

THE NEW TOURIST'S PROFILE: SOME GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

Mihai Gabriel CRISTIAN¹

Lucian Blaga University of Sibiu, Romania

Abstract

People are a major factor of the tourism and hospitality industry. In a tourism industry, understanding how people acknowledge to a travel products and services can increase economic performance and commerce preferences. This article offer an overview of tourist profile in the context of IT&C development. The study highlights some consideration about “digital-free tourism” (DFT) that impact the personality of tourists. Encouraging a better comprehension of the role personality presents in the tourism industry may help contribute a further researched in the future.

Keywords: *tourism, personality, tourist personality, technology, IT&C*

JEL classification: *L83, Z30, Z32*

1. Introduction

People, especially in the tourism and hospitality industry, face numerous circumstances on a daily basis. The needs of different people with different behavioural traits and ways of thinking need to be taken into account. Personality can influence shopping choicess, decision-making methods, self-control, synergy with others, emotions and even the manage of stress (Carver & Scheier, 2008). There are countless situations in the industry where consumers and service workers need to think and interact with one another. Personal behaviour and the staff responses to such cooperations affect the personal emotions of others (Yeung & Leung, 2007). Trying to define the

¹ Ph.D. Student, Lucian Blaga University of Sibiu, Faculty of Economic Sciences, e-mail: mihai.cristian@ulbsibiu.ro

tourist personality has been a challenge for many researchers over the past years.

Viewing the crucial role of personality, this study first offers a understanding overview of the tourist profile according to the literature review studies on the relevance of personality in the tourism and hotel industries and secondly, the tourist profile in the context of IT&C development.

2. Literature review

Personality according to Cervone & Pervin (2008) indicate that “people frequently spend their time trying to understand what others are alike”. Carver and Scheier (2008) refer to the word “personality” like “a sense of consistency or continuity about a person, and implies that regardless of how that person behaves, it comes from within. Society began to place a premium on leisure time”. We are no longer focused on work but rather on leisure. According to Krippendorf (1986) a new idea of leisure and travel will emerge quickly against the backdrop of these societal and individual transformations. The younger generation is leading the way in terms of lifestyle change, and the middle and elder generations will follow. The desire for more meaning in one's life. The need for more time to live, for greater humanity, for a human dimension is not limited to a small number of 'alternative' organizations. These expectations are increasingly becoming part of the requirements of individuals in the “established society”.

Aaker (1997) proposed a concept: „brand personality as the set of human characteristics associated with a brand”. This domain highlights the understanding of people's attitudes, thoughts, desires, opinions, feelings, emphasizing constant emotions, and other rational experiences, especially from an individual's point of view (Leung, & Law, 2010). Personality research faces many uses in the area of tourism, such as: marketing, product positioning; specific destination development of new resorts, experiences and attractions; and others (Jackson, M., White, G., & White, M. G., 2001).

Almost four decades ago, Plog (1974) tried to develop a personality theory of tourism, so he classified a group of people (that he interviewed) into 2 types of personality traits: psychocentric and allocentric, each one with specific and different traits. Some studies have related the theory of the concepts of allocentrism and psychocentrism to clarify different aspects of tourism since Plog's (1974) point of view and later revisions (Griffith & Albanese, 1996).

According to these personality profiles, researchers should now ought to better illustrate tourists, their experiences and behaviours. Table 1 shows theory-driven factors of behaviours of each personality type.

Table 1: Personality type with description

| Personality type | Proposed tourist behaviours |
|-------------------------|---|
| #1 the explorer | own time/ no timetables, get to know hosts and their unique culture, not organised, not controlled, secluded / discrete destinations, enrich own knowledge, excitement, challenges, quiet in group/ avoid crowds. |
| #2 the adventurer | travelling with friends / not with unknown tourists, meet new people (especially hosts), travel not organised, activities optional, not regimented, avoid boredom by stopping at many places and doing exciting things, explore different cultures, sense of freedom. |
| #3 the guided | sense of isolation and being alone (or in a discrete unit), travelling only with spouse or special friend, everything arranged to avoid worries, misunderstandings, or over-expenditure, revisit favourite destinations, escape life's problems, relax, enjoy luxury, prefer the familiar, not foreign. |
| #4 the groupie | travel with group of friends or meet tourists on packaged tours, meet touristshosts of both sexes, go to sun/beach/nightlife destinations that attract tourists, lots of activities including sporting events and theme parks, go where there are crowds and action. |

