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PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS OF DEVELOPMENT OF APITOURISM IN KAZAKHSTAN

Abstract. In the modern world, one of the most popular and faster growing types of tourism is apitourism. This is due to the growing interest in this type of tourism from tourists of all ages who want to spend their holidays in the apiary tasting bee products (honey, propolis, royal jelly, etc.); tourists are interested in learning the secrets of the technology for making high-quality honey and products related to it. Apiaries become as excursion objects for tourists. Especially attractive for tourists are the goods in the manufacture of which they personally participated. Apitourism promotes the socio-economic revival of rural areas, ensures the diversification of agricultural production, and creates new jobs. The article discusses the current state of development of apitourism in Kazakhstan, review the problems and prospects for its development. The experience of the development of apitourism in foreign countries is analyzed. In the course of using mental modeling and analysis of scientific literature, using the deductive research method, we were able to identify the resource base for the development of apitourism, and assessed the current state of the beekeeping in Kazakhstan. As the main research method, we conducted a sociological survey of potential consumers of tourist services, during which the advantages of apitourism and the main directions of its development were identified.

Keywords: apitourism, ecotourism, beekeeping, apiary, agriculture, nature-based tourism, local community.

Introduction. Tourism is one of the fastest growing industries of world economy. There are many new possibilities to attract tourists and satisfied their needs. Demand for the development of modern world civilization, the relationship between people and environment is growing up. As a unique way of sustainable development, apitourism has become a new type of travel that combines the desire to create a natural and unique experience, such as a beekeeper's lifestyle [1].

Apitourism is one of the new directions in tourism, which unites the spheres of tourism and beekeeping. It performs not only the functions of ecotourism, but also considers the issues of medical, educational tourism. Apitourism is a new travel destination that is harmoniously connected with the modern culture of bee breeding and beekeeping. This type of tourism has a great potential as an additional opportunity to expand and strengthen beekeepers' presence in the tourist market.

Honey breeding is one of the most rapidly developing types of farms. The honey breeding has a great potential for socio-economic development, preserving natural forests [2].

It is necessary to pay attention to apitourism for the sustainable development of tourism through the development of beekeeping in Kazakhstan. One of the most favorable and attractive areas for the development of apitourism is the East Kazakhstan region, and the authors visiting several villages in the area to take research. The main objective of the study is to identify the importance of apitourism in the development of the country's economy and tourism, to analyze the problems and prospects of the development of apitourism in Kazakhstan.

The research methods. For a deeper understanding and a more detailed disclosure of apitourism, we began our research with a theoretical analysis and generalization of the scientific literature regarding the subject of our study.

Apitourism (the name comes from Latin name of honeybee - *Apis mellifera*), as a form of tourism that deals with culture and traditions of rural communities could be considered as one of the most sustainable way of development and a niche tourism. Apitourism is a form of tourism connected with beekeeping as a traditional profession and with bee products in ecological, food and medicinal aspects [3].

We used the continuous absentee online survey method to solve the tasks in this scientific study. The survey can be considered as one of the most common methods for obtaining information about the subjects - respondents to the survey. The survey is that the respondent was asked special questions related to apitourism, the answers to which allowed us to obtain the necessary information. When creating the survey, we first formulated program questions that were relevant to the solution of the problem, but which were accessible only to specialists. By using the questionnaire method, it is possible to obtain a high level of mass research with the least cost. A feature of this method can be called its anonymity (the respondent's personality is not recorded; only his answers are recorded). During the study, we were able to draw up an SWOT-analysis, identify the main areas, and lay the foundation for the future development of apitourism in Kazakhstan. As a conclusion, we came to the result that apitourism is a unique way of sustainable development; it has become a new type of travel, combined with the desire to create natural and unique news for yourself as a way of beekeeping.

The discussion of the received results. Educational function of apitourism promotes pro-ecological environmental activities making tourists aware of a huge role bees play in functioning of many ecosystems. One-third of products eaten indirectly and directly by a man depend on insect pollination [4].

