

IMPLICATIONS OF THE SOCIAL TOURISM ON QUALITY OF LIFE

IORDACHE CARMEN MARIA

“CONSTANTIN BRANCOVEANU” UNIVERSITY FROM PITESTI, FACULTY OF MANAGEMENT
MARKETING IN ECONOMIC BUSINESS, RAMNICU VALCEA

iordache72@yahoo.com

Abstract

Appeared in the realization of convergence concerns of the collective welfare - as a necessary, but not sufficient - with the political process of asserting fundamental human rights, in which was included the right of resting and leisure, social tourism emerged as a distinct form of tourism, conducted by well-defined social measures to facilitate the vacation of those with the most limited access to relaxation, the extent of this participation is conditional on economic development and the importance that each country attaches social life in order to increase its quality. This paper tries to analyze several attempts to define social tourism to submit its specificity and show how this form of tourism participating in quality of life.

Key words: social tourism, quality of life

JEL Clasification: L83

1. Introduction

Appearance of *social tourism* concept is located in democratic Europe after the end of Second World War. Hesitating between *popular tourism* and *tourism for all* founders chose a simple term that can be translated into most languages of the world and meets a social vocation. A definition of social tourism was given by PhD. Professor W. Hunziker: "tourism that is characterized in that it is practiced by small circles purchasing power and is facilitated by its special benefits, easy recognizable as such".

However, PhD. Professor W. Hunziker states that "... *social tourism should not be identified with mass tourism* because tourists are recruited from groups of people who have modest incomes but differs from mass tourism that addresses some blankets determined population, whose travel for tourism purposes (for rest, treatment balneomedicale etc.) are funded partially or even entirely, of trade unions, social insurance funds, etc., social measures". Thus, social tourism is the result tendering holidays of social groups as a result of domestic policies in some countries, actions and approaches to professional associations, trade unions or other meaning (Draica, C., 2003, pp. 102).

Social importance of tourism as a formative of society, promoter of economic growth and sustainable development, with a large contribution to global development, led to the creation of specialized bodies (International Bureau of Social Tourism - BIST), inclusion on the agendas of the forums highest (UN, European Community Commission).

The statute adopted by the General Assembly of May 15, 2002 BIST at the World Congress of Social Tourism held in Mexico stated: "the social tourism means all relationships and phenomena resulting from participation in tourism, and in particular the participation in tourism low-income social strata - participation possible or facilitated through measures of social well-defined".

Yves Robert Lanquard and Raynouard in their social work *Le tourisme et associatif*, says that social tourism wants to reach everyone and enables those who do

not always have the material resources and intellectual ability to participate in a trip or a holiday in their best possible financial, technical, psychological and cultural.

2. Features Of Social Tourism

As **manifestation forms** in social tourism are mentioned: medical travel spa treatment and cure, youth, study trips, school camps, some forms of leisure tourism and so on, from this point of view is difficult to divide in a clearly way from other forms of tourism.

Thus addressed, the characteristics of social tourism tourism in general or any other form of travel is by **customizing** the category of consumers who are addressed and how they are funded vacations (Hall C, 2000).

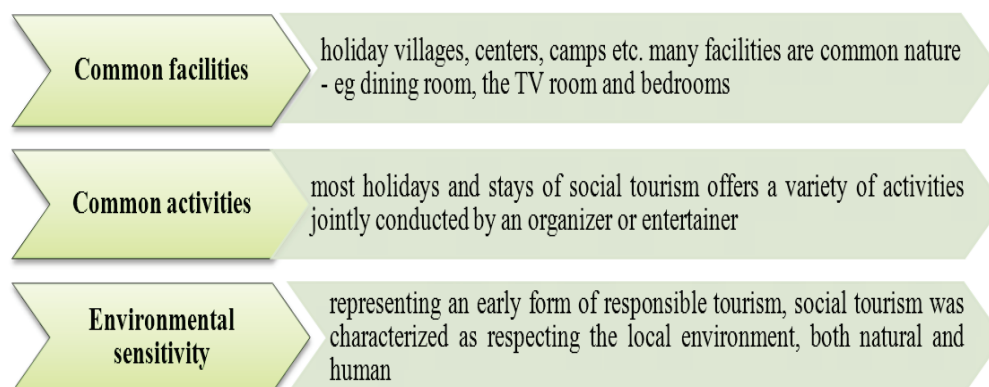
Recipients of this kind of tourism are groups of people with limited financial means, represented by those with incomes at minimum wage or social status showing this: pensioners, the unemployed, students, agricultural workers, etc. (Chauvin, J., 2002). Regarding travel opportunities, they are satisfied - partly or entirely - through subsidies granted by society through social welfare organizations and various other organizations: houses for social security pensioners' unions, trade unions, youth organizations, foundations, and and payment facilities offered by tourism operators (lower rates, lower levels of commission).

