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Socio-Psychological Motivation and Extreme Tourism as a Manifestation of Addictive Behavior

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Abstract

Extreme sports (hiking, hiking in winter, rafting on mountain rivers) have a strong addictive potential, which is accompanied by the possibility of penetrating into an altered state of consciousness and stimulating the dopamine link in neurotransmitter metabolism. We studied the behavior of 98 tourists in trekking (18-35 years old, 62 men and 36 women), as well as questionnaires and interviews, and analyzed their motivation. We believe that tourism is the path to addictive behavior. Motivation was found to vary with age and sporting experience. We found symptoms of addiction in their behavior, psychological and physical dependence. Conclusions: sports tourism is one of the ways in which addictive behavior is manifested.

Introduction

Sports tourism (mountain tourism, speleo tourism) as a type of activity is connected with coming into extreme geographic zones. This activity brings the high risk for human life and can be mortally dangerous very often (for example, tours to the mountains, walking tours in winter time, rafting on mountain rivers). The participation in tours includes also considerable financial expenses by sports equipment, time losses for training and expeditions; besides, it also includes reorganizations of the social scale of a sportsman. All these factors lead to breaches of social functioning of a person. A psychological analysis, made in our study, was revealed the signs of behavior breaches which may be characterized as addiction.

The principal characteristic of addictive behavior is aspiration to escaping from real life and don't solving their problems, with the helping of chemical psychotropic substances or such activity which helps to made more comfortable basic psychological personality conditions. The addictive behavior may be a way out of the frustration when overwhelming aspiration to addictive realization appears. The social adaptation is disturbed in this case very often. There are some publications which talk about the validity of excersises-workaholism addiction [1-3]. The sport, especially the extreme sport, has addictive potential in itself, since it is accompanied of the possibility to be entered into an altered condition of consciousness, with markedly stimulation of neuromediation dopamine link. Observations show that anhedonia as a manifestation of abstinence most expressed exactly in athletes involved in extreme sports, in paired with risky situations, and even mortal danger - paragliding, rafting on mountain rivers, speleo tourism, hiking, etc. Clinical cases of development of sports addiction in other sports (running, oriental wrestling, track and field athletics, weight lifting, bodybuilding etc.) are described by modern authors [4-6]. The addiction behaviour was revealed also in the people who go in for sports just for maintaining their health [7]. But we failed to find any investigations in the field of sports tourism addiction. Therefore, we believe the study of this problem deserves more attention.

1. Literature Review

1.1. Extreme tourism as a form of search for new emotions

People with different emotions perceive situations related to extreme sports. Where overcoming this state allows you to achieve a high degree of consciousness and achieve your goals. The principal findings are as follows. Individuals differ in their fear and thrill responses. The same individual may have different responses on different occasions. Fear boosts performance, but panic causes paralysis. Anxiety or apprehension prior to a risky action or event differs from fear experienced during the event itself. The intensity of pre-event fear generally increases with the immediacy of risk to life, and time to contemplate that risk. Fear must be faced, assessed and overcome in order to act. Thrill can occur either during or after a high-risk event. Thrill can occur without fear, and fear without thrill. Below a lower threshold of perceived risk, thrill can occur without fear. Between a lower and upper threshold, thrill increases with fear [8].

1.2. Psychoneurophysiological approach and extreme tourism

Many types of adventure recreation, especially at expert level, involve significant physical risk. They require a high level of learned skill, rapid and precise coordination between sensory perceptions and bodily actions, and an ability to overcome fear. There is a significant number of analytical studies of ethnocultural tourism, and several relevant neurophysiological studies [9-12]. For commercial adventure tourism and recreation, guides can monitor the emotional responses of their clients [13-18].

Extreme sports, defined as sporting or adventure activities involving a high degree of risk, have boomed since the 1990's. These types of sports attract men and women who can experience a life-affirming transcendence or «flow» as they participate in dangerous activities. Extreme sports also may attract people with a genetic predisposition for risk, risk-seeking personality traits, or underlying psychiatric disorders in which impulsivity and risk taking are integral to the underlying problem. Dominika Dudek concludes in her study that these results showed higher rates of bipolarity and impulsivity in athletes with extreme or increased risks, suggesting that these measures are sensitive to high-risk behavior [19].