Apitourism is a relatively new phenomenon and is primarily focused on the beekeeping community or those interested in apitherapy, i.e., medicinal use of products from honeybees [5].

Apitourism allows apiaries, students or ordinary tourists to be acquainted with the art of breeding bees, to study the culture of beekeeping. Most visitors consider apiaries to be "sights of ecotourism," more attention needs to be paid to their development [6]. Apitourism is an innovative form of tourism [7], which is suitable for the study area and provides new jobs, take support for local infrastructure development, provides opportunities for small beekeepers in rural areas of the region in terms of promoting the region.

Since apitourism has a broad concept, it was formed as a separate type of tourism. Excursions to apiaries, excursion museums of bees in the open air, tasting various varieties of honey, cooking various types of honey products, etc., all this is an integral part of apitourism

A clever combination of ancient and old-fashioned beekeeping skills revitalizes local crafts and helps preserve the environment. Beeswax or apitourism has two obvious advantages. Beekeeping products, including bees, beeswax, propolis, pollen and mother's milk, etc. products can be a source of income. Another advantage is that it plays an important role in ecology, spraying flowers and plants in everyday life. Bees are at risk around the world, because if bees die, it can negatively affect the environment and plant life [8].

Api-tours give an idea about and represent a nature, heritage, traditions, cuisine and hospitality of different regions of the country.

Apitourism as a sphere combine many things: craftsmen, apiaries, ethnography collectors for apiaries, open-air museums and herbivores, apiaries, honey confectioners, honey wax candles, honey and honey dump sands, honey drink producers, producers of cosmetics and care products, as well as special gift makers, etc.

On the grounds of conducted research, basic apitourism functions were distinguished.

Therapeutic function. A distinctive feature of apitourism is apitherapy. It affects the health and restoration of human vitality. Massage with honey, breathing chambers inside the apiary, aromatherapy and others, contribute to the restoration of the respiratory system, and improve blood circulation and helps in the prevention of various diseases. It is essential to attract attention to not well-known and rarely used bee products such as propolis, beebread, royal jelly, pollen and wax. Showing numerous applications of bee products in cooking, medicine and cosmetics it is also a promotion of pro-healthy lifestyle and the return to nature, which can successfully serve a man.

Cognitive function. For tourists, information about the traditions and customs of the local population is of great interest. Therefore, tourists are acquainted not only with the development of beekeeping in the country, but also get additional information about the history, traditions and customs of the visited place.

This function draws attention to the specific nature and tradition of a region and especially of beekeeper's work and the history of beekeeping.

Educational function. How the honey economy develops, what kind of plants are needed for its development, where it is favorable to develop, etc. providing relevant information and providing new information. For that reason, it is very important to retain the largest number of bee colonies and to ecologically educate allowing understanding and appreciating the role of bees in life and economy of a man. Environmental education - the leading competence of students and trainees in relation to the world around them and themselves: the ability to live in harmony with nature and culture, with themselves and with society - leading orienteer global education [9].

Social function - an apitourism offer allows activating a local community by creating new jobs at tourist traffic services, to develop agrotourism farms and to benefit from the potential of knowledge and experience of apiarists [10].

This is the spectrum of cognitive activity of apitourism associated with the ecotourism and the leisure tourism.

Beekeeping requires less use of land, labor and resources than other types of farming, and it is well suited to the environment and ecosystem of the region [11].

Development of beekeeping in the country is one of the most important factors for the development of apitourism. However, the amount of honey produced is not one of the mandatory requirements for apitourism development (figure 1).