In working in any strategy, for developing this form of tourism, will have to take account some aspects that characterize social tourism industry (BITS 2001):

- in most countries, social tourism is not a homogenous structure either in terms of supply, or in terms of demand,
- tourism demand has a fluctuating evolution, therefore, even in countries with tradition in this form of tourism, it is necessary an offer rightlty structured.

Also, in organizing the social tourism should consider a number of **distinctive features** of this type of tourism (*Le tourism social dans le monde*, 2006):

Figure no.1: Features of social tourism



It should be mentioned here, however, a number of factors that can adversely affect the development of social tourism, tourist activities are included here, such as: (Freyne J., Brennan A. J., Smyth B., Byrne D., Smeaton A. F., Jones G.J.F., 2009, Marjoribanks, K. 1998):

- psychological barrier when potential customers refuse to make their holiday out of season;

- family obstacle, due to the fact that a significant proportion of tourists are married which, having school children and they can not take holidays just during their school holiday;

- technical obstacle, linked to large companies during the season would have to close their doors to employees who wish to spend their holidays in the same period of school holidays.

Social tourism is a form of tourism directly related to the evolution of economic development, the degree of civilization of the people, the establishment of rest days, paid holidays, etc., stages that prerequisites "democratization of holidays and tourism » (Chauvin J., 2002). Social tourism could play a very important role in all areas of accessible tourism, industry associations having the purpose of linking partnerships with public and private authorities, trade unions, businesses and so on, in order to enable all segments of the population, especially those with modest incomes to benefit from a holiday (Minnaert L., 2007).

In developed countries, there are four types of financial resources to subsidize investments in social tourism: state loans from the National Family Allowances Fund (CNAF) or locally, at House Family Allowance (CAF) or funds from loans to individuals or financial organizations.

Another way to implement the so-called "social tourism management" in developed countries, which began to be practiced in Romania, based on holiday check sites that encourage labor saving idea. An employee has the opportunity to save a certain amount each month, according to well-defined understanding employer, and providing facilities that enable low-income employees.

There is also support from the National Agency for the Savings Bank Holidays (ANCEV) with a double social mission: on the one hand providing funds for holiday departures categories of people who meet certain income, age or social status, and secondly for managing social properties by distributing funds for renovations, repairs, improving comfort, etc.

Another body necessary for the implementation of the management system of social tourism is Public Interest Group of Solidarity Scholarships (GIPBSV). Its purpose is to bring together offerings stay for people who cannot go on holiday without financial assistance with a number of financial terms very favorable. This body collects bids from a number of providers of tourist services, with specialized associations related with people that faces a range of social problems (Popescu D., Geamănu C., 2004).

3. Contribution of Social Tourism on Improving Quality of Life

The role of tourism in the economy is widely recognized, as well as its effects both economically and socially, but for a complete picture of the field, it should be noted that tourism and consequently, social tourism, not only influences but is also influenced to turn on a number of factors.

In fact, the direct and indirect effects of tourism on the two plans is reflected in the standard of living of the individual, so in its quality of life, defined as "**a measure of human achievement, a balanced multilateral meeting real human needs, leading authentic to human fulfillment**".(Zamfir E., 1989, pp. 20)

Figure no.2 Complexity influences from and on tourism

Factors influencing tourism	Urbanization		Tourism	Resting		Quality of life
	Stress			Relaxing		
	Level of training			Knowing		
	Income			Aesthetic taste		
	Leisure			Energy and tone		

Like any other economic sector, tourism, and therefore implicitly, social tourism as an integral part of it is connected to socio-economic dynamics of a country evolving subject of various factors, the most important being, in the opinion of most experts, the **income population** expressing synthetic level, the level of economic and social development of a country.

It is known that this revenue is primarily intended to satisfy vital needs (so-called "compulsory consumption") with relatively constant size, caused by the cvasilimitat of physiological needs, and secondly available money goes to the satisfaction of requirements that ensure a comfortable and ultimately only the needs of leisure (possibly tourist activity).

As the overall level of income increases, obviously, that designed to meet the needs of the secondary becomes larger and exercising a choice tourist activities can be considered.

