SPORTS TOURISM AND TEXTILE INDUSTRY

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Abstract

This paper focuses on detection and description of the role and importance of the textile industry for the tourism industry i.e. its specific form of selective tourism - sports tourism. It is widely known that nowadays textiles can be designed in different ways and in accordance with our needs e.g. sports. These types of textile materials, have their place in the field of technical textiles, as a specific part, so-called sports textiles i.e. sporttech. With the development of society and technology, sports and recreation it was possible to put for this paper hypothesis that textile industry has, with all its resources, a comprehensive applicability in the business of sport and, as a consequence, in sports tourism. It produces significant economic, sociological, psychological, intrinsic and other unmentioned effects. Different trends of understandings of life and ways of life, favor to the growth of consumption in the segment of sports tourism, and thus in the area of supply and demand for sports textiles. In support of hypothesis, are given examples of unquestionable connection between the textile industry and services and production activities relevant to the development of sports tourism, which are in the function of their numerous impacts and in order to meet the needs of consumers.

Key words: sports tourism, textile industry, technical textiles, sports textiles, sports textiles impacts

Introduction

The 21st century gives us a new paradigm for textiles. Textiles are not associated any more only with clothes that covers our body and protect it from harsh environmental conditions, but also with materials that can be designed according to the specific requirements in use like e.g. breathable (water repellent and at the same time vapor permeable) fulfilling our needs from medical to sports (Figure 1). These kinds of textiles have different structures and characteristics depending on the specific requirements and needs. Such unconventional textiles are known as technical textiles (Figure 2) and today, with the respected value market represents the major profitable niche in textiles production. The reasons for such success can be contributed to the fact that textile science and technology through different textile fibers, structures and constructions provide solutions that help modern engineers to accomplish different temptations and expectations posed on them at the present time like e.g. light construction and low weight, air-permeable, ultra-breathable, optimum heat and moisture regulation, temperature control, rapid drying or wicking, low water absorption and water vapor permeability, biodegradable, non-flammable, dimensionally stable in different weather condition, bullet resistant, windproof and waterproof etc. Usage of such technical textiles in sports activities is no exception - quite the contrary.

![Figure 1: Areas of textiles application](image-url)
Methods

In this paper, general methods of scientific research were used: desk research of primary, secondary and tertiary sources, systematic observation, description method, causal method, deductive and inductive methods and methods of analysis and synthesis. On such collected data, the qualitative explanatory case study method (Baxter, Jack 2008) was made. So, “this type of explanatory case study would be used if the goal is to seek the answer for a question that sought to explain the presumed causal links in real-life that are too complex for the survey or experimental strategies” (Yin, 2003; Baxter & Jack, 2008:547). In this case, of evaluation, the explanations would link to effects.

Hypothesis

Hypothesis: Textile industry has a comprehensive applicability in the business of sport and as a consequence in sports tourism.

Discussion

Since sport is perhaps the most dominant social influence in the world today by penetrating into every aspects of our life (O’Mahony, Braddock, 2002), sports textiles i.e. sporttech become more and more important not only for top athletes but also for ordinary humans. Sports textiles are one of the segments of technical textiles, which include:

➢ Textile materials used as sportswear (aerobic clothing, athletic clothing, football clothing, sweatshirts, swimwear etc.) with several function, providing not only body protection but also comfort, recognition and aesthetic design and sometimes even outstanding results.

➢ Textile fibers and materials used in sports equipment and accessories (sails, trampolines, camping gear, leisure bags, bikes, rackets, artificial grass, etc.) enabling e.g. faster sailing, safer climbing or simply easier handling and usage.

➢ Textile materials that is used in sports footwear (athletic shoes, football boots, gym shoes, tennis shoes, walking boots etc.).

The sports textiles business is technically oriented, using highly functional textiles for specialized performances in different sports, e.g. good thermal properties for cold-weather sport, aero-dynamic properties for downhill skiing and swimming, breathable waterproofing for outdoor pursuits, strength and durability for sails, less effort and fatigue of athletes due to the lightweight rackets and bats, safety in fencing because of cut and puncture resistant clothing and so on. With the introduction of intelligent textiles and wearable technology, innovative solutions have become the name of the game for the sportswear businesses (Sisho, 2005).

Since the hypothesis of this paper is claim, that textile industry has a comprehensive applicability in the business of sport and as a consequence in sports tourism, several (to this study available) studies were analyzed in order to confirm the claim (Table 1).
What does sports tourism stand for? According to different researchers, (Gammon & Robinson, 1997, Ross, 2001, Saayman, 2012, etc.) sport(s) tourism refers to similar, but in final content, different issue. “Sport tourism refers to the experience of travel to engage in or view sport-related activities. It is generally recognized that there are three types of sport tourism: Sport Event Tourism, Active Sport Tourism, and Nostalgia Sport Tourism.” (Ross, S.D., 2001, p. 3). Sport Event Tourism includes visit to different sport events. Active Sport Tourism describes active participation in sports activities of individuals who travels. Nostalgia Sport Tourism is travelling to famous sport-related attractions (Ross, S.D., 2001). On the other hand, Gammon and Robinson (1997) describe relation between sport and tourism as “Sport tourism” and “Tourism sport”. Sport tourism involved passive and active participants at a competitive sporting event, while “Tourism sport” involves visitors who engage in some minor form of sport or leisure (Saayman, 2012). Therefore, it is obvious that sports tourism integrates into tourism product sports activities. Since sport involves very wide range of activities it is necessary to explain the areas of sports activities – these subareas are areas of competitive sport, recreational sport, education and science in sports, physical training and sports of disabled and other business sporting activities (Novak, 2001).

