

ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF PRACTICING ADVENTURE TOURISM

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***Abstract.** Adventure tourism is considered to be that form of tourism which involves traveling in isolated, dangerous faraway places, in order to participate in physically difficult activities, carried out in nature. This form of tourism overlaps with sports tourism, because some specific activities are also sports at the same time. The activities specific to adventure tourism, depending on the environment in which they are practiced, land, water, air, generate many subtypes of adventure tourism. Practicing adventure tourism has many advantages for tourists, as it helps build confidence and motivation, making them take risks, coming into contact with nature, removing frustration, stress and monotonous life. The disadvantages of its practice are that the activities specific to this form of tourism can be traumatic, can cause concern in the families of adventure tourists, can create problems with the law for destruction or violation of property and financially tools and equipment require high costs.*

Key words: *adventure tourism, sub-types, motivation, advantages, disadvantages*

INTRODUCTION

Adventure tourism is defined in the literature as the type of tourism that involves distant or exotic trips to take part in outdoor activities, which are physically challenging [9,17]. It is considered that adventure tourism partially overlaps, over sports tourism because many of its specific activities are sports, some of them even Olympic [7,15]. Adventure tourism has been intensively studied from different perspectives [2,8,14]:

- operational audit;
- the characteristics of the adventure tourist;
- social, ecological, economic, managerial, marketing perspective;
- equipment manufacturing;
- geography of the place;
- psychological (conflicts, norms, strong sensations);
- security (insurance, illness, personal injury),
- trade statistics;
- the structure of tourist products.

Given the profile of the activities limited to adventure tourism, there are minimum standards in terms of equipment and human resources needed to practice them safely. Romania ten years ago, was in the Top 10 in of countries in development course where it occupied the ninth place where adventure tourism was growing, according to the Adventure Tourism Association of George Washington University.

The scale of activities specific to adventure tourism takes place from:

- the activities of the iconic adventurers, few in number;
- activities giving strong sensations in fairs - many in number;
- activities giving strong sensations in theme parks - the most numerous;
- activities in descending order of difficulty and increasing the number of practitioners, by [3,4]:
 - a. extreme sites;
 - b. adventure recreation trips for which special skills are required;
 - c. tours in faraway areas for which special skills are required;

- d. tours in accessible areas for which no special skills are required;
- e. destinations with tours for which no special skills are required;

The reasons why people choose to practice adventure tourism [6], on land, on water or in the air, from the perspective of the "push and pull" approach, there are certain internal factors that:

- push people to look for a tourist experience:
 - a. to be with the family and to learn;
 - b. to appreciate natural resources;
 - c. to escape from everyday life;
 - d. in the spirit of adventure.

- make them to choose the experience or product based on external factors that attract:

- a. key tourist resources;
- b. information;
- c. the comfort of the facilities offered by the service units;
- d. accessibility to the resource;
- e. transport conditions.

MATERIAL AND METHOD

The development of adventure tourism supposes the existence of tourist activities that designate as many sub-types of adventure tourism, on water, on land or in the air, which partially overlap with sports tourism due to the fact that it requires some training in this regard. Within this scientific approach, consulting the specialized literature, we made an analysis on the motivation to practice this form of partially sport adventure tourism, the advantages and disadvantages of this activity depending on the sub-types of adventure tourism carried out by consumers of such tourism products.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Analyzing adventure tourism, depending on the practicing environment of specific activities we find the existence of the following forms:

- adventure tourism in the air;
- adventure tourism on the water;
- adventure tourism on land.

