

Recreational Tourism as a Growth Driver for Tourist Destination*

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Abstract—This article addresses recreational tourism as a complex type of tourism, characterized by a number of cofactors that allow encompassing a whole range of types of tourism. Particular attention is paid to the popularity of the spread and use of the benefits of recreational tourism, which are determined by the presence of diverse and unique opportunities to use recreational resources in the host destination. We have noted a territorial distribution of recreational tourism resources across the Russian federal districts. We have identified and substantiated the main structural components of recreational tourism, such as recreational resources, recreational infrastructure, recreational businesses, and consumers of the recreational product. We have noted the importance of the segmentation of the recreational services market, which makes it possible to single out consumer market segments taking into account their perception of the marketing impact of the recreational businesses of a destination.

Keywords—recreational tourism; recreational resources; recreational infrastructure; recreational businesses; consumer segmentation; market segment; destination

I. INTRODUCTION

Recreational tourism is a complex type of tourism, as it encompasses the provision of services in a whole range of types of tourism which aim at preventive rehabilitation, compensatory recovery of physical strength, the correction and rehabilitation of the state of tourists (the recreating persons). The concept of "recreation" comes from the Latin word "recreatio", which means "recovery". There are many methods of restoring the physical, mental and physiological strength of a person; therefore, the organization of this type of tourism has a multifunctional character and includes recreational and therapeutic programs, leisure and entertainment, educational and sports activities to meet the physical, spiritual and emotional needs of the recreating persons.

We can single out the following cofactors of recreational tourism that reflect its complex and systemic nature:

- the therapeutic factor based on the use of recreational and health-improving techniques;
- the factor of changing the scenery, which helps the recreating persons to switch to new external objects and distracts them from the negative effects of the previous scenery;
- the factor of physiological activity, ensuring the fitness of the cardiovascular, respiratory, musculoskeletal and other human systems; and
- the factor of the stimulation of natural immunity, which allows improving the regenerative processes of the human body.

Most authors recognize the health-improving factor as an integral and prevailing component of recreational tourism services. According to V.Yermakov, L.Panasyuk, the health-improving factor is "the preventive extended self-development of the hierarchical system of individual life regulation, in which increasingly general ways of adapting to the unknown conditions of the natural and social environment are acquired" [1]. The authors view ways of adapting as "health management", and "the basis of health reproduction".

II. CONCEPT AND TYPES OF RECREATIONAL TOURISM

Recreational tourism as a type of tourism is distinguished by a large variety of quality characteristics. Most authors acknowledge that recreational tourism can be described as the process of arranging the relocation of people to recreational areas for the recreation and recovery of their physical, moral, emotional and psychological strength in their free time from other activities. According to Yu. Sharunenko, "recreational tourism means trips with the aim of recreation, rehabilitation and treatment, restoration and development of the physical, mental and emotional strength of a person" [2]. In our opinion, recreational tourism should also be studied as a form of active tourism, which provides for gentle loads, restrictions based on age and physical

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abilities, resulting in an improvement in the general symptoms of the recreationist's body.

According to UNWTO international experts, the second most important motive for tourists, after the wish to get to know a new culture, lifestyle, culinary traditions, is the health-improving and therapeutic purpose of tourist trips with stays in country, seaside, mountain health resorts and health facilities, as well as in houses and recreation centers, boarding houses, which provide rehabilitation, animation and leisure activities, but do not provide medical services. In third place are professional business trips for the organization of exhibition activities, participation in conferences, congresses, the preparation of programs for promotional tours, etc. [3]. It must be admitted that recreation, leisure, various kinds of entertainment, as natural human needs allowing the individual to restore his/her mental and physiological state, are inherent in almost all types of tourism; however, the health-improving factor is characteristic only of recreational tourism.