Source: adapted from Jackson, M., White, G., & White, M. G. (2001)

When it comes to event tourism, it is obvious that most of them belong to the “new generation” category, because “sentimental tourists” prefer to come to this destination to “rediscover” the destination visited in the past. It is also obvious that festivals mainly attract supporters of group tourism, who come with their colleagues or to make friends and socialize.

Individual trends also affect the preferred type of tourism and demand profile, being one of the factors affecting tourism demand. This change led to the creation of a new concept, namely: “new tourist”. Yeoman (2008) describes the “new tourist” as:

- Oriented towards learning, towards authentic adventures and experiences;

- New tourists generate demand for better quality, more value for money and more flexibility in the travel experience;
- Increased interest in sustainability, being willing to pay more;
- Very interested in experiencing and participating in the experience of local cultures;
- Oriented towards niche tourism;
- Much more stressed looking for relaxation and comfort;
- More technology-friendly, often using the Internet to book and purchase tourism products;
- Concerned about health and safety during the holidays;

In parallel with the characteristics of the “new tourist”, some of the emerging factors that affect the trends in tourism demand have been identified, namely (Griffith et. al., 2009):

1. Higher expectations regarding the way of carrying out the activities and a greater differentiation of them
2. Increasing consumer expertise and co-creative tourism in which all parties, such as consumers and suppliers, come together to create.
3. Curiosity to find out new information using available technologies and online resources (using Google, Booking.com, Expedia, tripadvisor.com etc.)

In the case of tourists, specialists consider that each of the criteria based on which tourists can be categorized is a segmentation criterion. It is up to the knowledge, experience, creativity, and ingenuity of the marketing specialist in an enterprise to identify the most suitable market category for his offer. The following classification criteria are common in tourism marketing: age, motivation, tourist behaviour, lifestyle, income allocated to tourism, nationality, and others.

3. IT&C Implications in tourist personality

Information technology (IT) is one of the most identified field in tourism technology since the 1980s (Buhalis and Law, 2008). With the accelerated improvement and implementation of front line data technologies in tourism and hospitality, it is essential to update and modernize the progress of technology use in tourism in the past 15 years and set up some objectives for future research (Sertkan et. al., 2019). According to Tribe and Mkono (2017), utilizing travel applications like TripAdvisor or Airbnb might irritate travellers

searching for authenticity. The notion of rejecting pervasive connectedness arose as a result.

We live in a world where everyone is connected, where technology has changed and revolutionized the tourist industry. Permanent connectedness through technology has been demonstrated to distract individuals from physical experiences to some level (Tanti and Buhalis 2016) and can have a detrimental influence on tourist attraction consumption, wellbeing, and social interaction.

Table 2: Factors that boost or discourage use of connectivity

| (+) Boosts | | Discourages (-) |
|--|---|--|
| Devices = Applications = | Hardware and Software | = Deficiencies of technology = Offline Applications |
| Solo Traveller = Unfamiliarity = Purpose of Travel = (e.g. Discovering) | Needs and Contexts | = Accompanied Traveller = Familiarity = Purpose of Travel (e.g. Relaxation) |
| Actively Connected = | Openness to Usage | = Selective Unplugging = Self-Imposed total disconnection |
| Available Infrastructure = Social Wi-Fi = | Supply and Provision of Connectivity | = Unavailable Infrastructure = Lack of knowledge/trust on foreign service providers |

Source: (Tanti & Buhalis, 2016)

Social media and web 4.0 facilitate people to network and cooperate in a mass and international system. Customers also use these mass collaboration platforms to write, share, and search information about items and suppliers, as social intelligence and online interpersonal relationships considerably aid customers online purchasing decision-making (Chandler, J., & Chen, S., 2015). Thus, is changing personalities into active business players by allowing them to participate in the different activities like: marketing, selling, comparing, curating, and buying of goods in online commerce (Shin, 2013; Trequa, 2015).