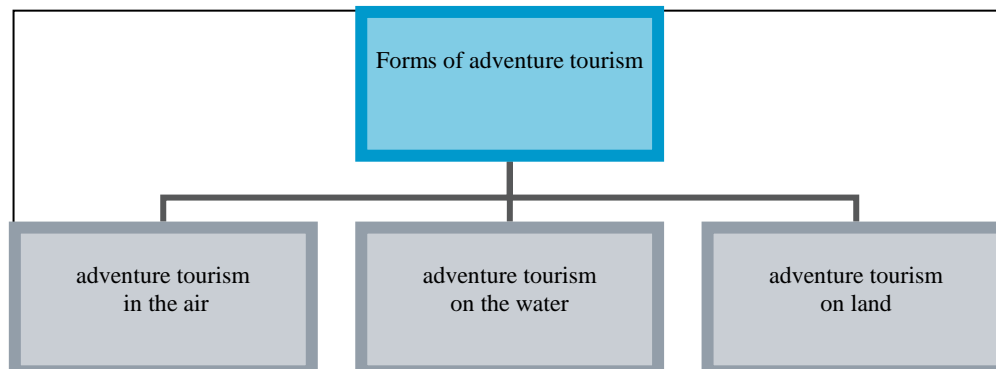


Figure 1. Forms of adventure tourism

The most important precautions measures before participating in any air tourism adventure are taken into consideration:

- meteorological observations;
- the experience of the coach to avoid the experience being very expensive.

The most practiced aerial tourist adventures "are [2,5]:

- a. air safari-exploring an air place with para-engines, motorized parachutes, maneuvered by experienced pilots;
- b. microlighting - the flight with a small plane;
- c. parascending - sliding through the air carried by an open parachute while being towed by a motor boat, for lifting in the air and getting off a boat;
- d. skydiving - jumping from an aircraft and performing acrobatic maneuvers in the air in free fall before landing with a parachute;
- e. gliding - glider flight;
- f. parajumping - parachuting;
- g. bunlee jumping - high jump with ankles tied to a long rubber band wrapped in nylon
- h. flight seeing - visiting an area from an airplane;
- i. balloonig - the flight with the balloon with hot air, helium or hydrogen;
- j. helicopter flight;

Sub-types of air adventure tourism	
air safari-exploring	
microlighting	
parascending	
skydiving	
gliding - glider flight	
parajumping - parachuting	
bunlee jumping	
flight seeing	
balloonig	
helicopter flight	

Figure 2. Sub-types of air adventure tourism

Water adventure or water adventure tourism can be practiced in waterfalls, springs, glacial lakes, seas and oceans, the most practiced forms of adventure being [2,3,5] shown in Figure 3:

- a. white-water kayaking - kayaking across a river;
- b. river running - descending on fast river;
- c. white-water rafting - sailing with an inflatable raft;
- d. windsurfing - moving on the surface of the water with the help of a cloth plate;
- e. surfing - moving on a wave that advances towards the shore with the help of a board. There are several types of surfing depending on the method or type of device used for travel: surfboard without a board-bodysurfing, surfing with a motor boat- tow-in surfing, knee surfing, lying down surfing - body boarding, regular surfing - regular stand-up surfing, kite surfing with the help of a kite - kite surfing, surfing on the canvas board-windsurfing, surfing on huge waves - big wave surfing, rowing on surf skis - surf skiing;

- a. snorkeling - swimming with a short tube that allows the swimmer to breathe while his face is under water;
- b. scuba diving - swimming underwater with an oxygen tube;
- c. diving - underwater exploration;
- d. sailing - sailing in a sailing boat;
- e. jet boating - traveling in a motor boat;
- f. jet-skiing - travel on a vehicle powered by an air jet;
- g) cross-country skiing;
- h. waterskiing - moving on the surface of the water with the help of skis;
- i. deep sea diving - diving in deep areas of the ocean;
- j. canyoning - crossing a canyon;
- k. sea kayaking - rowing in a canoe on the sea.