Urbanization leads, in turn, changes in the structure of population needs, influencing directly and sizes of tourist traffic. This is due to the effects of urbanization that has on the natural environment and the human nervous request, giving rise to the desire to escape from major conurbations, to quiet areas, unpolluted, for rest, recreation, eliminate **the stress** of everyday life (solving everyday problems, tasks at work, etc.). Urban population growth (which is about 70 percentage points on the European continent), results in size increase tourist flows.

Leisure and its dimensions determine the conditions for tourism, it is actually one of the most important consequences of increasing size spare time (based on shortened working hours, reducing the working week, annual leave pay increase and reducing the time on the total working life).

Finally, it was found that the **level of training** influences consumer inclination to travel, so segments of the population with a higher level of education, exhibits a greater demand for tourism, due to a certain perception of travel with its meaning, but and due to higher cash (causing another hierarchy of needs than those with a lower educational level).

On the other hand, tourism influenced by these factors influence, in turn, by another series of factors, *the main aspects of quality of life*. Mention here **rest / recreation** and equally **relaxation**, which ensures the biological and physiological balance of contemporary man, who finds in this work an effective solution against constraints of all kinds of it.

Replacing gradual on globally the treatment to those based on natural cure factors and **maintaining tone of life**, especially the elderly, leading to increasing life expectancy and recovery capacity of the workforce.

In this context, maintaining the lead tone through medical spa tourism, **improve the health** of the population, so tourists and treating various diseases or prevent some of these complications, using climate, mineral waters, mud, salt water etc. The climatotherapy (using climatic qualities) getting to strengthening and increasing the body's resistance weakened after fatigue or illness, leading to rebalance the body.

However, tourism can contribute to raising the level of training, **knowledge** and human civilization through the acquisition of new knowledge, facilitating access to cultural values, exchange of ideas, information, opinions, thoughts that contribute not only to broaden the cultural horizon of the tourist, but by contact with different cultural patterns (habits, lifestyles, ceremonies, etc.) develops a certain **aesthetic taste**.

Tourism phenomenon being closely linked to culture and civilization and inoculating them on the tourist that practice tourism, tourism caused over-appointment as "*ambassador of peace*", which is a means of knowledge, understanding and rapprochement between nations.

Through all these factors, tourism influences the quality of life that can be assessed on the basement of two distinct elements:

1. condition of human life, as it is at a given moment - global expression of all conditions and activities which compose life: the quality of the natural environment, work, family life, leisure, education, health, participation in social, economic, and social services etc.

2. existence of a set of criteria (values) in relation to the condition of life is assessed as good or less good, reminiscent in this sense, the origins (family), education level, hierarchical position (income, working time, social prestige, lifestyle), access to quality services (health, education, information), the role and status of the individual in society etc.

For a better evaluation of the quality of people's lives, in recent years have been undertaken extensive development of methodologies to measure quality of life, despite the difficulties that arise particularly high in this regard. Thus concluded that the formula is (D. Vârjan, 2002, p.102):

$$I_{cv} = \frac{I_v}{I_s}, \text{ where:}$$

I_{cv}- quality of life index;

I_s- state of life index;

I_v- evaluation criteria index.

State index incorporates a number of social indicators (life expectancy, population health status, level of education), economic (real income per capita), socio-cultural, consumer and so on, which, while not constitute in particular, to make assessments of quality of life, they make the relationship computing.

Index evaluation criteria raises the question of determining the needs, aspirations, ideals, human values, which is very difficult because it involved issues of hierarchy evaluation criteria, which differ from one individual to another. A number of needs, such as physiological (food, safety) may be easier to appreciate, while the spiritual (belief, attachment, social relations) are very difficult to measure.

Despite these difficulties that arise in assessing quality of life index, it can be appreciated both at micro (small community) and macro level (country level) through multiple social benefits generated by tourism development:

- **Tourism access for a large number of people** - each person has the right to rest and leisure in order to fully develop their personality.

- **emphasize the human side of development of tourism activity** by shifting the emphasis to date on the **economic efficiency** of tourism activity (making a profit), the social efficiency (relative to the individual and the benefits it derives).

- **is a social tool, improving relations between people** (social cohesion) and enables integration of problem (disabled) in social life (social inclusion) – tourism allows the contact with **different realities, cultures and traditions and, above all, allows networking with other individuals** who otherwise would not be possible.

- **extended tourist season** - by creating social tourism offers of off-season, when tourist traffic is minimal, it creates favorable conditions extend over a longer activity of the year.

- **increase labor employment** - by extending the tourist season **is reduced seasonal jobs**, thus providing both better conditions to ensure employees and reduce staff turnover.

