

INFLUENCE OF INTENSIVE WATER MANAGEMENT AND WATER QUALITY ON RECREATION AND BUSINESS IN TOURISM IN TREBON REGION

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Abstract

The main aim of the current study was to find out the influence of intensive water management in ponds and related water quality on recreation and business in tourism during the months of June, July and August in the area of the ponds in the Třeboň region, CZECHIA. The most important characteristics of different types of tourism were defined from the point of view of Czech and foreign literature and were subsequently characterized for a particular area. Another issue discussed here, is the influence of tourism on the particular area. In this perspective, the first part of the paper describes a theoretical outline of the aforementioned issue in light of the literature and subsequently its effects on the area of Třeboňsko. The information obtained were then used for the SWOT analysis, Defert's tourist function and the design of measures leading to the sustainable development of tourism.

Keywords: Tourism, area of South Bohemian ponds, sustainable management, Czech Republic

INTRODUCTION

Tourism is one of the most important socio-economic phenomena of the present age, and together with the automotive and oil industry, has become one of the world's largest export industries. The purpose of the tourist industry is to offer tourists satisfactory, extraordinary, memorable, and valuable experiences (Čaušević et al. 2021). However, the development of tourism is also inherently linked to far-reaching impacts, both positive and negative. A strong tourism sector directly contributes to the national income of the country, combats unemployment and improves the balance of payments (Mavrommarti et al. 2021). Tourism can also make enormous economic profits for the area, bring a lot of jobs for the locals, it is

often an impulse to develop infrastructure and help increase people's education in areas including information on foreign places and the way of life of other world cultures. Conversely, the development of tourism must also have its limits and must be sustainable for the area. Insensitive tourism development can disrupt natural and social conditions in the area, suppress local culture, and also have a major negative impact on the environment.

Therefore, the current study was designed to analyse and valorise the conditions of provided current, new and innovative products and services according to recent trends, potential of given locality and preferences of customers which have influence on the attractiveness, increase of turnout and increase of profits with the support of marketing communication and sales promotion of offered products and services.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Tourism, leisure time and recreation are concepts that belong inseparably to each other, but their meaning is different. For example, Dumazedier (1989) defines leisure as an activity – apart from obligations of work, family, and society – to which the individual turns at will, for either relaxation, diversion, or broadening his knowledge and his spontaneous social participation, the free exercise of his creative capacity (Veal, 2019). Broadly speaking, leisure refers to the free time that people can spend away from their everyday responsibilities (e.g. work and domestic tasks) to rest, relax and enjoy life (Gelná, & Fialová 2010, 2011; Fialová et al. 2018). Whereas recreation refers to all those activities that people choose to do to refresh their bodies and minds and make their leisure time more interesting and enjoyable (e.g. walking, swimming, meditation, reading, playing games and dancing etc) (Khasnabis, et al. 2010). Recreation itself is divided into passive and active recreation depending on the age and socio-economic characteristics of people. And it is considered that active recreation includes for example, walks in nature, fishing, various sports, hunting, etc. (Coppock & Duffield, 1975). On the other hand, there is no solid definition of tourism. The definition of tourism by UNWTO (2010) sees tourism as a subset of travel, where travel refers to the activity of travellers. A traveller is then someone who moves between different geographic locations for any purpose and any duration. Next to this definition of tourism there are many varieties among different persons and sources which are actually based on two basic directions. The first direction explains tourism from a participant's point of view and addresses its content, motivation, activities, relationships, etc. The second one mainly focuses

on the institutions and the various sectors providing the services of tourism itself (Vystoupil, et al. 2010).

Tourism is divided typologically into different forms and types, depending on the reasons and needs of the participants of the tourism industry as well as the duration and nature of the objectives (Fialová et al., 2010). In this context, stating the typology of tourism, it has been described that tourism has two basic parts – movement and consumption, influencing the environment a lot (Williams, 2009; Gjorgievski, et al., 2013). For example, Pásková defines tourism from the point of view of geographic, economic, social, and other conditions, and its effects, and the way it is carried out (Pásková, 2008). However, different types of tourism, whose division is rather complex, have been described in full details by Gjorgievski and colleagues. They divide tourism by several criteria – such as according to the place of realization (domestic and foreign, active and passive), the way of participation and forms of reimbursement of costs (free and tied), the way and the organization of services (not organized and organized, often excluded tourism outside public forms - cabins, weekend houses, etc.), group sizes (group and individual), duration of participation (short and long term), time rhythm (daily, weekend, weekly and longer) and distribution during the year (seasonal, year-round) (Gjorgievski et al., 2013). Another classification is based on the means of transport used, the prevailing location (urban, suburban, rural, coastal, and mountainous, agro-tourism), the age of the participants or the impact on the environment (soft and hard) (Bacsi, & Tóth, 2019) and the use of natural and anthropogenic resources (mass, consumer, alternative and sustainable).

Likewise, there are three categories reflecting the various factors influencing tourism. Among them the first is a group of natural prerequisites, second a group of cultural-historical prerequisites, and finally a group of social prerequisites (Vystoupil et al., 2010; Hristov, 2015). Currently, the most common classification of tourism and recreation prerequisites divides them into localization prerequisites, including natural and cultural prerequisites, selective prerequisites and, finally, implementation prerequisites (Williams, 2009). Localization prerequisites and factors influencing tourism are those that include natural, cultural, and cultural-historical features where natural prerequisites mean the relief of the area, its climatic conditions, water, fauna, and flora (Vystoupil et al., 2010). Nature-based tourism is one of the tourism forms with an increasing appeal (Bacsi & Szanati 2021). These natural conditions most influence the majority of tourism and recreation activities, especially their residential forms.