The trends in the development of tourist destinations, which formed the basis of the UNWTO forecast, compiled and presented in the Tourism 2020 Vision, define recreational tourism as the most promising and widespread type of tourism of the 21st century. The growing popularity of recreational tourism by 2025 is due to the versatility of its directions. The relevance of the spread and use of the benefits of recreational tourism is determined by the unique opportunities to use the available recreational resources in the host destinations of various countries to further improve the development of this type of tourism, in particular, in the recreational areas of Russia.

Taking into account the predominance of certain factors for a particular destination (tourist territory, region), we can, for our purpose, identify two types of recreational tourism:

- health-improving tourism;
- educational tourism.

Each type of recreational tourism requires using its own recreational resources. In particular, recreational resources aimed at health-improving and regenerating the physiological properties of the body, by the largest proportion of their total volume, are located in the Southern Federal District (SFD) of the Russian Federation (18%), 14% of these resources are located in the eastern part of the Siberian Federal District, and 11% in the Central Federal District. Recreational resources that provide for the educational type of recreational tourism are mostly located in the Central Federal District (39% of total volume), in the North-West Federal District (26%) and in the Southern Federal District (14%) [4].

For reasons beyond control, harsh climatic conditions and historical features of the development of other federal districts of Russia cause a significantly lower concentration of recreational resources, leading to less favorable conditions for the development of recreational tourism. The use of recreational resources in conjunction with the logistics of specialized tourist and health centers, recreational businesses, health facilities and the recreational infrastructure of a territorial entity form the recreational potential of a destination, which allows to have objective prerequisites tourist and recreational activities, resulting in the development of a recreational product.

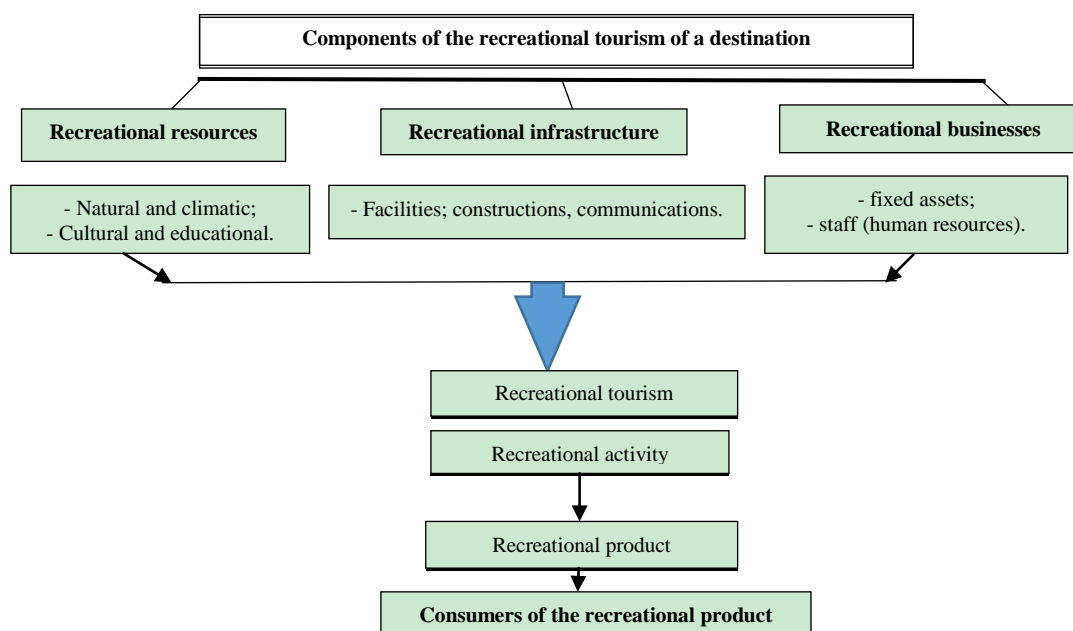


Fig. 1. The relationship between the components of recreational tourism of a destination.