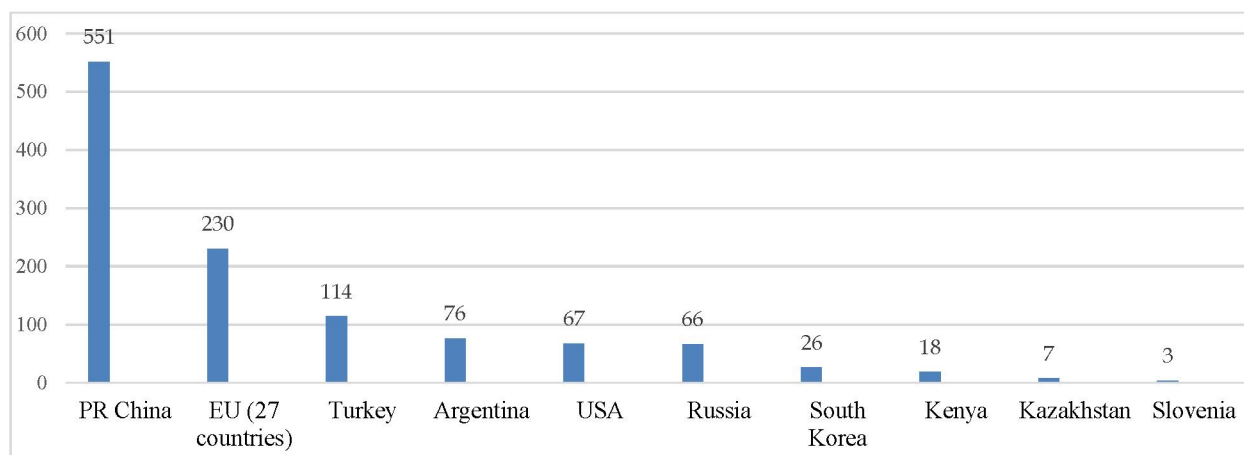


Figure 1 – World honey production in 2017 year (thousand tons) [according to 12]

China is the world leader in honey production and export. In 2017, China produced more than 550,000 tons of honey.

According to statistics, by the end of the 1990s Kazakhstan exported 50 thousand tons of honey per year. Most of them are exported to Germany, Japan, South Korea and China. At present Kazakhstan produces about 10 thousand tons of honey a year [13].

In Slovenia, about 10,000 beekeepers produce 3,000 tons of honey per year [14]. The main points of the api-tour's advertising are: "Acquaintance with the methods of biodynamic development of beekeeping, taking into account the natural integrity of apiaries, demonstration of different apiary systems, the introduction of apnea pollen, breast milk and propolis, as well as their beneficial effects on human health and well-being, with organization various seminars". Slovenian ApiRoutes company specializes in beekeeping tours [15]. Beekeeping is an ancient and well-developed type of economy that arose in Slovenia from the moment it was settled by the Slavs [16].

Countries with the highest number of bee hives are not the highest producers of honey. This mainly depends on the environmental climate, the number of bees, the number of plants with pollen, and so on.

It is generally recognized that a certain degree of state intervention in the development of tourism is important [17], therefore, for the successful development of apitourism, state support is necessary not only from the material side, but also legal support is needed. In 2010, the Kazakhstan's National Association of

Beekeepers “Bal-Ara” was founded, which made a significant contribution to the development of beekeeping in Kazakhstan, a targeted program for the revival of bee farming in our country was launched.

First of all, the main factors for developing of beekeeping are environment, vegetation and water resources [18]. Accordingly, apitourism may not develop in all regions of our country. In Kazakhstan, the most favorable zone for the development of apitourism is a region with well developed beekeeping industry. It is desirable to choose right places with the most favorable climate and effective in terms of location. In Kazakhstan, the most favorable conditions for the development of the beekeeping industry are in the east of the country. The collection and analysis of material gave us the opportunity to determine that apitourism can well develop in the East Kazakhstan and Almaty regions. Recently, the production of honey is also developing well in Northern Kazakhstan. Apitourism is not only an acquaintance with honey products, but also has a number of its own characteristics. It also contributes to the development of other types of tourism. Beekeeping is well developed in Katon-Karagaysky, Zyryanovsky, Glubokoy, Shemo-naikhinsky, Kurchumsky, Urdzharsky, Ulansky, Borodulikhinsky areas of the East Kazakhstan region.