Water-based tourism can be considered as a special part of nature-based tourism. The relationship between water and tourism is characterized by a dual understanding of this element: as a precious resource and as an attraction. As a tourist attraction, water represents a resource with a strong potential to attract tourists. Different types of bodies of water can sustain several, diverse forms of tourism, such as beach tourism, river tourism, tourism of reservoirs, lakes and natural pools and tourism of thermal waters (Folgado-Fernández et al, 2018).

The definition of water-based tourism according to Jennings says, that water-based tourism relates to any touristic activity undertaken in or in relation to water resources, such as lakes, dams, canals, creeks, streams, rivers, canals, waterways, marine coastal zones, seas, oceans, and ice-associated areas (Jennings, 2007). Similarly, but more specifically Hall and Harkönen (2006) define lake tourism as tourism that occurs not only on the lake itself, but also in the surrounding area.

The significance of lake tourism lies in its various recreational activities. Such as fishing, pilgrimage or activities related to boating, surfing, or yachting for example. Thanks to these wide possibilities, staying by the water is a very desirable form of spending free time and holidays. In the Czech Republic, up to a third of the holiday accommodation base is located around the water areas and streams (Toušek et al. 2008). Round the water, and in particular near the mineral springs, spas are built, as an example of longer-lasting recreation. Flora and fauna, i.e. plant and livestock, are also irreplaceable. The plants basically shape the landscape, and they are completely dependent on the natural conditions of the area. The cultural and historical prerequisites, as the second component of the localization prerequisites, differ from the natural ones by being created by human activity (Williams, 2009). Without realization prerequisites, it would not be possible to carry out tourism and recreation itself (Vystoupil et al. 2010). In essence, they create a link between tourism and recreation areas of interest and destinations, and tourism and recreation areas - in other words, the link between demand and supply. There are nine basic functional types of tourism and recreation centers in the Czech Republic - resorts of summer recreation near the water, mountain resorts of summer and winter recreation, historical towns and centers of international and national importance, historical towns of non-regional significance, other towns, natural attractions, spa resorts, other tourist resorts and finally the most important centers of second homes (Pásková, 2008; Vystoupil et al., 2010).

Generally, the factors are classified into demographic, urbanization, economic and socio-cultural and socio-political groups. The issue of sustainable tourism development has been the most important paradigm of tourism geography in recent decades. Currently, the research focuses on the growing importance of long-term sustainable tourism and the sustainable development of regions and cities; for example, to create a sustainable urban environment, it is crucial to identify areas of opportunity as well as concern and to respond by developing realistic sustainability goals with a long-term perspective (Blagojević, et al. 2020). The sustainable approach also deals with the impacts on the natural and social environment and seeks to optimize these impacts through strategic tourism planning, management, and organization (Toušek et al., 2008).

DATA AND METHODS

The main aim of this paper was to find out the influence of intensive water management in ponds and related water quality on recreation and business in tourism during the summer months in the Třeboň region. For this purpose, the hypothesis was set as:

“Intensive farming in ponds and related water quality influences tourism and business in the region”.

The method of observation was applied during a statistical survey and controlled interviews with asked participants of the qualitative and the quantitative research in the course of the summer season 2020 with repetition in the summer season 2021 in the selected area.

Selecting the area of interest

The Třeboň region was selected for the current study as a unique water system, consisting of ponds and connected by sewers, that have been built in the region since the 14th century. The ponds of Třeboň region are a system of shallow basins of different size (1-420 ha) connected by sewers. The ponds were built in a flat basin drained by the river of Lužnice, partly by the Nežárka river. Many ponds have rugged banks with richly developed littoral stands. They pass into communities of high sedge, swamp alder and willow. The forests around the ponds are predominantly secondary borne and spruce forests. The water in ponds is largely atrophied; mesotrophic only in some small ponds.

Figure 1 Map - The Třeboň region



Source: Okolo Třeboně, výlet k rybníkům do malebné jihočeské krajiny | iReceptář.cz (ireceptar.cz)

Research approaches applied

Both quantitative and qualitative methods of research were used, as these methods are considered very beneficial for this kind of research.

Quantitative research is based on positivism, and it is supported by deduction. To carry out quantitative research, the questionnaire method is used, applicable to a large number of respondents. Personal questionnaires are generally used for assessing customer satisfaction in spite of their expensive and time-consuming character, because questionnaires can provide excellent quality information (Lőke et al., 2018). It is also easier to involve the participants, as the method is anonymous.

There are three approaches to quantitative research according to Veal (2006):

Type A: hypothetical-deductive quantitative research conforms to the hypothetical-deductive model discussed under positivism earlier. This model is implicit in many discussions of quantitative methods.

Type B: statistical quantitative research makes use of statistical methods and tests but is not necessarily hypothetical-deductive. It can be descriptive, exploratory and/or deductive.

Type C: inductive quantitative research is based on numerical data but makes little or no use of statistical test; its most sophisticated statistical measures are usually the percentage shares and sometimes means/averages. Type C quantitative research is more informal than type B or type A and is closer in approach to qualitative methods.

In the context of the quantitative research based on the deductive approach, the hypotheses was determined, and verified by the data obtained from:

- a) the questionnaire survey of tourists (1);
- b) the questionnaire survey of operators of accommodation, catering and other facilities in the region (2);
- c) the questionnaire survey of the mayors of the territory concerned (3).

Questionnaire 1 was composed of 21 questions that are open, closed, and semi-closed. The open questions were asked to find the least distorted opinion of a participant. The closed questions were mainly of a general nature (gender, education, etc.). The semi-closed questions that combined the two previously mentioned types should avoid overriding the possibility of answering the question. For the scaling of the responses, Likert's scale was used to measure the respondent's attitude. A random selection was used to choose the respondents. In total, 289 questionnaires were spread in the areas of Hejtmán, Chlum u Třeboně, Majdalena, the ponds of Svět and Opatovický rybník, Staňkov and Třeboň.