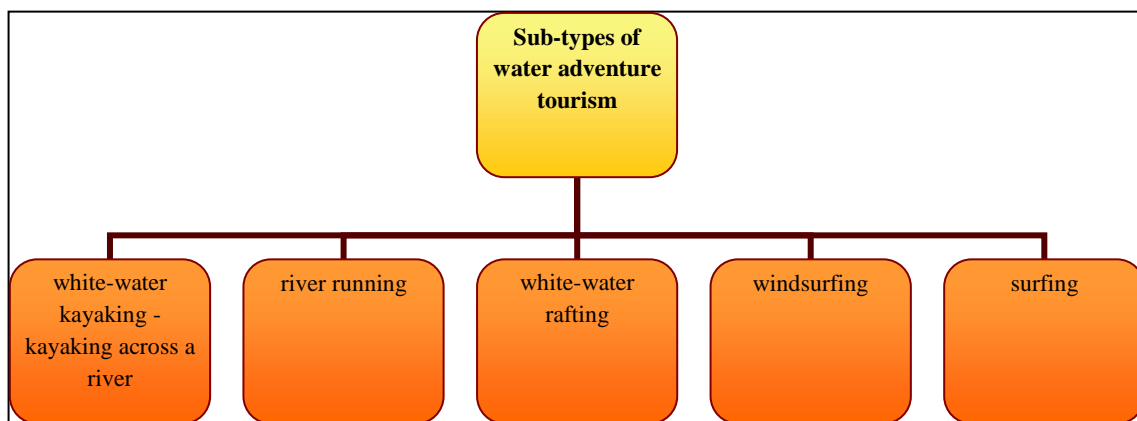


Figure 3. Sub-types of water adventure tourism

Among the sub-types of land adventure tourism the best known are those presented in the figure below [2,5,9]:

- a. mountaineering - rock climbing;
- b. snowboarding - sliding with the board;
- c. survival & wilderness training- survival in the wildness;
- d. riding - riding heavy animals;
- e. ice climbing - climbing on glaciers [12];
- f. mountain biking [10];
- g. expedition cruises - expedition type cruises [10]
- h. trekking - travel on foot;
- i. cycle safari - bicycle expedition [11];
- j. snowshoeing - walking in the snow wearing a flat device that looks like a tennis racket;
- k. fishing - with traditional means;
- l. all-terrain vehicle - ATV ride;
- m. snowmobiling - walking with snow mobile;
- n. dog sledding;
- o. cross-country skiing - skiing on undeveloped slopes;â
- p. elephant safari - hunting tourism riding on elephant.