By analyzing of 2019-year literature materials, we able to discover excursions to the Ulken Naryn, Kishi Naryn, Solonovka, Besuy, Sennoe, Katon-Karagay, Kaindy districts with the purpose of apitourism are being realized. In these areas, local and foreign tourists can get acquainted with local beekeeping and try various honey products. Farmers from "Sunkar", "Bee" and "Chekankin" LLP produced 5 tons of local honey in the Ulken Naryn rural district in 2017. In the small villages of Naryn and Solonovka, the number of nesting sites of bees in private farms is more than 1800. The total honey production in 2017 amounted to 46 tons in this region. Due to the high demand for beekeeping products, there is an increase the number of honey hives in farms.

At the same time, some regions of Kazakhstan have an apitherapy. Apitherapy is a scientifically-based medical concept that promotes traditional knowledge of beekeeping products and their nutrition and use in medicine [19]. Apitherapy - a solution to the problems of preserving and maintaining human health through beekeeping. Beekeeping products are food, biologically active substances and natural medicines. In recent years, medicine has rediscovered and confirmed the results of the prevention and treatment of diseases through beekeeping [20]. In Katon-Karagay and Glubokoe districts of the East Kazakhstan region, it is now widely spread to go to bed in specially built houses with the aim of preventing and treating various diseases with the help of apitherapy. Special api-houses were built in the area near Kaindy village in Katon-Karagai district of the East Kazakhstan region under the project “Altyn-Altai - Wealth for the development of the region” [21].

Sleeping near an apiary is an ancient and very effective way to strengthen the health of our ancestors. Bees pass into their nests through small openings against the wall. Special mesh near the hive prevents the bees from entering the interior of the house. The house next to the bees is ideal for strengthening immunity, strengthening the cardiovascular system, treating lung diseases, neurosis, and many other diseases [22]. Thanks to the free circulation of aromatic air, the chick peas have are very nice microclimate, which can easily penetrate into the body of steam and general sleepiness [23].

Innovation is important for the agricultural sector of the Republic of Kazakhstan, bringing the potential for long-term economic growth [24]. Therefore, the development of apitourism in is an innovative approach in the development of beekeeping in our country.

In the field of the scientific research, we prepare and carry out an online survey conducted with apitourism. For these purposes, we used the most affordable option for conducting an online survey – Google Forms platform.

About 1,200 people took part in an online survey. Before taking the information from survey, a brief information about apitourism was presented to respondents. The analysis of survey, show that the most of the respondents (55.8%) were interested in apitourism for medical purposes. The rest of the respondents chose a cognitive purposes - 33.3%, for educational purposes - 5.8%, for business purposes 1.7%, 39 respondents (3.3%) did not express interest in this type of tourism (figure 2).

The therapeutic function of apitourism has increased the importance, respondents identified improved health through apitourism as its main advantage (figure 3).

Due to the development of apitourism in Kazakhstan, it is possible to have a significant impact on the development of the tourism industry in the country as a whole. Nevertheless, the majority of respondents believe that there are some obstacles to the development of apitourism in our country (figure 4). Some