III. COMPONENTS OF RECREATIONAL TOURISM

Recreational tourism includes 4 main components (structural components) which interact with each other:

recreational resources, recreational infrastructure, recreational (specialized) businesses, consumers of the recreational product (see "Fig. 1").

Recreational resources reflect a comprehensive scientific concept, which implies all kinds of resources designed to meet the public demand for tourism, recreation, rehabilitation, and which divides into two main groups: natural and climatic (water, forest, landscape resources, etc.) and cultural and educational (historical, ethnographic, landscape and architectural resources, etc.).

The main feature of recreational resources is to restore and rehabilitate the spiritual and physical strength of a person. Such resources are used both for direct purposes, i.e. as recreational centers and health resorts, as well as for indirect purposes, for their cultural, educational, and recreational benefits. The concept of "recreational resources" is not only geographical (territorial), but also historical in nature, since over time new types and varieties of recreational resources have been and will continue to be formed, which is also due to the transformation of the recreational needs of the recreating persons, as well as the development of new service technologies.

Recreational resources definitely have aesthetic appeal and health-improving properties. The specific composition of the recreational resources of a particular destination creates its attractive image, which has a positive psychological and emotional impact on the recreating persons. Based on this property of recreational resources, the main task of recreational activities — to restore the physical and psychological strength of the recreating persons — is accomplished.

The recreational infrastructure defines the general conditions for recreational tourism. It plays a significant role for recreational production in the formation and provision of the recreational, tourist product; therefore, this concept was

discussed in the works of N.V. Agapova and M.A. Budovskaya. In our opinion, recreational infrastructure should be understood as a set of facilities and structures of passive purpose that contribute to the rehabilitation, active recreation, sports, therapeutic purposes, and which are joined by appropriate ways of communication, the lack of which would make it impossible to use the services. The development and improvement of the recreational infrastructure ensures the functioning and development of several areas of the recreational zone (destination): health and recreational, tourist and sports areas.

The recreational infrastructure of a destination, including the infrastructure elements of the health resort, tourism and sports areas of the recreational zone, uses the passive part of the assets of the health resorts, rehabilitation and diagnostic centers with the appropriate communications, facilities, and is also linked with outdoor recreation facilities, which can be equipped as camping spots, hiking trails, green areas in parks, etc.

The recreational infrastructure must comply with the health and safety regulations and ensure public and personal security, which is important in a period of political instability and increasing social tension. When creating and improving the recreational infrastructure of a destination, the public demands for rehabilitation are taken into account, and the recreational capacity of natural territories is also considered, with due regard for the load limit.

The organizational and legal form of recreational businesses in the Russian Federation implies the association of individuals and legal entities subject to different economic conditions, which fall into 2 main categories: business and non-profit forms of association (see "Fig. 2").

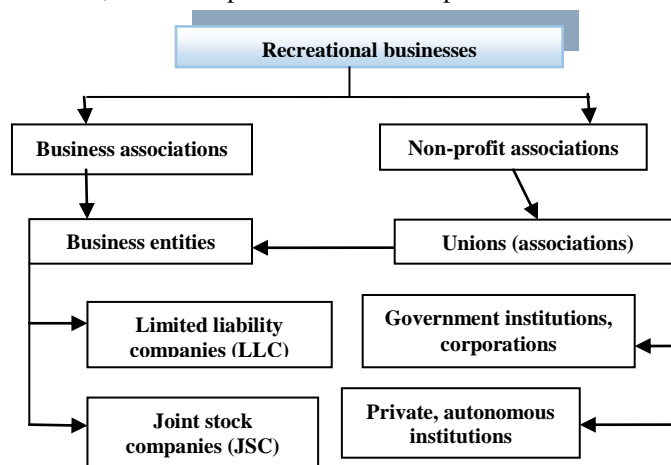


Fig. 2. Organizational and legal forms of recreational businesses.