Questionnaire 2 was composed of 20 questions that are open, closed, and semi-closed. In total, 43 questionnaires were spread in the areas of Dvořiště, Hejtmán, Chlum, Jemnička, Lomnice nad Lužnicí, Lutová, Lužnice, Opatovický rybník, Staňkov, Svět and Třeboň.

Questionnaire 3 consisted of 10 questions and types of questions and the evaluation procedure was consistent with the previous procedures for questionnaires 1 and 2. The questionnaire was distributed among 22 mayors and deputy mayors of the territory concerned. The mayors were contacted personally, by email and by phone.

Qualitative research is based on phenomenology, hermeneutics, symbolic interactionism, and relies on induction. It is commonly defined as non-quantitative investigation and interpretation of social reality (Disman, 2002; Aguinis & Solarino, 2019). Qualitative research is an addition to quantitative research and is aimed at uncovering unknown facts about social and socio-psychological phenomena, including the existence of phenomena, their characteristics and functions, and factors related to social and socio-psychological phenomena (Surynek, 2001; Blair, 2015). Qualitative research is focused on the behaviour of social subjects.

The qualitative research was conducted in the form of a semi-structured interview. As part of the interview technique, there is a direct encounter between the interviewer and the participant. The interviewer tries to get information by asking questions that reveal experience, memories and knowledge. Through the interview, the interviewer identifies attitudes and opinions of people (Surynek, 2001; Zich, 2004). The basic rule is to ask only what cannot be measured, determined, calculated (Surynek, 2001). The processing of the data obtained from the interviews was done by the coding method, which is divided into the basic three groups: open coding, axial coding, and selective coding (Aguinis & Solarino, 2019). In our case, the qualitative research only supplemented the quantitative research.

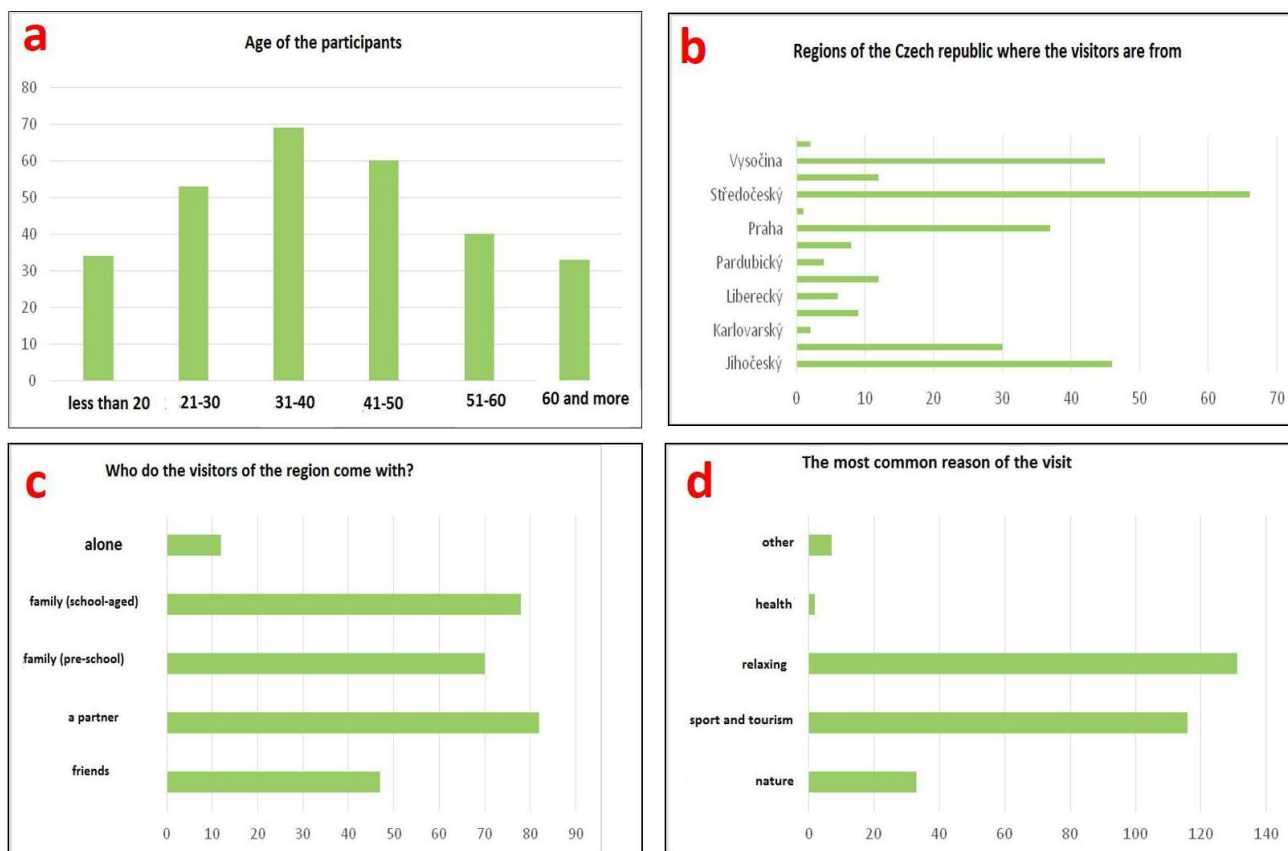
RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Part I.

The first part is focused on the evaluation of visitors' survey and their view of water quality in the recreational area of Třeboň region. There was a total of 289 participants in the research, of which 133 were women and 156 were men. Among them 76% learned about Třeboň region from the recommendations of people they know and only 10% from the internet and print advertising.

As shown in Fig. 2a, the Třeboň region can be regarded as a popular location for all ages, however, most respondents were aged 31-40.