“What are general benefits of sport tourism? Sports are an investment in the tourism industry; Creates economic growth through filled hotels, restaurants and retail establishments; Creates exposure and enhances a positive image for your community; Creates new product, a new tourism destination; Maximizes facility use in your community; Builds community relationships and strengthens corporate support; Creates youth opportunity/entertainment; Attract high-yield visitors, especially repeaters; Generate favorable image for the destination; Develop new infrastructure; Use the media to extend the normal communications reach; Generate increased rate of tourism growth or a higher demand plateau; Improve the organizational, marketing, and bidding capability of the community; Secure a financial legacy for management of new sport facilities; Increase community support for sport and sport-events” (Ross, S.D., 2001, p. 7). Tourism provides one of 11 job worldwide (UN World Tourism Organization, 2017). Market for sportech according to David Rigby associates consumption of sports apparel was 195 Kilo Tones in 1995 it increased to 395 KT in 2005 (Haldner, P., 2013). Also, “global sportswear market in 2012 exceeded $244 billion” (Shishoo, R., 2015:3) and the market has trend to grow each year.

Example: “It is estimated that golf tourism currently generates around £220 million for the Scottish economy. This output represents Gross Value Added of £120 million and supports 4,400 jobs...This increase in demand for tourism services creates further economic activity through ‘multiplier’ effects. These businesses will need to purchase more inputs (i.e. goods and services) and this generates additional demand for suppliers...” (SQW Consulting, 2009, p. 51, 7). How many jobs and how many other different economic effects generate textile industry within those effects?

Since, the uses of sport(s) during vacation and/or travel with sports purpose necessarily incluse apparel i.e. textile items or equipment that implies that every with active participated and sport motivated travel is connected with direct or indirect expenditure for textile items. In that sense, how many jobs provides sports tourism and textile industry for sport tourism within this one of 11 jobs and / or for all of above mentioned impacts of sport tourism? On this questions is very difficult to answer, but is obvious that there are some significant impacts. It is common knowledge that sport has influence i.e. makes contribution to the GDP in semi and developed countries - around 1 to 2%. Tourism participate with 4 to 6% (Ritchie, B.W., Adair, D., 2004, p. 2). „International tourist arrivals grew by 3.9% to reach a total of 1.235
million, according to the data analyzed in this issue of the UNWTO World Tourism Barometer. Some 46 million more tourists (overnight visitors) travelled internationally last year compared to 2015 (UNWTO Barometer, 2017:1). Therefore, many visitors obviously have to participate in sport tourism as well. Sports visitors in 2014 in USA participate with 25.65 million arrivals (NASC, 2015). In Croatia in 2014 visitors make 11.6 million arrivals with 10.1 billion US$ expenditure (UN statistical Yearbook, 2016). But only 2.75% on sport and leisure (Institute for Tourism, 2015).

Because of previously mentioned economic impacts and wide range of subareas of sport, sports tourism has opportunity to offer wide range of textile products within tourism products. Those products can be, and they are, connected with different type of facilities, equipments and nature for which are technical textile in sport (sports tech) specially designed. Having in mind different kind of sports tourism it is obvious that sports tech present a significant part in its realization:

➤ For competitive sport – institutional or not institutional competitive activity that involves highly skilled physical efforts with goal to achieve competitive results and/or joy of winning for which they need to use various types of technically advanced sportswear.

➤ For recreation tourism - to be able to escape the routine of daily life as in camping or going to a beach, solid, water resistant air-permeable tent is imperative while UV protective, fast drying swimsuit is essential. For active tourism like e.g. climbing on a mountain, thermo regulating, comfort clothing and light equipment are needed. In sports tourism as sky holidays or recreation sailing fiber reinforced fast and light skis or sail are wanted. For adventure tourism, super strength ropes in rock climbing or anti-slippery footwear during tracking through rainforest can save a life. In wilderness tourism curt resistant clothes and shoes might help in surviving. For ecotourism biodegradable, multifunctional accessories are in accordance with sustainable living.

➤ For health/medical and/or physical training (kinesotherapy) textiles breathable and antimicrobial clothes in exercising can be contributing factor as well as clothes and/or equipment that provides safe exercising.

➤ For sports of disabled persons there are many special apppares technically advanced for special purpose and other equipment based on fiber reinforced composites.

➤ For education and science in sports there are items that provide lecturing or exercising possible as well as different scientific activities.

Conclusion

According to shown facts and arguments, it is possible to conclude that given hypothesis: Textile industry has a comprehensive applicability in the business of sport and as a consequence in sports tourism is confirmed. Sports textile industry has significant impact on most of economies on supply side through production or through consumption for sports activities, which are part of sports tourism as well. That makes this conclusion possible.

References