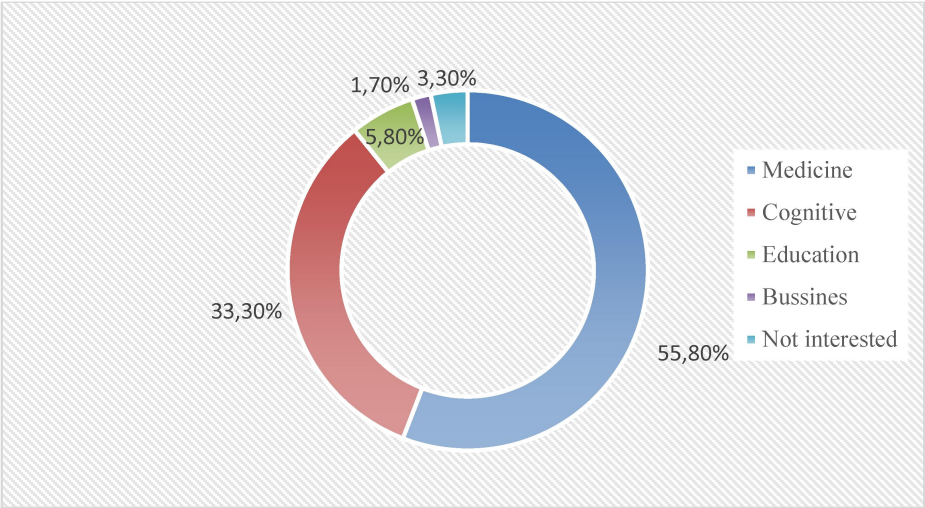


Figure 2 – The interest of potential tourists to apitourism in Kazakhstan

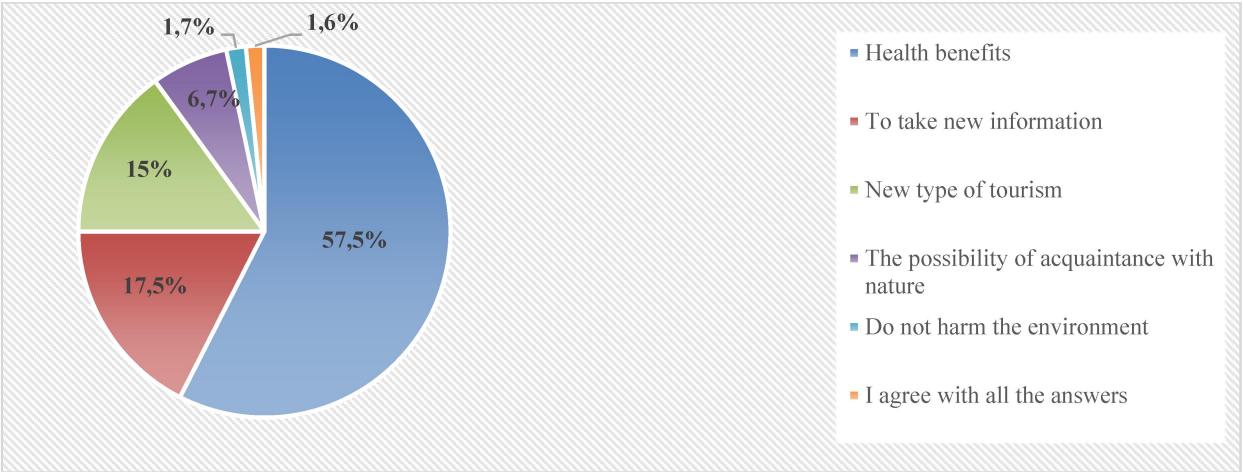


Figure 3 – The main advantages and features of apitourism, according to respondents view