Figure 2 a) Age of the participants; b) Regions of the Czech Republic where the visitors are from; c) Who do the visitors of the region come with?; d) The most common reason of the visit.



Source: own results

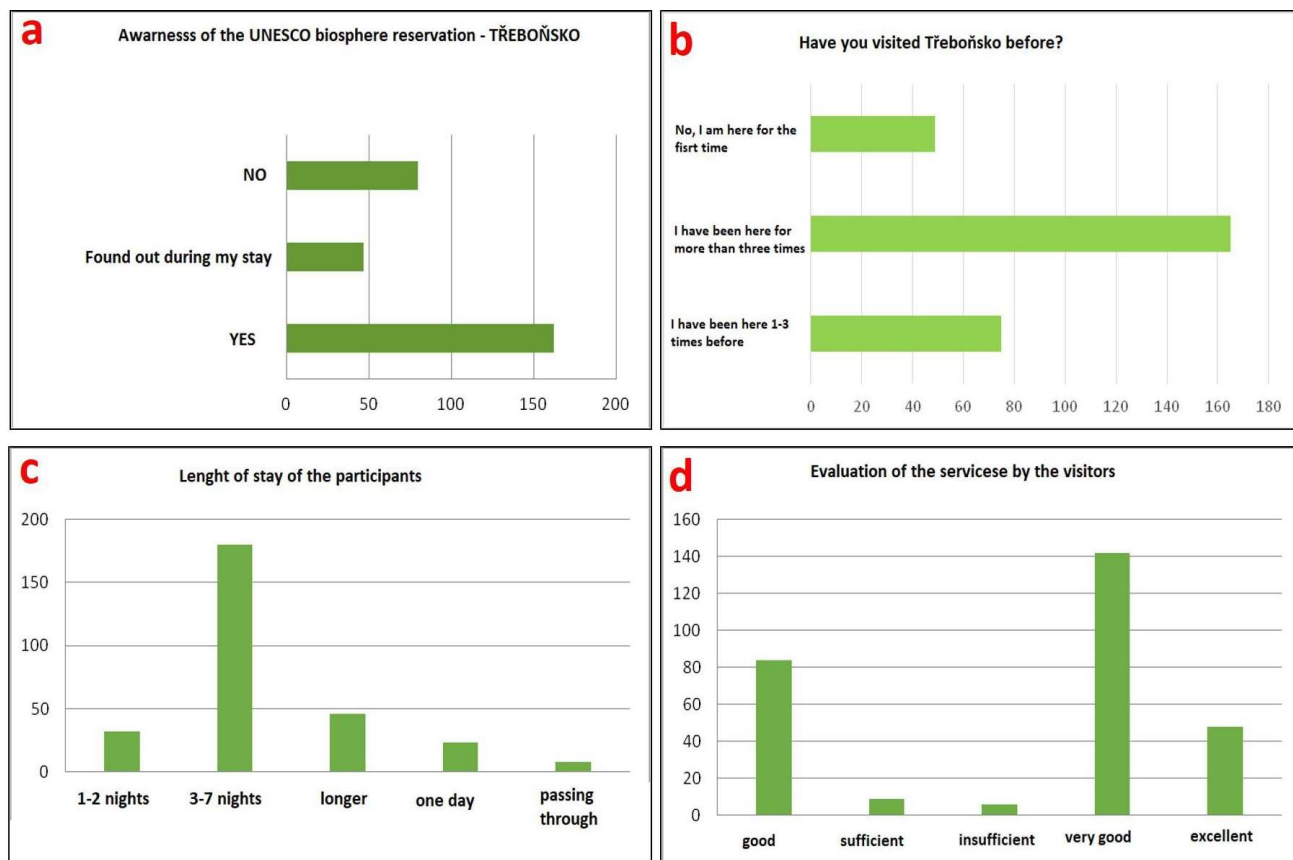
Fig. 2b, shows the localities of the visitors in Czech Republic from where they came. Mostly they were from the Central Bohemia region and Vysočina, followed by the region of South Bohemia (Fig. 2b). A similar trend has prevailed for more than seven years, as revealed by comparison with previous research.

Similarly, most of the respondents came to the Třeboň region with a partner, followed by the family holiday with school-aged children and pre-school children, see Fig. 2c. They come for the adventure brought to them by camping and cycling. We found that 93% of the visitors get to the region by car, which they sometimes use during their stay. Only 5% of respondents use the bus and train link. The trend in the use of means of transport has changed over the past 5 years, when train and bus connections were used more intensively (around 20%).

The data showed that relaxation is the most common reason for the stay (45%), followed by sport and active tourism (40%) and the nature and landscape (11%), (see Fig. 2d).

An interesting finding is the respondents' awareness of the Třeboňsko Biosphere Reserve, as more than 55% of the visitors are familiar with the site and its nature, see Fig. 3a.

Figure 3 a) Awareness of the UNESCO biosphere reservation – TŘEBOŇSKO; b) Have you visited region Třeboňsko before?; c) length of stay of the participants; d) Evaluation of the services by visitors



Source: own results

A positive trend is related to repeated visits to the region, as 57% of the respondents have visited Třeboň region more than three times, and only 26% have visited the site for the first time, (see Fig. 3b). This fact is also influenced by the satisfaction of visitors with the services they use during their stay.

Třeboň region is gradually becoming a popular holiday destination where visitors stay for three to seven nights. From previous research seven years ago, it was obvious that people here stayed for the weekend and the extended weekend. At present, this limit is shifted to weekly stays (see Fig. 3c).

