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AN INQUIRY INTO THE CONCEPT OF TOURISM ATTRACTIVENESS

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An Inquiry into the Concept of Tourism Attractiveness

Abstract. The article delves into the intricate concept of tourist attractiveness, exploring the diverse array of elements that contribute to the attractiveness of a specific destination, place, or object for travelers. It comprehensively reviews existing methodologies for identifying and defining the constituent factors that shape overall tourist appeal, considering both broad perspectives and more nuanced categories such as destination attractiveness or allure of specific types of tourism. The outcome of this study is a meticulous examination of the components comprising tourism attractiveness, organized into distinct categories encompassing nature, culture and heritage, tourism infrastructure, sustainability, digitalization and broader tourism development, sports and entertainment, as well as hospitality and local communities.

Key words: tourism, tourist attractions, tourism attractiveness, content analysis.

Евлоева Аза Султановна

Туристік тартымдылық тұжырымдамасын зерттеу

Аңдатпа. Мақалада туристік тартымдылық белгілі бір аумақты, орынды, нысанды туристер үшін тартымды ететін әртүрлі элементтерді қамтитын кешенді тұжырымдамалық аспект ретінде қарастырылады. Жалпы туристік тартымдылыққа сайтарлықтай әсер ететін құрамдас элементтерді анықтауға және анықтауға, сондай-ақ дестинацияның тартымдылығы немесе туризмнің жекелеген түрінің тартымдылығы сияқты нақты санаттар тұрғысынан қолданыстағы тәсілдер көрсетілген. Зерттеу нәтижесі табиғат, мәдениет және мұра, туристік инфрақұрылым, тұрақтылық, цифрландыру және туризмнің жалпы дамуы, спорт және ойын-сауық, қонақжайлылық және жергілікті қауымдастықтар сияқты санаттарға біріктірілген туристік тартымдылық элементтерін егжей-тегжейлі көрсету болды.

Түйін сөздер: туризм, туристік аттракциялар, туристік тартымдылық, контент-талдау.

Евлоева Аза Султановна

Исследование концепции туристской привлекательности

Аннотация. В статье рассмотрена туристская привлекательность как комплексный понятийный аспект, охватывающий различные элементы, делающие определенную территорию, место, объект привлекательными для посещения туристами. Обозначены существующие подходы к выявлению и определению составных элементов, существенно влияющих на туристскую привлекательность в целом, а также с позиции более конкретных категорий, таких как привлекательность дестинации или привлекательность отдельного вида туризма. Результатом исследования стала детализация элементов туристской привлекательности, объединенных в такие категории, как природа, культура и наследие, туристская инфраструктура, устойчивость, цифровизация и общее развитие туризма, спорт и развлечения, а также гостеприимство и местные сообщества.

Ключевые слова: туризм, туристские аттракции, туристская привлекательность, контент-анализ.

Main provisions. Tourist attractiveness is a complex concept encompassing various elements that make a certain territory, place or object attractive for tourists to visit. There are various approaches to determining the components of tourist attractiveness, the diversity of which necessitates a holistic approach on the one hand and taking into ac-

count the specific properties of certain elements that become central from the point of view of attractiveness, on the other.

Introduction. Tourism remains one of the most dynamic and promising sectors of the global economy. With the increasing mobility of the population and the development of vehicles, the tourism indus-

try is becoming a key sector for many countries. The success of the tourism industry depends on many factors, one of the most important of which is the tourist attractiveness [1].

Tourist attractiveness includes many facets that go beyond just the physical or geographical attractiveness of a tourist destination. These facets are represented by natural, cultural, historical, ecological and infrastructural elements, the complex interaction of which forms the attractiveness of the tourist territory [2]. The roots of tourist attraction can be traced back to the phenomenon of Grand Tours, when the European nobility went on long trips across the continent to expand their cultural horizons. It was then that travel became associated with cultural enrichment and intellectual pursuits. Over time, the concept has evolved to include elements of leisure, adventure and relaxation.