Next study is dedicated to finding answers about the attractiveness of extreme sports *D. R. Patel and E. F. Luckstead*. This article reviews the reasons for participation and attrition from sports, the phenomenon of thrill seeking in sports, certain risk-taking behaviors of athletes, and studies comparing health risk behaviors in athletes and non-athletes [20].

Another study the sportsmen were classified using a typological approach to personality based on eight personality types, which were constructed from combinations of neuroticism, extraversion, and conscientiousness. Results showed that personality types with a configuration of low conscientiousness combined with high extraversion and/or high neuroticism (impulsive, hedonistic, insecure) were greater risk-takers. Conversely, personality types with a configuration of high conscientiousness combined with low extraversion and/or high extraversion (skeptical, brooder, entrepreneur) were lower risk-takers. Results are discussed in the context of typology and other approaches to understanding who takes risks in high-risk domains [21].

Risk can also be considered as comprising either (*Bauer, 1960*):

- I. Absolute or real risk;
- II. Subjective perceptions of risk.

Subjective perceived risk is often the focus of tourism researchers, as it is the consumer or manager perceptions of risk that influence their decisions [22].

2. Methodology

2.1. Aim

To study psychological personal peculiarities of tourists and their motivation in sport. Investigations of tourists were fulfilled in real conditions of several mountain tours of the 1st category of complexity. All the participants ($n=98$, aged 18-35, 62 men and 36 women) were rated sportsmen in tourism or other kinds of sports and they have the medical permit for the participation in the tours. Their educational level was not lower than secondary education, length of going in for sports tourism was from several months to 10-15 years. We used methods of observation, psychological interview, conversations. To study motivation for going in for tourism we worked out a special questionnaire. It included statements which characterized the following motivations: situational motivation (beginning by chance and got accustomed to tourism); submissive motivations (subordination to a strong leader); aesthetic motivation (wish to see the beauty of nature and uncommon places); motivation of hyper stimulation (search for new sensations, combating boredom); motivation for overcoming difficulties, wish to raise self-appraisal, to be in a team, to be not like others, to reach high sports results; hedonistic motivation (aspiration to attain the physical and mental comfort). We proposed 10 statements, received from 1 to 10 for each motivation, and all positive replies were analyzed. We used also "The method of socio-psychological attitudes for person in motivation-needs sphere" by *O.F. Potemkina*. This questionnaire includes 80 questions with given two variants of reply and has 4 scales: orientation to the process, to the results, to the work and to the money. The investigated sportsmen were divided into age groups and into groups according to sports experience.

3. Results

Orientation to the process is more typical for elder sportsmen with longer experience in tourism. As for younger people - they are more interested in result. As for orientation to work and to money - there was no significant

difference in age groups and sports experienced groups (Tables 1&2). You can pay attention (see table 1) that people under the age of 18 - 25 years old will be focused on achieving results during extreme sports. Athletes over 25 years of age are dominated by the motive for participating in the process of extreme sports. The relationship of motivation with the duration of classes is noted. So with a duration of less than five years - this is the achievement of the result. More than 10 years - it will attract the process of participation in competitions (see table 2) [23].

It is noteworthy that in the structure of motivation during active tourism, athletes strive for results, and this tendency exists constantly and does not depend on the age of the athlete (see table 3). For people over 30 years of age, the effect of hyperstimulation and the receipt of emotional enjoyment from classes (hedonism) will be attractive.

We found differences in the structure of motivation in different age groups (table 3) and groups of tourists experience (table 4). Thus, in 19-25 years, the situational motives are predominant in the overall motivation structure, and the primacy belongs to achieve high results motives. The motivation of hyperstimulation and hedonistic impulses prevailed over aspiration to high results in more senior athletes. And exactly this is a sign of addiction in the structure of this activity. The situational motivation decreased twice and hedonistic motivation increased in four times with age. The motivations connected with personal peculiarities and aspirations to distinguishing, to become a member of a team, aesthetic motivations practically were not changed with age. The submissive motivations progressively decreased with age. Aspiration to achieve high sport results is one of the most expressed motivations and its index is rather high in all age groups and does not differ significantly.