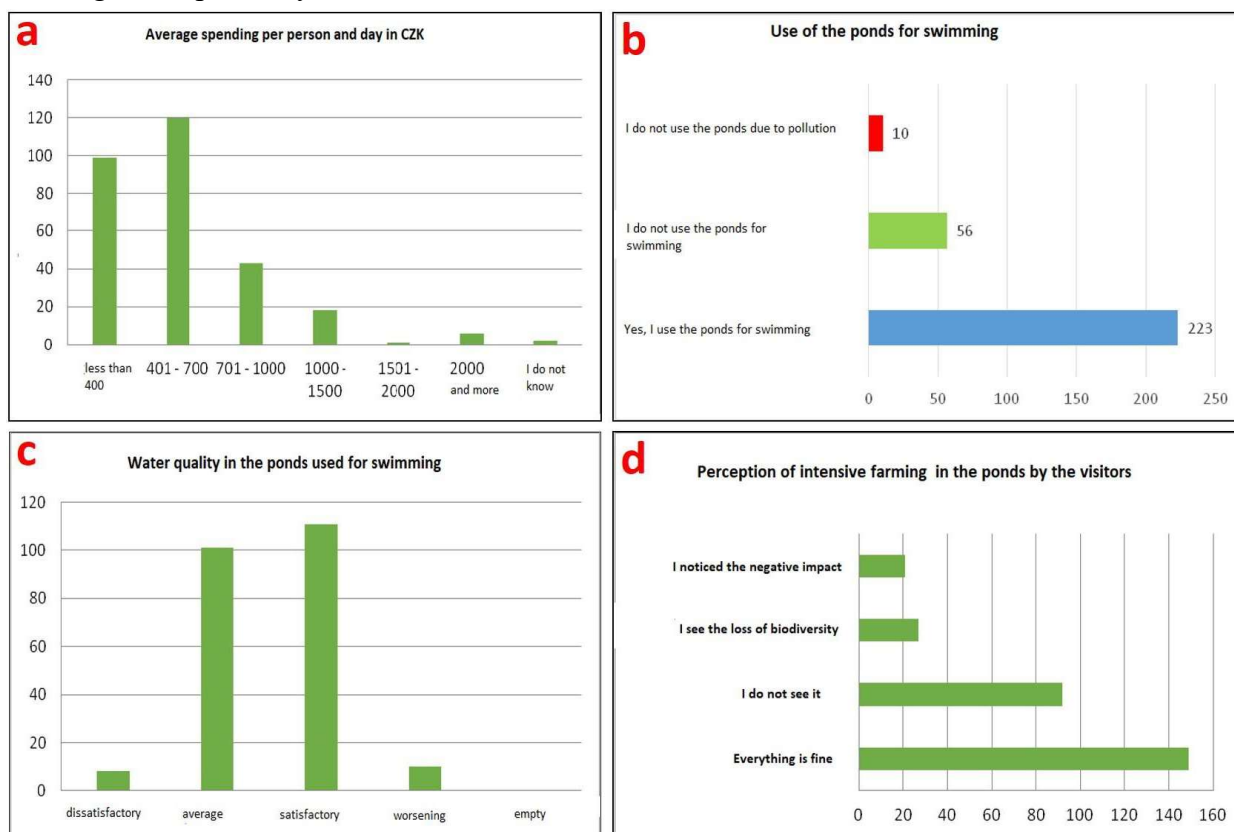
The evaluation of the services in Třeboň region was determined by other research questions. Quality and satisfaction with services are rated by 49% of the respondents as very good and only 2% see them as insufficient, (see Fig. 3d).

An extended stay of visitors means a higher reputation for service providers, and better profit. On average, a person spends from 400 to 700, - CZK per day, as reported by 42% of the respondents; 34% of respondents spend to 400, - CZK per person per day, (see Fig. 4a).

During their stay, 77% of respondents use the ponds for swimming. 19% do not use it because of other sports activities and illnesses, as reported in the questionnaire survey. Only 4% of respondents do not use them due to pollution and poor water quality, (see Fig. 4b).

The respondents using the ponds for swimming assess the water quality in the following way: 50% of respondents find it satisfactory; 44% average, 4% worsening and only 2% as dissatisfactory, (see Fig. 4c). The visitors do not see the semi-intensive farming in the ponds as a negative phenomenon, they see it as a part of an intensive production. 9% of the respondents perceive the loss of biodiversity that they associate with the increasing pond management, only 7% of the respondents have seen the negative impact of the management on water quality, (see Fig. 4d).

Figure 4 a) Average spending per person and day in CZK; b) Use of the ponds for swimming; c) Water quality in the ponds used for swimming; d) Perception of intensive farming in the ponds by the visitors



Source: own results

A total of 77% of respondents are satisfied in the region, 33% lack better quality of the social facilities in camps, poor serviceability, non-binding cycling routes, higher number of services and information boards. 82% of the respondents do not see any issues in the region; the remaining 18% are bored by a large number of bikers, poor labelling and higher prices.