- **provides the maintenance requirements reception areas (tourism) units throughout the year** maintaining tourism as long as the tourist circuit is on activity, maintenance conditions are improving countinously, creating conditions fundraising for their modernization.

- **ensure a better use of the natural, cultural and human potential in the area** - tourist attraction and retention targets as many natural, cultural and anthropological objectives, lead to favorable legal framework to exploit and protect them.

- **tourist flows shift to less frequented areas, relieving some, promoting others** - social tourism might attract (through social and special offers) tourists to less known tourists areas due to less intense promotions.

- **development (economic) of local communities** - local communities benefit from increasing the number of jobs, cultural exchange, openness, possibility of funding for modernization of its equipment, infrastructure, etc.

- **may be a solution for less favored areas (mining, industrial, etc.)** - in many areas where a number of industrial facilities have been closed, where jobs are few and are very low living standards, the only solution is to create conditions tourism development through enhancement of the area attractions (natural order, cultural or anthropogenic).

- **increasing quality of life at a company level** (tourists, local community, businesses, etc.) - social tourism provides everyone involved better living standards through recreation, restoring health, rest and so on, for tourists and for the community, by an increase of income.

4. Conclusions

Economic crises, structural changes in the economic and social issues, globalization, technical formulation excessive unemployment and the existence of many children in a family are generating poverty. An efficient economy is able to offer its members more and more effective ways to combat poverty.

Studies have shown determinism consistent and sufficient income to include tourism programs in family budgets. Poverty cancels people opportunities to participate in tourism, which is the first to be waived consumption in case of income reduction or emergence of other priorities for their solving is only a choice between different alternative destinations unbearing additional spending their budget.

Poverty adversely affects tourism by restricting both segments of the population to which it is addressed and the lack of resources for tourism planning and equipping areas with tourism potential to combat poverty.

Therefore, social tourism can become a source of fighting poverty in areas with tourism potential by creating jobs, raising incomes, creating or enhancing all adjacent activities and development of the whole country through which launches applications the various productive sectors through its multiplier effect.

Tourism must be an opportunity for all of us a chance of knowledge and mutual discovery, a school of solidarity among locals and tourists. This industry involved in some way the notion of happiness to live and therefore is a chance for all paid by all social system.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. BITS, Le tourisme social dans le monde, 2004-2006
2. BITS (1996), La declaration de Montreal 1996 – pour une vision humaniste et social du tourisme, Bruxelles, 1996.
3. BITS (2001) Youth Tourism: a Growing Tourism Sector. Social Tourism International, No. 138, pp. 8
4. Chauvin J., (2002), Le tourisme social et associatif en France, L'Harmattan, Paris, 2002, France

5. Draica C., Turismul internațional. Practici de elaborare și distribuție a produsului turistic, All Beck Publishing House, Bucharest, 2003, pp. 102
6. Freyne J., Brennan A. J., Smyth B, Byrne D., Smeaton A. F., Jones G.J.F., 2009, Automated Murmurs: The Social Mobile Tourist Application, cse, vol. 4, pp.1021-1026, 2009 International Conference on Computational Science and Engineering, 2009
7. Hall, C., (2000) Tourism Planning: Policies, processes and relationships. Harlow: Prentice Hall
8. Hunziker W., (1958.), Comments on the finance and investments in social tourism. Tourism Progress, No.1;
9. Hunziker, W., (1951), Social Tourism: Its Nature and Problems. No Place: International Tourists Alliance Scientific Commission.
10. Lanquard R., Raynouard Y., Le tourisme social et associatif, Colecția Que sais-je?, Presses Universitaires de France Publishing House, 1995, pp. 24.
11. Marjoribanks, K., (1998), Family capital, children's individual attributes, and adolescents' aspirations: a follow-up analysis, The Journal of Psychology, 132:3, pp. 328-336
12. Minnaert, L., Maitland, R. & Miller, G., (2009), Tourism and social policy – The value of social tourism, in: "Annals of Tourism Research", Vol. 36, n° 2, pp. 316-334
13. Popescu D., Geamănu C., 2004– Turismul social și asociativ, formă modernă de turism practică cu succes în țările dezvoltate, Economistul Journal, nov. 2004, third page
14. Vârjan D., Creșterea economică și condiția umană, Doctorat thesis, ASE, Bucharest, 2002
15. Zamfir E.,- Incursiuni în universul uman, Albatros Publishing House, Bucharest, 1989, pp. 20
16. *** Le tourisme social dans le monde. No. 145, Mars, 2006