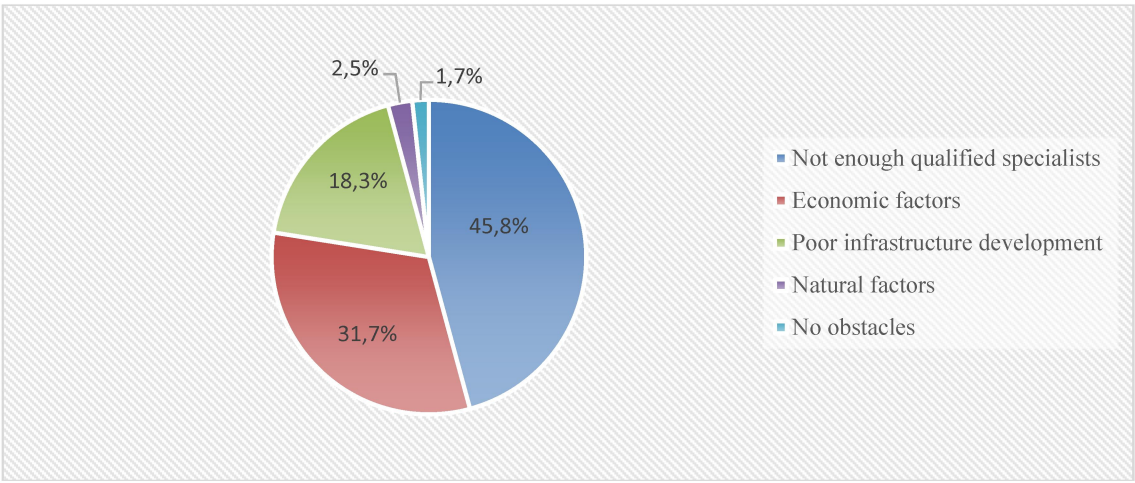


Figure 4 – Obstacles in development of apitourism in Kazakhstan, according to respondents view

respondents considered that one of the main obstacles to development apitourism is not enough qualified specialists (45.8%), some of them have chosen economic factors (31.7%). At the same time, some groups choose poor development of tourism direction with weak infrastructure development (18.3%), as well as a natural factor (2.5%).

Traveling with the aim of apitourism, apitherapy takes the most important place for mind of tourists (60%). Therefore, it's necessary to quality develop “apitherapy” for the development of tourism and attract tourists, and it is also necessary to include medical procedures in the local api-tour programs.

It is also advisable for future local managers and enterprises to take on a mind to organize excursions to honey fairs for tourists who are going to taste and buy various types of honey products in Kazakhstan (figure 5). As a additional result of the survey, we were able to identify that the main part of the excursionists, who choose visiting bee apiaries with excursion purposes are schoolchildren and students.

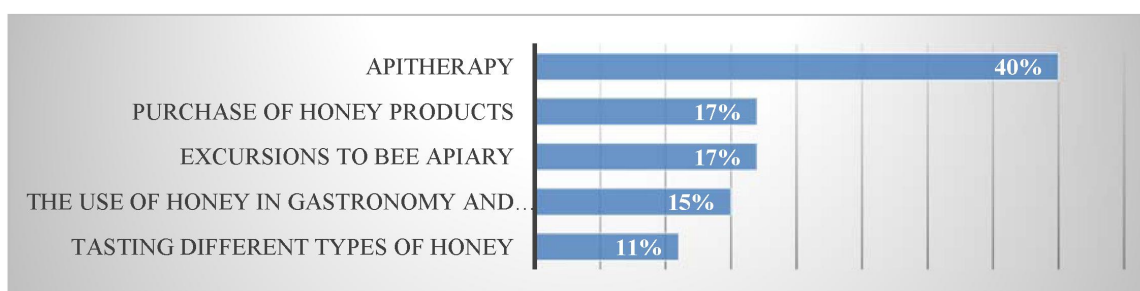
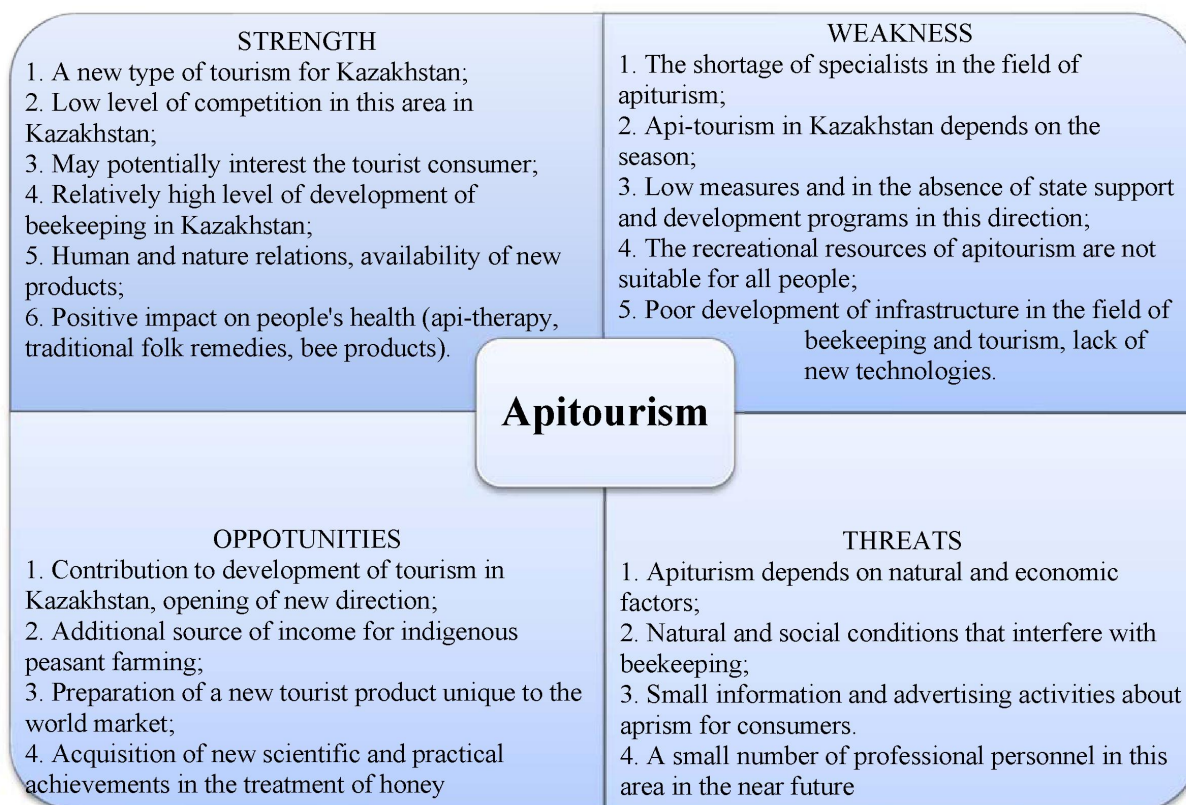