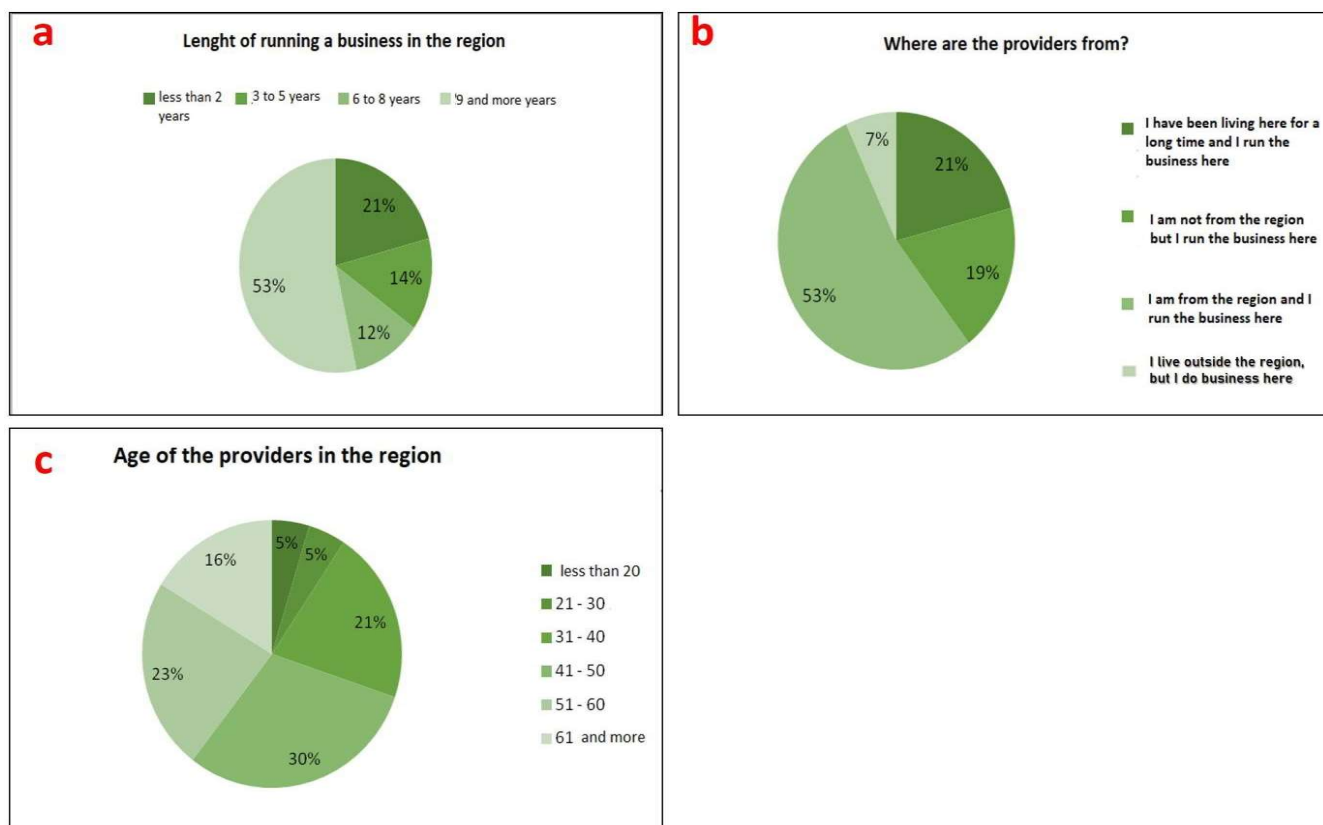
The research shows that the Třeboň region is one of the most popular destinations where visitors want to come back. A total of 69% of respondents already knew at the time of the survey that they would visit the site next year and 25% would visit it sometime later.

Part II.

The second part of the research was aimed at the providers of accommodation, catering and other facilities in the region. The aim of the survey was to find out whether the management of ponds and the associated quality of water had an impact on the recreation and tourism businesses. In total, 43 providers from the area of Hejtmán, Staňkov, Svět, Třeboň, Chlum, Lutová, Svět, Lomnice nad Lužnicí, Opatovický rybník, Dvořiště and Jemčina took part in the survey. 53% of respondents have been active in the region for more than nine years; (see Fig. 5a), given the fact that they are able to compare the current situation to the situation ten years ago.

More than a half of the respondents (53%) come from the region, and they run their business here, and 21% of the providers have lived in the area for a long time and run their business here (Fig. 5b). This finding provides us with an adequate sample to assess the state of the region in connection with the increase in intensive tourism.

Figure 5 a) Length of running a business in the region; b) Where are the providers from?; c) Age of providers in the region



Source: own results

Regarding age, 30% of the providers in the survey are 41-50 years of age, 23% of 51-60 years old, (see Fig. 5c). The mentioned respondents already have experience with business in the region and know the strengths and weaknesses of the site in detail.

Based on the qualitative interviews, it was found that the entrepreneurs are more aware of the needs and weaknesses of the region, unlike larger enterprises employing nine and more employees. The retailers are more dependent on other services in the region, compared to larger guest houses and hotels that provide most of the complex services on their own.

There are different types of activity in which the respondents run the business, including catering services as the most common ones, to bike and water sports rentals.

The 51% of the respondents are self-employed persons, and 28% of them are employers having up to three employees.

The next part of the questionnaire was aimed at the satisfaction of the providers with local administration. The survey was also focused on the extent to which the providers are informed about the strategic plans in the region.

Working together with the local authorities was rated as excellent by 14 providers, as very good by 8 providers, 13 of them rated it as good, 3 as sufficient and only 5 as insufficient. The dissatisfaction with the authorities was mainly addressed by small businesses and one provider with more than nine employees from the localities of Staňkov, Lutová and Lomnice nad Lužnicí.

The communication between the private and public sectors through the awareness of the intentions of the towns and the region is evaluated by 15 respondents as excellent, very good or good by 18 respondents, 4 as adequate and only 6 respondents see it as insufficient, the others did not know how to rate the situation. The administrative procedure is not satisfying for 5 operators only, who have been running the business in the region for more than eight years and are mainly from Lutová, Staňkov, Svět and Lomnice nad Lužnicí.

An interesting finding is related to the dissatisfaction with the transport infrastructure, as 14 respondents rated it as insufficient, especially from the localities of Lutová, Staňkov, Chlum, Třeboň. The inadequate transport infrastructure has been in place for more than 5 years, its reconstruction has been going on for a long time and inefficiently.