The sports experience influenced to the motivation on rather most. Situational and submissive motivations decreased in three times with increasing of tourism's experience. Both the aesthetic motivation and the hyperstimulation motivation were increasing insignificantly. Motivation of overcoming, to be in a team aspiration, and to be distinguishing decreased in three times. And motivation to achieve high sport results was increased to some extent. But contribution of hedonistic motivation increased in 4.5 times.

Conversations, observations and psychological interviews gave us a possibility to supplement and summarize the results of the experiments. The received data give the ground to propose that not less than for one third part of tourists-sportsmen, especially elder ones; tourism is a way of realization of addiction with all the signs and effects of addiction, both psychological and physical. This addiction is rather peculiar. Among motivations for this sport activity hedonistic motivations stand at first ranked among following: the striving for the risk, the stress and its overcoming, the necessity to find and overcome obstacles, the changing of situation and the achieving of success. For young members of group to be the team member and to satisfy their needs for contacts with like-minded colleagues were the most important motivation.

We found that the use of jargon is typical for tourists, and other people aren't understood by these words fully. And this fact increases solidarity in the group. We consider the presence of strict hierarchy and distribution of responsibilities as an important characteristic of a tourist group. We understand that this is necessary for survival in extreme conditions but sometimes it becomes excessive.

Aspiration for achieving of high sport results and ranking was the less important motivation, and we found it at the third part of participants. Old tourists were "people of process" and weren't "people of results", if compared they with young tourists. The submissive motivation was found in 10% of all participants and it was connected with conformism, subordination to leader or person who had tourism's passion. The condition of psychological discomfort was typical for most of the tourists in ordinary life. We observed the ability to receive emotional support and warmth from colleagues-tourists or in tourist environment only. The aspiration to going of tourism again and again, the dromomaniacal way of life was amplified and was realized sometimes in psychic traumas situations such as social isolation, loss of ideals, loss of work, and family, sharp change of usual vital stereotypes. In all

Table 1: Socio-Psychological Motivations in Scores by Age Group.

Motivation	<20 years n=26	20-25 years n=28	25-29 years n=28	≥30 years n=16
Process	5.45	5.65	7.78*	8.00*
Result	7.59*	7.33*	5.76	5.47
Work	5.25	6.23	6.88	6.42
Money	4.82	4.73	3.8	5.23

* - Significantly Above from other Motivations in this Age Group (p<0.05).

Table 2: Socio-Psychological Motivations in Scores by Sports Experienced Group.

Motivation	<5 years n=46	5-9 years n=34	≥10 years n=18
Process	4.46	5.76	7.98*
Result	7.98*	6.33	4.76
Work	5.35	6.11	6.22
Money	4.38	4.27	4.65

* - Significantly above from other Motivations in this Age Group (p<0.05).

Table 3: Motivation's Structure of Tourism Activity according to Age.

Motivation	<20 years n=26	20-25 years n=28	25-29 years n=28	≥30 years n=16
Situational	6.2	5.1	4.1	3.1
Submissive	4.3	3.1	2.3	1.5
Aesthetic	6.1	5.1	6.3	5.6
Hyper stimulation	4.1	5.4	6.9	7.8
Overcoming	6.1	6.1	5.4	5.2
To be in a team	6.1	4.8	3.2	3.1
To be distinguished	3.2	3.2	2.4	2.5
To achieve results	6.8	7.4	7.6	8.8
Hedonistic	2.2	3.5	5.4	7.8

Table 4: Motivation's Structure of Tourism Activity according to the Sport's Experience.

Motivation	<5 years n=46	5-9 years n=34	≥10 years n=18
Situational	7.2	4.3	2.5
Submissive	6.8	3.4	2.1
Aesthetic	6.4	6.6	7.2
Hyper stimulation	6.1	5.2	8.1
Overcoming	8.4	6.2	3.2
To be in a team	7.3	4.2	3.1
To be distinguished	6.2	4.4	2.6
To achieve results	6.6	7.2	7.4
Hedonistic	2.4	6.5	9.4

-cases of development of this unnormal situation, the person's thoughts were about realization of tours, about preparations to tours, buying equipment, trainings and something like this mostly, which were emotionally colored. The thought about tour itself caused emotional enthusiasm, excitement, positive emotion and relaxation. During a tour, the desirable emotional state was achieved, the feeling of situation control was amplified and satisfaction was appeared.