The beauty of nature, the cultural significance of objects, sustainability, accessibility of destinations and infrastructure development are the first to come to mind when it comes to tourist attractiveness. Thus, one of the drivers of tourist attractiveness is the richness of the cultural heritage of the destination, which may include ancient monuments, museums and cultural traditions, all of which, in turn, acts as a magnet for tourists who want to immerse themselves in the history and culture of the destination. Breathtaking landscapes, a variety of ecosystems, and nature features are also important components of the attractiveness of a tourist destination. Elements of nature are always one of the basic categories when choosing a destination for tourists. However, the world's existing resources, whether cultural or natural, must undergo a certain transformation in order to become a tourist resource. Often, this transition is possible only if a competent tourist infrastructure is created, which ensures the availability of resources, which means that to some extent their attractiveness. Economic growth, the processes of globalization and digitalization also leave their mark on the tourist attractiveness – the development of the tourism business leads to the diversification of the tourist product, making it more diverse and personalized, the processes of globalization and digitalization provide huge opportunities to find new ways to promote products and entire destinations. Of course, those products and destinations that take full advantage of digitalization are becoming more competitive and attractive to tourists [3].

Among the emerging trends in choosing a tourist product or destination and determining the most attractive offer, one can also highlight the greening of thinking and consumption. The modern tourist is

characterized by extensive knowledge in the field of conscious consumption and increasingly chooses green products based on respect for resources, and most importantly, for host communities. Summarizing the above, tourists prefer products created taking into account the principles of sustainability.

Attempts to reveal the picture of tourism attractiveness make it obvious that the concept is dynamic and it is influenced by many factors. From historical heritage to natural wonders, from cultural wealth to technological innovation, the background and context of tourism attractiveness provide a holistic understanding of what makes a destination attractive.

The purpose of this article is to comprehensively study and analyze the multifaceted concept of tourist attractiveness and the variety of elements that make up it. To fulfill this purpose, the article solves the following tasks:

- examine and identify the various dimensions or facets that contribute to the overall attractiveness in sense of tourism;
- propose a conceptual model of tourist attractiveness, taking into account the latest trends in the field of tourism.

Methods and organization of the research.

The article provides a content analysis of existing approaches to determining the elements that form the tourist attraction. The studied elements were grouped into seven main categories that affect tourist attractiveness. The variety of approaches and general understanding of tourist attractiveness, as well as the specificity of some studies, has reduced the possible combinations of elements. Nevertheless, the resulting picture of tourist attractiveness suggests the need for a holistic approach to this phenomenon, as well as a possible universal formula for the necessary elements of tourist attractiveness.

Literature review. In order to understand the concept of tourist attraction and identify its key elements, it is necessary to start with basic concepts such as attraction itself. Simply put, this is what attracts tourists in one way or another. An attraction can be either an object or a place, or an event, in a word, something that will make the trip interesting and memorable. The literature identifies various approaches to the classification of tourist attractions, which usually include:

Natural objects: landscapes, water bodies, flora and fauna, mountains, beaches, picturesque lakes, climate and weather.

Cultural objects: historical monuments, museums, temples, castles, various objects of cultural heritage, both tangible and intangible.

Urban planning: urban architecture, famous streets, embankments, bridges.

Entertainment: parks, attractions, theaters, concert programs.

Events: holidays, festivals, sports competitions, matches, promotions and more.

Gastronomic attractions: restaurants, food tracks, national cuisines, wineries, cheese factories and more.

Industrial facilities: factories, large industrial enterprises, spaceports.

Socio-economic component: local community, economic development.

The most complete is the basic functional classification of tourist attractions proposed by Kušen (Table 1).

Table 1 – Basic functional classification of tourism attractions [4]

Basic functional classification of tourism attractions	
1	Geological features
2	Climate
3	Water
4	Flora
5	Fauna
6	Protected natural heritage
7	Protected cultural heritage
8	The culture of life and work
9	Famous persons and historical events
10	Special events/happenings
11	Cultural and religious institutions
12	Natural spas/sanitariums
13	Sport and recreation facilities
14	Tourism paths, trails and roads
15	Attractions for attractions
16	Tourism para-attractions

It is important that the attractions are well organized, safe and interesting for visitors. They contribute to the development of tourism and create positive impressions among tourists. Attractions are the basic tourist resources that form the tourist attraction. Nevertheless, attractiveness in tourism is a complex and complex phenomenon, influenced by various factors, depending on what is decisive in delineating the boundaries of attractiveness. Thus, many scien-

tific papers on attractiveness in tourism are based on the concept of attractiveness of a tourist destination. A tourist destination is a complex of tourist attractions that are in a certain connection and interaction. The most common definition of a destination is as a territory that attracts tourists and is essentially the purpose of a trip. A destination may have both administrative and geographical boundaries, may occupy hundreds of thousands of square kilometers, or be limited to the territory of one theme park of twenty hectares. It all depends on the features that become points of attraction for tourists.

