

LEISURE AND TOURISM

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Summary

Leisure is a universal component of human culture which takes different forms and meanings based on the characteristics of a given society. The growth of tourism is part of the globalization process and involves markets around the world, affecting labor relations and cultural aspects held as part of a broad global movement. This has provided greater force for international organizations that control a substantial amount of services in the tourism market, such as hotel chains, airlines companies and travel agencies. It seems apparent the recognition of tourism as a thriving job market for leisure professionals, before a historical and social growth of tourism in the face of the deepest economic downturns. However, it appears that the presence of leisure in vocational training in tourism is commonly considered in a limited fashion, usually linked it to a technical conception from the recreation and associated as a product in a commoditized market which is based largely on the tourist sector.

This chapter aims at the approach of aspects related to the development of leisure, emphasizing this sector in well-known expansion and understanding the importance of this for social and economic development in its insertion in a globalized worldwide context. As a methodology, a qualitative analysis was performed in academic books, related articles, research organization' supplies and even on Brazilian and international institutional documents, emphasizing tourism as a relevant element in the field of leisure.

1. General Introduction

It is important to seek some answers understanding the leisure sector in the world and its relation with physical education and tourism. It seems to be well known the recognition of tourism as a prosperous labor market to the professionals of leisure,

before both historical and social situation of growth of tourist activity even before the deepest economical adversities. Therefore, it is understood tourism as a part of leisure and a basic contemporary element for analysis of that human life sphere. The perspective of the growth of tourism in the world is emphasized in many studies, increasing that field as an “industry without any chimney”, emphasizing its benefits for the environment and receptive community.

The expected is that the sector still grows in real terms 4.2% per year in a period between 2007 and 2016, information that helps to sustain the tourism as one of the strongest priorities in the world economy for the future. According to the sources used in this text, since the mid 1990s, South America registered a growth on 6%, beyond the world average 4.1%, which suggests that on the next years we will testify a definite awakening of the region in an economical and tourist sense. Especially on Brazil, about 50 % of the total of arrivals of international tourists to the country has as a main goal of the trip the category of “leisure and vacations”, once the other 20% are approximately in the category “visiting friends and relatives” and 30% are on “business and professional reasons”.

2. Historical Overview of Leisure and Tourism around the World

A definition of leisure that proposes to be universal is practically impossible, because in western society, influenced by Judeo-Christian and Protestant ethic, leisure is commonly seen as free time from work and other obligations. The definition adopted in leisure oriental society is still little known and widespread academically (Jackson, 2006).

According to Iwasaki (2006), culture plays a central role in the conceptualization of leisure, whether in Western society, in Asian culture, the indigenous, among others. There is research evidence that proves the contribution of leisure to the quality of life for people in various cultural contexts in the world. In this way, forms of expression at leisure for art, dance, music, religion, dress, language, sports and gastronomy denote and celebrate individual and collective identities (Chick, 2006).

As part of the global economic processes of production and consumption, the internationalization of leisure activities force the emergence of a wider range of services and establishment of transnational relations franchise provider of retail products. Globalization thus lies at the heart of modern culture and refers to the network, always growing and developing rapidly, interconnections and interdependencies that characterize modern social life (Tomlinson, 1999).

Bull et al (2003) defend that the growth of tourism is part of the process of globalization that involves markets, relations of labor and culture realized in a global dimension. Such fact has proportioned a bigger strength to international organizations that controls a substantial quantity of services in the tourism market once as owners of hotels, air companies and integrated tourism agencies. This way, it doesn't matter where the tourist is. He will be able to find his hotel style, his food and the same variety of entertainment. California's Disneyworld is replied on Florida, France and Tokyo. McDonald's or Pizza Hut exists in practically every city in the world.