4. Discussion

Such behavior gives an illusion of solving problems through false way of changing one's psychic condition. As a result, person appears in a trap of permanent going away from reality. It may be considered as an addictive behavior. Thoughts, discussions, activity connected with tourism are cause of vividly expressed positive emotional reaction, fixation on this feeling, aspiration to realize these ideas, even to the detriment of a social adaptation in a society. So, people with emotional tourist's behavior, which we revealed in our study, had expressed the psychological dependence in their activity. But there is also physical dependence connected in the tourist's addiction structure, as well as in any other addiction. It's possible connected with the increasing receptors' field of centers of pleasure, this is probably due to the need to be constantly in the state of stress and it's overcoming. Physical dependence in tourism includes the following signs which we observed during tours.

Loss of control over the amount of the fulfilled work (passed kilometers, overcame obstacles), lack of sense of proportion not depending on the level of physical tiredness. We marked the presence of the need to continue moving despite of any conditions (bad weather, coming night, physical tiredness) in some members of the group. Sometimes we noted a change in consciousness, accompanied by the effect of meditation while overcoming extreme stretches of the path with the lack of self-criticism. At the stage of planning the route there was observed an aspiration for increasing daily length of road disregarding increased risk of traumatism and decreased quality of aesthetic perception of the nature. With increasing addiction such a behavior was so vividly expressed that caused misunderstanding in other tourists. These addicted tourists lost orientation in their personal physical feelings (weariness, danger, hunger). Such orientation developed in critical situations. We may denote such person's conditions as "obsession".

Irrepressible bent to tourism, which have not the comprehensive readiness to this time and conditions objectively, very often arising suddenly or at the appearance of negative emotional experience, compulsive desire to go to the mountains, to go down into the caves, to run to the forest. We found that impossibility to abstain from a tour due to objective causes (working duties, problems at work, illness or even death of relatives) does not stop them. Such tourists consider their work as a duty which is needed only to provide financial basis for the next tour.

5. Conclusion

With a passion for extreme tourism, when there is a cessation of travel for various reasons, you can observe a syndrome of the state of cancellation of sports activities. Which the manifested as extreme discomfort: headaches, weakness, irritation, obtrusive aspiration to traveling that is considered as super-important idea. Such symptoms like tachycardia, perspiration, trembling hands, breach of coordination of movements were noted in participants in such condition and we consider this as hyperadrenalinhaemia. People thought that it is illness. They felt themselves ill if they could not realize their intentions for a long time. And when they go to travel again they felt improvement of their physical state. They say usually: "As soon as I going to tour, I felt fine immediately". Such discomfort states is appear especially often when a person have wishing to change his lifestyle or working status, or marital status, that means changing usual stereotype and accompanied with tension and active participation in social interactions. The necessity to control of unusual situation (for example, child birth) causes such a big stress that aspiration for moving away becomes overwhelming. And it is very similar to the hard drinking status.

We seem of avitality activity manifestations are the striving to the risk for the sake of risk, and creation of situations which are wittingly dangerous



for life. Overcoming obstacles which were not included in tourist plans, climbing up with a feeling of tiredness at the end of the day without any need, neglecting the safety measures and personal health for the sake of illusory goals. It can be concluded that presence of the mentioned above signs gives the ground for considering sports tourism as one of the ways of manifestation of dependent, addictive behavior. We can say that addictive behavior, and extreme tourism is such, contributes to socio-psychological adaptation, and in any case reduces the risk of behavioral maladaptation in such extreme conditions, because there is no other way to survive.

6. Appendices

The authors declare that we have no competing interests.

The personal data were obtained and processed with the written agreement of study participants. This study was approved by the Ethics committee, Pedagogical University, Novosibirsk, Russia.

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