Among the works considering the attractiveness of a tourist destination, there are many that narrow down to the attractiveness of certain types of tourism or a tourist product. Thus, the tourist attractiveness of cities or the process of urbanization itself, natural tourism [5], cultural product, heritage and many others have been studied. In many of these works, attempts are made to identify categories, factors or elements that form tourist attractiveness, which is most interesting in the context of this study. For example, Bridaa (2012) divides all the variety of factors affecting urban tourist attractiveness into three key components: primary, secondary and additional. The main elements are cultural facilities (for example, museums and art galleries), entertainment and sports facilities, as well as physical and socio-economic characteristics, which represent the main purpose of tourists visiting the city. Secondary elements (i.e. accommodation and shopping) and additional elements (i.e. transport and tourist information) are also very important for the success of urban tourism, although they are not the main attractions for visitors. "Additional elements" also include parking spaces, information desks, travel guides and signs. In general, the city is no longer considered as a production unit, but as a place of consumption. Thus, residents and tourists are seen as a new economic resource capable of increasing local income and producing social benefits such as cultural and educational services for the local community [6].

Considering the attractiveness of national parks and, accordingly, an ecological tourism product, Castro associates it with the reputation of the park, the sights of the region and the population density. They identified the internal and external attributes of the park, including the age of the park, the variety of activities, opportunities for recreational activities, the number of services provided, such as transport, food, souvenirs, the number of tourist attractions, the number of accommodation and catering facilities, distance from the main settlements [7].

Also, the concept of tourist attraction is associated with the perception of tourists, there are a number of works devoted to the attractiveness index, where, along with basic categories such as territory and environment, infrastructure, historical and natural attractions, the economic profile of the tourist and the characteristics of tourist demand are laid down [8, 9, 10, 11].

Thus, tourist attraction is a broad and complex phenomenon that can include various elements depending on what is central: a specific type of tourism, a tourist product or a destination.

Results and discussion of the research. How broad can the concept of tourist attractiveness be and whether there are those elements that are essential and basic. After reviewing a number of sources devoted to the topic of tourist attractiveness, we came to the following main aspects of tourist attractiveness – the most important factor shaping the success of global tourist destinations. The results of the analysis are presented in the comprehensive scheme shown in Figure 1, which includes all the variety of elements that contribute to the attractiveness of tourist sites.