Williams (2006) suggests that tourism is an important basis for protecting natural, cultural and historic wealth for its ability to mobilize economic and political spheres. However, facing the various impacts that tourism causes on destinations around the world, besides it, concerning the environmental saturation and the economical decadence of productive activities, we call into question until when that sector wouldn't be into service of a mercantilization attached to consumerist values and in conformity with the actual society?

The Australian authors Veal and Lynch (2001) express the concern related to the huge number of tourists in that country, in which the growth of the demand of divers in the Great Barrier Reef, by the coast of the state of Queensland, or even the visitors on the Blue Mountains, nearby Sydney, becomes a huge challenge to the managers in terms of preservation and responsibility of the environment.

Menezes and Coriolano (2002) accuse the fact that tourism has revealed, with rare exceptions, tourists to be highly predatory of the natural ecosystems, because of the consumerist behavior that transforms it into another commodity. Krippendorf (2000) emphasizes the incessant search for the tourism in the free time as an escape from the values of the big cities, realizing escapism activities from the daily restlessness, in a certain functionalist way.

We shall see ahead how this situation has influenced the establishment of vocational training in tourism, seeking to understand the interfaces with leisure, investigating both thematic literature as well as some official documents performing key examples in a wide range of sociocultural realities.

3. Educational Perspective

The basis for leisure education is the belief that leisure is a creative and constructive force in the lives of individuals, social groups, communities and society overall (Henderson, 2006). We will discuss in this item the implications on the relationship between leisure and tourism with regard the job market.

We believe that is relevant to highlight some misunderstandings between leisure and tourism when discussing vocational training and the labor market, both in national and international level. In some cases, leisure is minimized as a discipline to be fulfilled in tourism degree courses. In others, leisure is understood as a broad area where tourism is just an element like sports, arts, dance, and others.

Camargo (2001) points out the greater expressiveness of tourism courses in Brazil, because the first one has greater appeal in commercial and political spheres than the second. From this perspective, if undergraduate and graduate programs in leisure are still a novelty in Brazil, some experiences in North America, Europe and Oceania have been developed offering programs in both fields.

Obviously the training is not only driven by tourism courses at the college level, denying several other training opportunities as on a technical level or through teaching, research and extension in various sociocultural contexts. However, from an educational

perspective, the intention is to seek the interface in leisure alluding to a university degree in tourism from the bachelor, modality that experienced a steep growth worldwide.

For instance, in the United States, McLean et al (2005) emphasize that training programs in leisure exist since the early beginning of the twentieth century. In the 1920s, for example, the National Recreation Association provided a degree program for professional work with recreation and park managers. According to the authors, during the Great Depression of 1930, thousands of people applied for a job opportunity with the Federal Government for jobs in the field of recreation in order to assist the design and development of themed spaces and facilities in communities. However, only after the second half of the twentieth century is that the career of recreation was seen as actually growing. The authors stress that the term "tourism" has been added recently in most programs in United States due to the commercial sector perspective, where associations in recreation and parks tend to be more connected to the business departments in American universities.

Similar to the process of training in leisure and recreation in the United States, in Australia tourism would be given as early as mid-1990 a prominent part in higher education. Australia has had a number of favorable conditions for the tourism industry by the climatic condition and the multiculturalism of their society, being such activity raised as a "big deal" and key element in the political projects of Australian universities (Parker, 1990; Paddick, 1990; Rowe, 1997; Lawrance, 1997; Hamilton-Smith, 1998).

Concerning the professional training and the labor market in leisure and tourism in Brazil, we observe a clear prevail of the second to the detriment of the first in terms of offers in higher education. Current information at Brazilian Ministry of Education, points out that by the end of 2012, 743 undergraduate programs in tourism and 44 in leisure were available (Brasil, 2012).

In summary, it is fundamental to perceive the importance to receive contributions from a wide range of areas besides tourism (such as physical education, arts, performing arts, occupational therapy, social sciences, etc) to the field of leisure studies. The next section will explore the career opportunities in tourism mostly fostered by an academic formation in leisure.

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