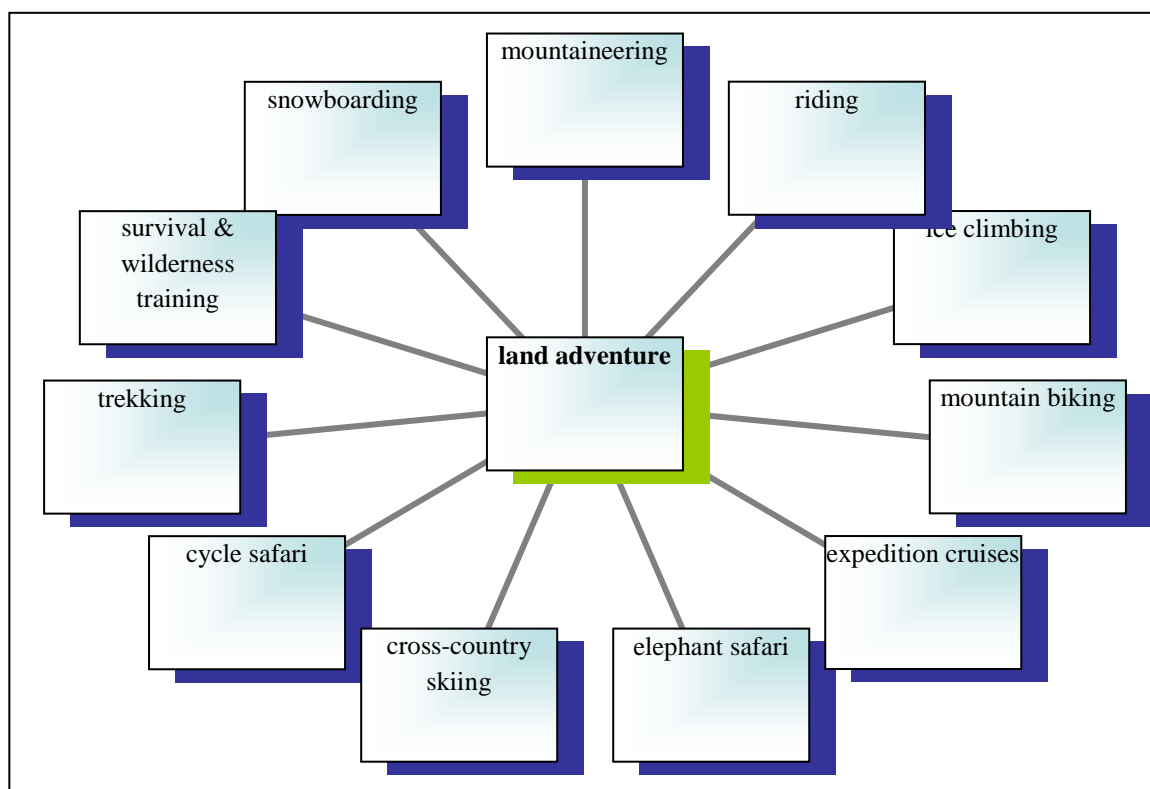


Figure 4. Sub-types of land adventure tourism

Practicing adventure tourism has many advantages for tourists who participate in these activities, because physical activity [16]:

- relaxes the mind and rejuvenates;
- helps build confidence and motivation by making people take risks at work;
- helps to overcome fear and increases confidence;
- it is a way of leisure;
- helps people get in touch with nature;
- keeps people in shape
- encourages militancy in the field of environmental protection;
- offers new experiences, an opportunity to live life to the fullest and to get rid of the daily routine, making from lived experiences invaluable memories;
- offers an accomplishment feeling;
- allows the experience of an alternative life;
- prevents a wide range of health problems.

However, the practice of adventure tourism, partly sports has some disadvantages because some specific activities can be dangerous and traumatic:

- can cause concern in the families of adventure tourists;
- may create problems with the law for the destruction and/or violation of property;
- can be very dangerous [1];
- may instill the idea that these activities are a testament of courage, boldness and masculinity;
- requires training;
- may endanger the lives of tourists only for recreational purposes.

Tourists who practice this form of tourism choose their destinations according to the landscape, the physical characteristics and the possible experiences to be lived. They are managers by profession, aged between 23-60 years and have financial power to purchase equipment, being motivated by the natural environment away from crowds and

civilization, personal growth through education or challenging activities. Their main preferences are:

- distance from home: important;
- in the travel experience: affordable costs, unique experiences, the chance to do something new;
- accommodation: accessible;
- at the destination: a variety of terrain with advanced levels of difficulty for adventure tourism activities;
- landscape: very important.

The reasons for practicing this form of tourism with its subtypes are:

- gaining prestige;
- adventure;
- to experience cultures, emotions;
- to experience the positive risk, the risk that constitutes, for the tourist, a challenge and that he can control [13];
- to interact with the natural environment which includes risk elements;
- to develop personally and to become intellectually rich;
- to participate in uncertain and risky activities rather than to admire the traditional tourist attractions.

The reasons for practicing this form of adventure tourism and partly sports tourism can be:

- internal reasons: risk-taking, self-awareness, skill development, desire for affiliation, desire for self-control, the need for adrenaline, the need to learn;
- external reasons: special landscapes, resources suitable for adventure tourism, endemic plant and animal species.

CONCLUSIONS

Adventure tourism, depending on the environment of practicing specific activities has the following forms of adventure tourism in the air, on water and on land, each with its own specific sub-types. Participating in any adventure involves taking measures regarding the quality of the means used, procuring specific equipment and training in the case of sub-types that are partially close to sports tourism. Adventure tourism is the type of tourism that involves long journeys to take part in physically difficult activities. It is considered that adventure tourism partially overlaps, over sports tourism because many of its specific activities are sports, some of them even Olympic. Adventure tourism has a number of advantages for practitioners, helping people to overcome their fear, increasing their self-confidence, by offering new experiences, opportunities to live life more intensely and escape the routine. Tourists who love adventure choose their destinations according to the landscape, physical characteristics and possible experiences to live; they are graduates of higher education, are financially motivated and can procure the necessary equipment, being interested only in personal growth through education. Although the practice of this form of tourism has disadvantages, it is the form of tourism with its sub-types that has an upward trend in the demand for adventure tourism products.

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