Figure 5 – The reasons of the local tourists for apitourism travel

For the development of apitourism in Kazakhstan, it is necessary to organize excursions to open-air museums for children and adolescents, organize workshops and master-classes on cooking and tasting honey in the cities of Almaty and Oskemen, educate and train highly qualified specialists who specialized in spa procedures using products based on bee honey and pollen.

SWOT analysis of apitourism development in Kazakhstan



East Kazakhstan and Almaty regions are favorable zones for the development of apitourism in Kazakhstan. In particular, East Kazakhstan is a region with a high development potential. The reason is that interesting excursions, festivals are already being organized here, apitherapy is used for medicinal purposes.

Conclusion. Today, interest in beekeeping is growing faster thanks to the efforts of modern society to consume environmentally friendly and organic products. The basis of apitourism is the production of honey and the agricultural sector as beekeeping. Beekeeping provides the local community in rural and suburban areas with many important products and services.

The success of this intervention to develop apitourism can be attributed to the people's access to all the types of resources needed to make their livelihoods sustainable: 1. Natural resources (strong populations of healthy bees and abundant forest); 2. Physical resources (lorries able to navigate rough forest tracks and to enable honey to be transported from the producers to the collection centre, buckets with lids allowing clean honey to be transported); 3. Social resources (the strong organization, owned and run by the producers and with access to market knowledge); 4. Human resources (the beekeepers skills at beekeeping and honey and beeswax harvesting); 5. Financial resources (access by the beekeeping enterprises to credit when needed).

Our research considers apitourism as a new direction of sustainable development. The number of tourists interested in apitourism is growing; this trend also applies to our Kazakhstan society. This was observed during the survey.

