (2003)



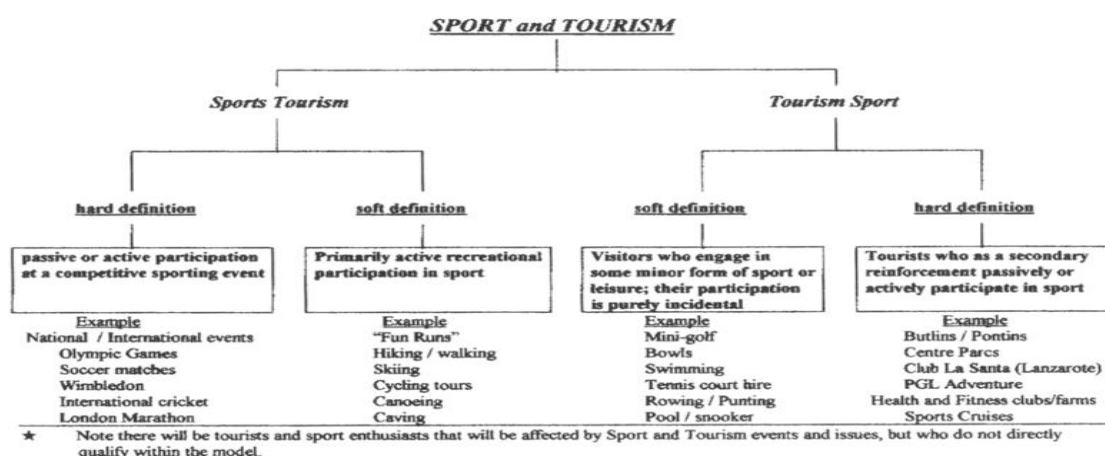
According to Karli et al. in 2002, sports tourism resulted in sports activities. In addition, in this category of travel, the sporting event is the protagonist (Katerinopoulos, 2002).

Previous research by Nogara, Yamagushi & Hagi in 1996 claims that the sports tourist is the person who engages in sports during his trip, who watches or participates in sporting events.

Gutzioupas (2006) estimates that the main goal of sports tourism is to participate in sports activities, watch games and all this with the aim of recreation. Scholars have shown that people who do not exercise in their daily lives are more likely to exercise during their holidays, while people who exercise in their daily lives are more likely to exercise during their vacations (Gibson 1998). It also shows that tourism tries to leave the everyday life that each person experiences separately.

For Gammon & Robinson (1997), the growing popularity of international events has led to a huge increase in sports tourism. While Sofield recorded sports tourism in 'soft' and 'hard' tourism.

### Sports Tourism / Tourism Sport and soft/hard definition by Gammon & Robinson (1997), Sofield (2003)



According to Gammon & Robinson, the rise in the tourism industry in recent years is due to some specific reasons such as

- 1) The wide variety of sports around the world
- 2 The increase in the popularity of the races

3) The opinion that sport is a carrier of better relations between peoples

4) Sports activity and health go hand in hand

Sports have become very popular at all ages. Due to the fact that the daily routine of most occupations is harmful to health, sports on vacation offer something that does not largely involve in everyday life and routine.

Sports tourism, at a scientific level, is developed by industry experts through:

1) International conferences

2) Creation of undergraduate and postgraduate relevant programs

3) Scientific journals on sports tourism, such as the Journal of sports tourism

4) and the publication of books which, especially after 1999, are observed to be a more intensive study for the field of sports.

In terms of the financial sector, job creation and the country's revenues are certainly a strong incentive for the development of sports tourism, but there will certainly be an increase in prices in sports activities in this case if we consider a possible increase in readability and brand of an area.

### **Tourism and people with disabilities**

In sports tourism, in addition to healthy people, we also include people who have some form of disability. Disability and tourism in recent years have begun to gain governmental and academic interest (Burnett et al, 2001). Prior to 1998, disability and tourism were not studied in depth. Dancy et al. in 1998, it claimed that people with disabilities and their companions in Australia left more than \$ 1.5 million in the country's tourism. Generally, people who have a mobility problem or have a disability, because they cannot or do not feel safe travelling alone, always take their family with them. This brings more money to the influx of tourists and makes it easier to grow.

The quality of life for people with disabilities is very important (Shi et al, 2012) and due to their low mobility, people with disabilities face various health problems such as heart disease, diabetes, depression, etc. (Theodorakis 2010). Exercise helps in the psychological field but also in the field of health. Through exercise, these people see that they can achieve things and face the problem they have. The more physically active people are, the more improvement they feel at their disposal and develop more social relationships with others with the same problem as them (Theodorakis 2010).

In addition, when the structure of the exercises and the sport are similar, exercise is a method of improving various problems such as alleviating the symptoms of multiple sclerosis (Gosney et al., 2008) and at the same time improving areas such as flexibility and fitness. Here we observe a direct relationship between health tourism and sports tourism.

For people with disabilities, travel is a means of escape from everyday life, so they look for it as often as they can (Nicolaisen et al., 2009). If tourist destinations and cities invest in this part of tourism, it seems that they will be able to achieve some form of local tourism development.

### **Conclusion**

Tourists who suffer from some form of disability do not travel on their own, as research shows, but choose to travel with at least one attendant to look after them and seek help if they need it. This means that travel always involves more than one person. In addition, their quality of life, of which their travels are a part, plays a very important role for people with disabilities, as due to their lack of mobility they suffer from diseases such as depression and diabetes. Exercising helps them to deal with problems related to their physical condition,

flexibility issues and other health issues. But the most important thing is that it helps them psychologically. That's why they seek sports and if it can be combined with some form of travel, it is chosen as a priority by most of them. People with disabilities see travel as an escape from reality and seek it out. People with disabilities can also leave money in the local community, which can lead to local growth in many areas. In a future study, the relationship between health tourism and sports tourism for people with disabilities can be studied as there seems to be a correlation.

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