Business recreational institutions may include sanatoriums and health care centers, balneotherapy and mud baths, recreation and retreat centers and health resorts providing medical treatment; while non-profit recreational institutions include government and public institutions. For example, Soyuzkurort is a state-owned company, which has been operating for 87 years, since its foundation in 1932, and which specializes in health resort treatment and recreation in virtually all regions of Russia. In addition to government

institutions, public organizations have been established, which influence the development of recreational activities at all levels of management. Such public organizations include the National Resort Association (NRA), the Russian Union of Travel Industry (RUTI), the Association of Specialists in Restorative Medicine (ASVOMED), the Committee on Entrepreneurship in the Field of Tourism, Recreation and Hotel Business of the Russian Chamber of Commerce and

Industry, all of whom actively influence the tourist and recreational policy of the regions.

In terms of the average number of staff, recreational businesses, in accordance with the Federal Law "On the Development of Small and Medium-sized Businesses in the Russian Federation" No. 209 of July 24, 2007 (as amended on December 31, 2017, July 3, August 3, November 28, December 27, 2018) may fall into the category of large organizations (more than 250 people), medium-sized organizations (from 100 to 250 people), small organizations (up to 100 people), and micro organizations (up to 15 people) [5]. In each recreational region, a health and recreation complex is established, encompassing recreational businesses and institutions based on the use of available therapeutic resources which are an integral part of the recreational resources of this destination.

The participants in the market process, recreational businesses, consumers of recreational services (products), and counterparties or co-providers of services (transport companies, sightseeing tour agencies, etc.) together form the market of tourist and recreational services. Legal entities and individuals obtaining title to a recreational service or package of services may act as buyers. The recreational services market consists of separate segments, including buyers with different needs. Segmentation allows dividing consumers into groups (market segments) that have the same needs and preferences, and that perceive the marketing impact from recreational businesses in a similar manner. Consumer behavior in the recreational services market, the nature of consumer preferences is associated with the personal, cultural, social, physical and psychological specificities of each consumer. The study of these factors is the main task of marketing research in the recreational industry.

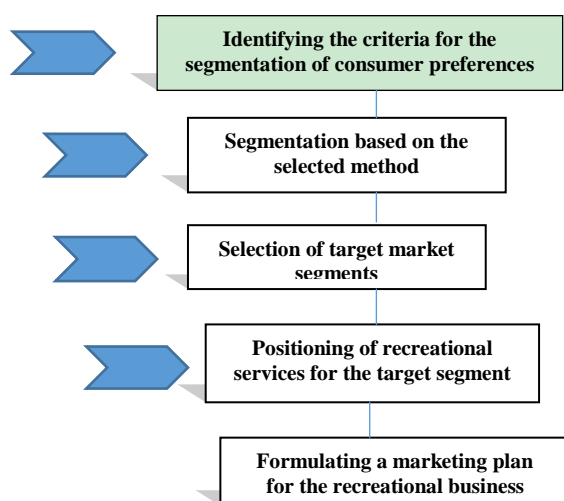


Fig. 3. Stages of the process of segmentation of consumers of recreational services.

Consumer segmentation is the basis for developing a marketing mix or a marketing program, based on the choice of recreational services, their pricing and advertising policies, and distribution channels in the implementation of these

services. The segmentation process is best understood in several stages (see "Fig. 3").

If a recreational business/organization consolidates its position in a certain market segment, it thereby confirms its dominant (monopolistic) position, making it possible to determine the market niche of this organization.

IV. CONCLUSION

The selected segments, in a single variant or in a certain combination for the marketing activities of a recreational business, represent the target market segment. In the process of consolidating the target market segment, a recreational business can focus on market niches and market windows to generate higher financial performance in its recreational activities.

Thus, the socio-economic importance of recreational tourism implies the rational use of its main structural components to meet the needs of the recreating persons and the further development of a particular destination. Therefore, the core activities of recreational businesses and institutions are based on the use of the diversity of the available recreational resources and the infrastructure of this destination in order to provide recreational services (products) to the target consumer segment to meet their health, sporting, emotional and psychological needs.

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