The East Kazakhstan region is one of the potential regions for the development of Kazakhstani ecotourism, the region meets all the parameters necessary for the development of apitourism in our country. This region of Kazakhstan is distinguished by its biological and landscape diversity. For the successful development of tourism in the region, it is necessary to attract qualified specialists in this field and develop infrastructure, it is necessary to coordinate the activities of local beekeeping enterprises and familiarize them with the high economic potential for the development of apitourism in their territories.

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ҚАЗАҚСТАНДА АПИТУРИЗМДІ ДАМУДЫҢ МӘСЕЛЕЛЕРІ МЕН БОЛАШАҒЫ

Аннотация. Қазіргі таңда туризмнің танымал түрлерінің бірі апитуризм болып табылады. Бұл өз деңгейін омартада ара шаруашылығы өнімдерінің жоғары сапасы мен технологиясының сақталуына көз жеткізу арқылы бал өндірудің қыр-сырымен танысып, ара шаруашылығы өнімдеріне (бал, прополис, аналық сүт және т.б.) дегустация жасап, өткізуге ниет білдірген барлық жастағы, әлеуметтік және ұлттық санаттар қатарындағы туристер тарапынан қызығушылық тууымен байланысты. Омарталар туристер үшін экскурсиялық нысандар болып табылады. Әсіресе туристер үшін тартымды өнімдерге оларды дайындауға өздері қатысатын өнімдер жатады. Апитуризм ауылдық аймақтардың әлеуметтік-экономикалық қайта жаңғыруына ықпал етіп, ауыл шаруашылығы өндірісін әртараптандыруды қамтамасыз етеді, жаңа жұмыс орындарын құрады. Мақалада Қазақстандағы апитуризм дамуының қазіргі жағдайы, оның даму мәселелері мен перспективалары қарастырылады. Шет елдерде апитуризмді дамыту тәжірибесі талданды. Сонымен қатар апитуризмді дамыту үшін ресурстық база мен Қазақстандағы ара шаруашылығының қазіргі даму жағдайы қарастырылды. Апитуризмнің артықшылықтары мен оның дамуының негізгі бағыттары анықталып, елдегі апитуризмнің дамуына байланысты әлеуметтік сауалнама, SWOT-талдау жүргізілді. Сондай-ақ, апитуризмді дамыту үшін қолайлы жағдайлары бар аймақтар анықталды.

Түйін сөздер: апитуризм, экотуризм, бал шаруашылығы, омарта, ауыл шаруашылығы, табиғи туризм, жергілікті қауымдар.

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ПРОБЛЕМЫ И ПЕРСПЕКТИВЫ РАЗВИТИЯ АПИТУРИЗМА В КАЗАХСТАНЕ

Аннотация. На сегодняшний день одним из популярных видов туризма является апитуризм. Это вызвано нарастающим к нему интересом со стороны туристов всех возрастных категорий, социальной и национальной принадлежности, которые желают провести свой отдых на пасеке, дегустируя продукты пчеловодства (мёд, прополис, маточное молочко и т.д.), изучая таинство создания меда, убеждаясь в соблюдении технологий и высоком качестве продукции пасеки. Пасеки становятся экскурсионными объектами для туристов. Особенно привлекательными для туристов являются продукты, в изготовлении которых они лично приняли участие. Апитуризм способствует социально-экономическому возрождению сельской местности, обеспечивает диверсификацию сельскохозяйственного производства, создает новые рабочие места. В статье рассматривается современное состояние развития апитуризма в Казахстане, проблемы и перспективы его развития. Анализируется опыт развития апитуризма в зарубежных странах. Вместе с тем анализируется ресурсная база для развития апитуризма, текущее состояние пчеловодческого хозяйства в Казахстане. Был проведен социологический опрос, SWOT-анализ развития апитуризма в стране, выделены преимущества апитуризма и основные направления его развития. Также выявлены районы, имеющие наиболее благоприятные условия для развития апитуризма.

Ключевые слова: апитуризм, экотуризм, пчеловодство, пасека, сельское хозяйство, природный туризм, местное сообщество.

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