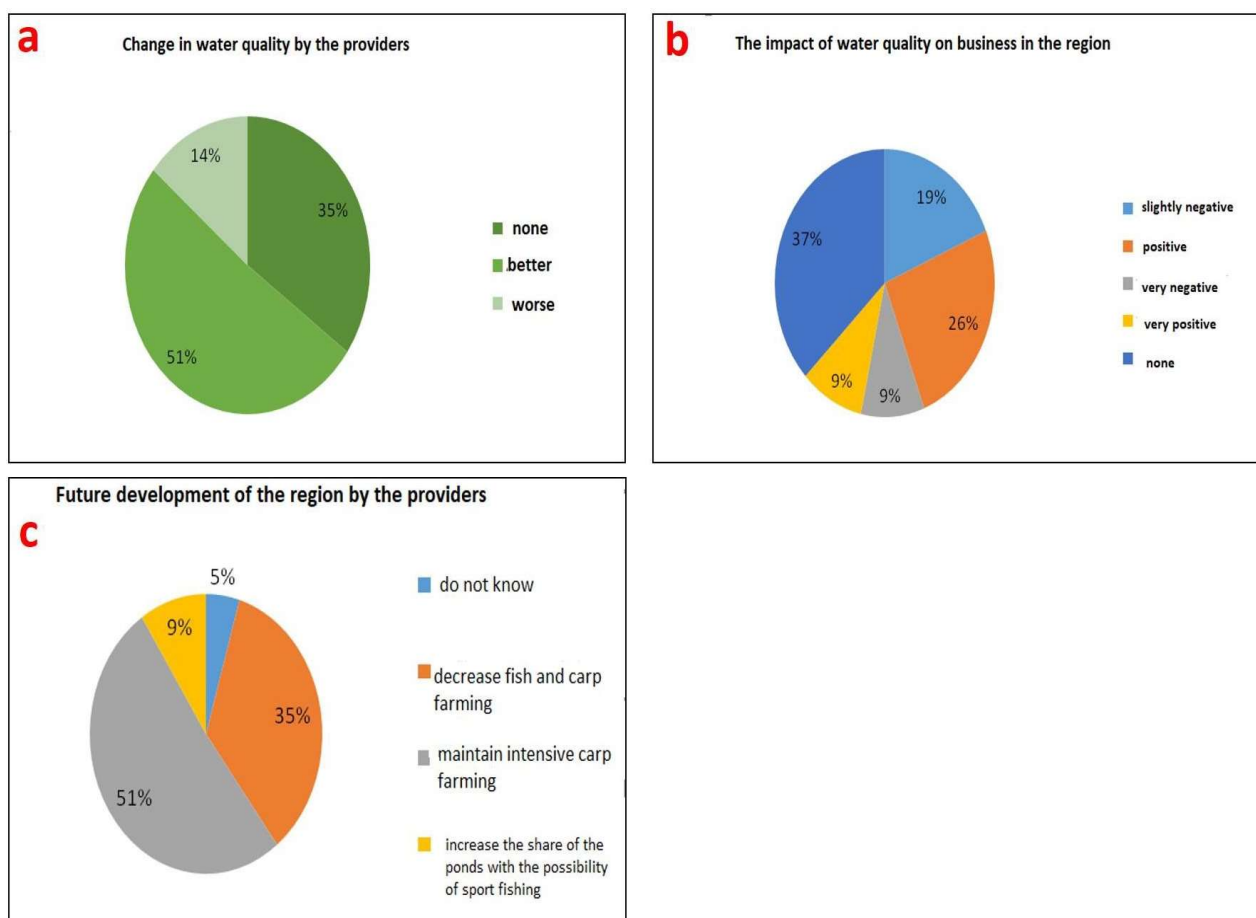
The evaluation of the technical infrastructure is more favorable in comparison with the transport infrastructure, as reported by the respondents, as only 5 respondents expressed dissatisfaction, 7 respondents rated it excellent and 14 respondents as good. The technical infrastructure has improved significantly in 10 years and the trend of innovation is obvious.

The providers of accommodation, catering and other facilities would welcome support for procurement, information on development plans, and construction of sewage systems from the

municipality. Respondents in many cases did not have a specific idea of what they would like. The next part of the survey is focused on the evaluation of water quality issues and their impact on business. As shown in (Fig. 5a), 51% of respondents reported a decrease in water quality over the last 10 years, mostly in the areas of Chlum, Lutová, Třeboň, Hejtman, Svět, Lomnice nad Lužnicí, Lužnice. The main cause of pollution is seen in climate change, which affects not only the Třeboň region. Another cause of pollution is the intensive management of ponds focused solely on the production of carp. 35% of the respondents did not see any change in water quality. 14% of the respondents reported better quality, mostly in the areas of Dvořiště, Chlum, Hejtman, Svět, such respondents have been active in the region for more than 5 years.

Another question was focused on the impact of water quality on business. As revealed in (Fig.6b), 37% of the respondents see no influence on their business, 26% reported a positive influence and only 9% reported a highly negative influence.

Figure 6 a) Change in water quality by the providers; b) The impact of water quality on business in the region; c) Future development of the region by the providers



Source: own results

The respondents, in order to improve the quality of water quality in ponds, raised negotiations at the level of fisheries management, especially in the area of Staňkov. In the areas of Hejtmán, Lužnice, and Třeboň the respondents report activities such as segregation of waste, cleaning of beaches and camp sites. Another finding was related to the position of the local government, and what is considered its main task. The providers see the main role of municipalities and local authorities in dealing with fishermen and management of ponds and see their position as an intermediary in communication between the entities. The development of the Třeboň region is a strategic objective in many conceptual documents of the South Bohemian Region. The providers see the main need for the overall development of the region (51% of respondents) in preserving carp farming, followed by increasing the share of the ponds with the possibility of sports fishing, (see Fig. 6c).

