

## Investigation and evaluation of sport tourist's profile and main human needs

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Sports tourism is any type of sporting activity or athletic event in which someone either participates as an athlete, or as a passive spectator. The characteristics of sport tourists are: 1) the active / passive involvement in sporting activities, 2) Participation in casual or in organized activities, 3) experiences for non-commercial, or for business / commercial reasons, 4) recreational trips away from home and work. (Standeven, De Knop, 1999). Human needs, as portrayed in Maslow's hierarchy of needs fall into five basic categories, these being self-esteem; home and family; security; companionship; and care. The purpose of this study was to document the profile and the main human needs of sports tourists. The sample was comprised 352 sport tourists who had visited both Greece and Cyprus. To successfully carry out the survey, the Tourist Role Preference Scale (TRPS) questionnaire of Gibson and Yiannakis (2002) was used. The aforementioned questionnaire was translated into Greek by Yfantidou, Costa and Michalopoulou (2007) and was deemed valid and reliable. The questionnaires were answered before or after a race or workout. To analyse the test data, a reliability test was performed, as well as a descriptive analysis, a factor analysis, cross tabs and 2-way Anova regarding gender and age. The results showed that most were Greek men, aged between 17-39 years of age,

graduates of higher education and OF full employment, with an annual income of € 20.000-60.000. On average, The main human need, presented by the largest percentage, which requires the most fulfilment is health and well-being and also the need for a high level of self-esteem. In the analysis of the main components, the total variance for human needs was 61.74%. The survey also considered the possible relationship between the factors in Maslow's hierarchy needs. The inference was that only in the factor of social needs, was there a difference based on various age and gender. All other factors were the same for different ages and gender. Also, as far as the need for safety is concerned, a major statistical difference was observed between various age groups and genders. Finally, concerning the factor of need for motivation and exploration, the major statistical difference was observed between age groups. Throughout this study, it has been concluded that Maslow's hierarchy of needs are indeed accurate. Sport tourists have presented the need for a high self-esteem, freedom, and creativity.

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