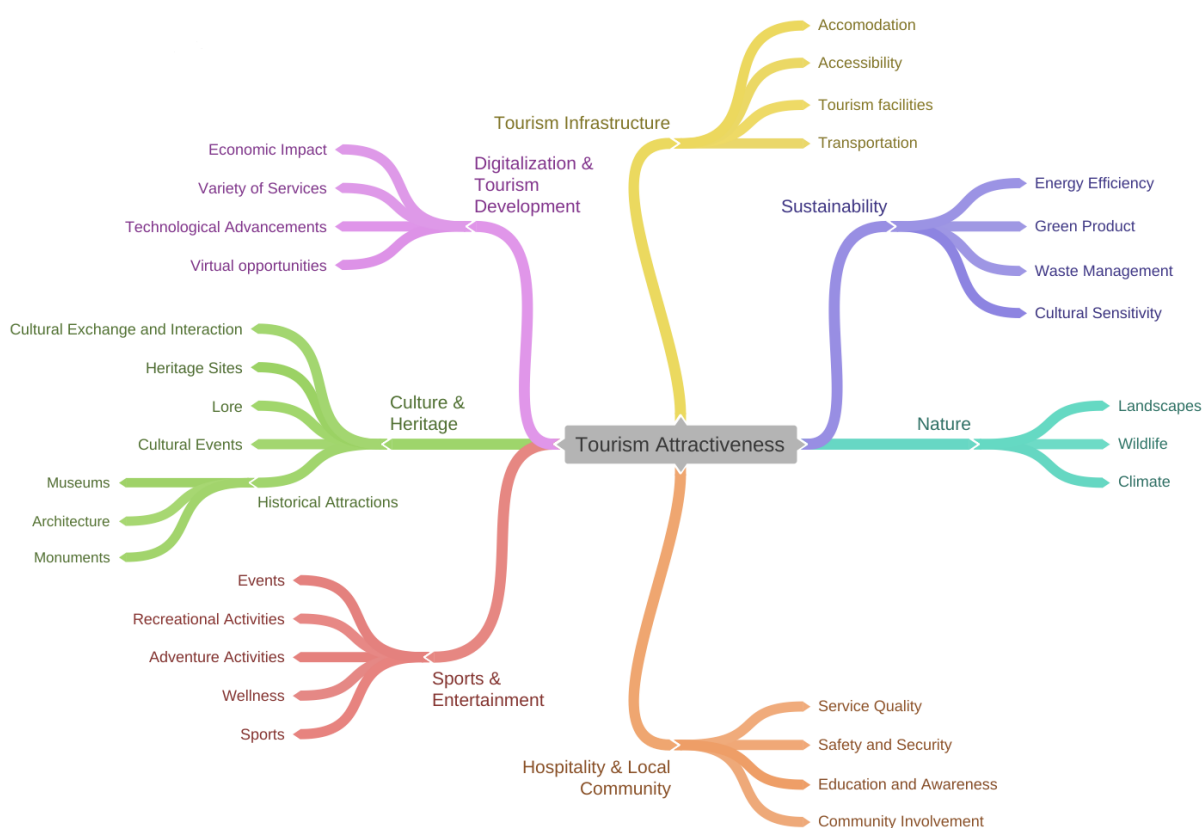


Figure 1 – Tourism attractiveness constituents [Compiled by author]

1. Nature. Natural aesthetics is inherent in one of the fundamental tourist factors – nature. Breath-taking landscapes, diverse wildlife and climate act as a magnetic force for travelers with a variety of goals.

2. Culture and heritage. The real soul and life in any tourist product are exalted by cultural objects. Historical monuments, museums and architectural wonders tell about the past, enriching the impressions of visitors. The fusion of tradition and moder-

nity creates a tapestry of authenticity, inviting tourists to immerse themselves in local narratives.

3. Tourist infrastructure. The basis of tourist attractiveness is deservedly a solid infrastructure. Well-established transport networks, modern accommodation facilities and efficient services form the basis on which unforgettable travel experiences are built.

4. Stability. The impact of tourism is twofold and the modern industry is trying to find a balance

between progress and conservation. The path to the development of tourism with an emphasis on caring for people and the environment lies through a green tourism product, when reasonable consumption of water, food, electric energy, waste minimization and recycling, as well as responsible and respectful attitude to diverse cultures become relevant. Achieving a delicate balance between economic development and environmental conservation ensures that tourism remains a force for good, leaving a minimal ecological footprint.

5. Digitalization and general development of tourism. Digitalization has penetrated into all spheres of human activity and leaves its mark on the attractiveness of objects and destinations. The economic impact, the variety of tourist services and products, and technological advances combine to create an environment conducive to tourism growth.

6. Sports and entertainment. This category is an effective tool for the diversity of the tourist offer – from wellness programs to adrenaline adventures, allowing you to achieve one of the most relevant goals today – to involve vacationers in various types of activities through games, competitions, quests. Whether it's hiking through lush forests or attending cultural events, these activities increase engagement and contribute to overall attractiveness.

7. Hospitality and local communities. It is critically important to apply high standards of service quality and ensure safety in the formation of attractiveness. An active search is underway to minimize

the impact of tourism activities on local communities, in the light of which tourist education and awareness become indicators of successful destinations chosen by modern travelers.

Conducted analysis highlights the need for a holistic approach. Due to the synergistic integration of these areas, destinations can achieve sustainable tourist attractiveness. As we navigate the complexities of a globalized world, the preservation of ecological integrity and the glorification of cultural heritage remain paramount tasks. Let's imagine a future in which travelers will find solace, inspiration and enrichment in a multifaceted tapestry of the most exciting places in our world.

Conclusion. Tourism attractiveness is a complex and multifaceted aspect that combines various elements that shape the experience and impression of a place among visitors. The study of this concept not only helps to understand what makes a place attractive, but also forms the basis for developing strategies for the development of the tourism industry. The interaction between natural, cultural and infrastructural elements determines the success of a tourist destination, making it not only a place to visit, but also an unforgettable experience for every tourist. An important conclusion of this study is the need for a holistic approach to the development of tourist destinations. The integration of these areas makes it possible to achieve sustainable tourist attractiveness. In the context of globalization, the preservation of natural integrity and respect for cultural heritage remain key tasks.

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