The results of the research show that the quality of the water in the Třeboň region ponds is evaluated as satisfactory both by most of the tourists and the providers. There is a conflict of interests mainly in Staňkov, where the entrepreneurs negotiate with the management of the ponds. The quality of water in ponds does not have a major impact on business activities and does not limit the attendance of the camp sites. The area of Třeboň region is a repeatedly visited locality, where people return several times, and the time of stay is gradually increasing from weekend stays to weekly stays.

Part III.

The third part of the study is focused on local governments, and 22 mayors and vice-mayors from the municipal authorities of Třeboň region were addressed. The purpose was to find out attitudes and opinions of the public administration on the impact of intensive farming in the ponds and water quality management on recreation and tourism businesses. All the municipalities addressed had a strategic document on the development of the region, designed either completely or at least partially. Based on qualitative interviews, it was found that only 40% of the respondents had a complex strategic document, approved by the council. 30% of the respondents stated having a document called Development Plan though lacking a system. The remaining 30% reported having a 10-to-15-page document, of which 10 pages dealt with history and cultural and historical sites of the village.

Another area of the survey is the quality of water, however the local governments were rather afraid to discuss such an issue, because of political reasons, as a number of enterprises contribute to the development of infrastructure, help with subsidies, therefore the

representatives were careful when responding. Therefore, it is not possible to see the answers to this question as significant. 45% of the respondents have not seen a change in water quality over the past 10 years. Even 23% see the change for the better. The respondents, who see deterioration in water quality, report climate change as the main reason for it (73%); only 27% see the pond management as the reason. In the qualitative interviews, more than 50% of the respondents pointed out that there was not intensive, but semi-intensive farming. The quality of water in local ponds has a great impact on tourism, but on the basis of the number of tourists, the respondents are convinced that water quality is good. The respondents report that they are in touch with pond management operators, and they assess their relationships as standard. The local authorities (the respondents) believe that for the future development of the region, it is necessary to maintain the traditions and related management of ponds while increasing the share of ponds with the possibility of sports fishing, which will also lead to a higher quality of water.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the data obtained in the current research supports the rejection of the hypothesis saying that “intensive farming in ponds and related water quality influences tourism and business in the region”. The results showed that visitors, providers of catering, accommodation, and other facilities, as well as local authorities think that the management of ponds and the associated water quality have an impact on tourism and business in the region. The attitude of the tourists and the providers, who do not consider the water in the ponds to be heavily polluted is crucial as they do not see the pond management as a major problem. Local governments perceive the situation as a problem, but they are afraid to comment on it for reasons previously mentioned (sponsorship, infrastructure financing, etc.). Furthermore, the obtained data highlighted the most developed types of tourism in the Třeboň region, including cultural, sports, spa, gastronomic, congress and sustainable tourism. Cultural tourism is popular in the area, especially due to the presence of important cultural sites. However, the number of visitors of the sites is strongly influenced by seasonality, which causes uneven revenues of the local entrepreneurs. There is no demonstrable deterioration in the status of historical objects in relation to the number of visitors and therefore there is no need to reduce their attendance.

This fact is especially obvious in the supply and demand of gastronomic facilities. The existence of ponds affects the overall image of the area. Tourism is further influenced by fish

farming, which is typical for the area. Tourists here have the opportunity to get acquainted with the history of fish farming in the Czech Republic. Fishing itself, however, is not very attractive among the tourists. The spa complexes attract the tourists throughout the year. It is mainly the center of the area, the town of Třeboň, where the complexes are located. Spa guests do not move only in the spa areas, but also use the services outside. They are the most frequent visitors to theatres, concerts, and exhibitions among tourists, so it is appropriate to tailor the programs of these events to such guests. Recently, the importance of rural tourism, agro-tourism and eco-tourism has also increased. These types of tourism have minimal negative impacts on the area, and it is therefore appropriate to support their development. Moreover, they should contribute to the preservation of the rural environment, demographic condition, and cultural heritage (Gajić et al. 2019). Tourism in the area of the ponds in South Bohemia is a highly developed sector employing a significant part of the population. The occupancy of the area was also determined. The Defert's function was used for this purpose. This function expresses the intensity of tourism in the municipality by the ratio between the density of potential visitors spending the night in a tourism facility that provides accommodation services in the municipality and the population of the municipality (Pásková, 2008). According to the results of Defert's tourist function Třeboň region is an area with a significant but not overwhelming tourist activity. For the healthy functioning of the region, the emphasis should also be put on the development of other economic sectors that are suppressed to a certain extent by the tourism industry. The main issues are related to the transport infrastructure and also to the decreasing number of permanent residents in the main tourist centers due to the increasing hostility towards tourists. In evaluating the internal and external environment (SWOT analysis), the strengths of tourism over the weaknesses, and the opportunities over the threats were identified. For sustainable tourism development, it is advisable to focus on preserving the strengths and maximizing the opportunities. Therefore, it is necessary to put the emphasis on preserving the quality of the environment, the landscape and the cultural heritage offered by the area. The increase in the number of tourists is not desirable for the Třeboň region, as the increasing attendance could increase the risk of negative impacts of the weaknesses and the increasing importance of the threats.

Based on the research, some measures were proposed to enhance sustainable development. The first measure is to modify and regulate the information boards, leading to preservation of the landscape character of the area and reduction of negative ecological impacts. The second proposal is to hold historical markets in the premises of the Třeboň Chateau with the involvement of the providers of sustainable tourism services. The aim is to suppress the

seasonality of visiting cultural monuments (the chateau) and the promotion of sustainable forms of tourism. Třeboň region is, however, typical of its beautiful landscape and nature (as a part of the Protected Landscape Area). The construction of new buildings would be a further interference to the landscape and the environment. It is therefore not desirable in this location. The problem is, in particular, the insufficient sports facilities that could be used in bad weather.

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