
Retreat Tourism as a Form of Alternative Tourism: A Conceptual Analysis

Marta Bizane

Daugavpils University, Latvia

Abstract:

Alternative tourism has gained increasing attention in recent years due to the growing demand for sustainable, personalized, and transformative travel experiences. Among its emerging forms, retreat tourism stands out as a distinctive type, focused on personal transformation, self-reflection, and holistic well-being. Despite its popularity, conceptual boundaries between retreat tourism, wellness tourism, and other forms of alternative tourism remain unclear.

This paper provides a conceptual analysis of retreat tourism, examining its unique characteristics and differences from wellness tourism. While wellness tourism primarily addresses physical and emotional recovery, retreat tourism emphasizes deeper personal growth, experiential learning, and transformative practices.

The study is based on a systematic review of academic literature and a comparative analysis of existing definitions and classifications of alternative tourism. Findings clarify the position of retreat tourism within the broader framework of alternative tourism and highlight its societal relevance, including the potential for specialized retreat centers. These insights contribute to both theoretical understanding and practical development of innovative tourism experiences.

Keywords:

Alternative tourism, retreat tourism, wellness tourism, sustainable development, digital detox.