This kind of ubiquitous technology has redesigned the tourist personality, making him more anxious and more attracted to customizable tourism products and services. The internet world can help individuals meet their information, entertainment, and communication needs. Passengers have felt more secure because of connectivity, knowing that any needs might be met immediately. Minazzi and Mauri (2015) looked at how travelers might lower their risk perceptions by accessing internet information and improve their experiences by making quick decisions utilizing mobile devices. Regarding to a study (MediaCT, 2014) people confident on online sources to get encouraged where or how to travel. The study also demonstrates that 65% of the leisure travellers start exploring online before a travel decision. Specifically in this new aspect of decision making a important number of people have difficulties to absolutely indicate their preferences and needs (Zins, 2007).

During their travels, tourists are frequently hampered by time constraints. The amount of time spent doing different activities can be affected by both connectivity and disconnection. Because technology offer passengers access to a worldwide database of information and permits them to achieve information immediately, quickly, connectivity can be useful in mindful information. When people connect to the internet not only for vacation purposes, but also for other activities such as online socializing, work, news, and so on, it can lead to inefficiency and time loss (Wang et al., 2014). Travelers may spend too much time online and miss out on opportunities to explore the real world. The benefit of disconnecting is that time may be spent solely on the holiday experience since there is less chance of being side-tracked when there is no internet. When passengers need to recover information, disconnection might take some time. Without the help of internet material, it would be impossible to succeed. The ubiquity of Internet connectivity has affected tourists' personality, making them more dependent and less responsible with the environment.

The concept “digital-free tourism” (DFT) was proposed by Li, Pearce and Low (2018) to characterized tourism-related actions in regions with restricted or no access to technology. People who prefer to disconnect on holiday follow therapeutic improvement (Paris et al. 2015) to accomplish a better outcome (Neuhofer and Ladkin 2017); still, the unexpected departure of technology could affect to negative feelings such as anxiety and stress (Pearce and Gretzel 2012). Although the implications of new technologies and connectedness in tourism are well known and appreciated, an appreciation of

the impact of DFT is crucial (Li, Pearce and Low 2018). This study focuses on digitally disconnected travel experiences in today's ubiquitous world, where people are accustomed to constant access to information and various services offered by various applications. Tourism studies were directed long before the introduction of technology; however, this study evidence are on digitally disconnected travel experiences in today's uncertain world, where people are accustomed to constant access to information and different services offered by various applications (Dery, Kolb and MacCormick 2014).

In the literature, there are very some studies that focus especially on DFT. Previous studies have focused on tourists being forced to disconnect in a „technological dead zone”, an area without or with a weak connection where the feeling of being disconnected combines multiple strong or more sensory aspects (Pearce and Gretzel 2012).

This lessens the typical stress that comes with living temporarily in a strange and unfamiliar environment, especially while visiting the location for the first time, with its diverse culture, language, and conventions. However, when traveling is unduly reliant on technology, this may be damaging, as lack of connectivity can be uncomfortable and stressful. While connection has the potential to aid and enrich travellers' personal growth, it may also isolate them in their own online world, preventing them from taking advantage of possible learning opportunities. Disconnecting can provide tourists with a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to interact with locals.

4. Conclusions

Few research in tourism have try to identify whether personality traits influence visitor behavior. As a result, future research should focus on developing appropriate measuring methods for evaluating and measuring personality and comfort. DFT could be one of the focus subjects of future research on the role of personality in tourism and hospitality.

The fast development of IT&C in recent decades, particularly with the beginning of the World Wide Web, has had a significant impact on and integral the tourism profile (www). Consumers nowadays have ubiquitous access to large volumes of information and are also highly connected, allowing them to share their experiences and learn more from one another.

In conclusion, the main findings focus on negative feelings, such as anxiety and stress, and the fact that „disconnection” can cause discomfort for some tourists and can create certain sensations like distress and anxiety. Meanwhile, emphasis on positive outcomes remains scarce.

Overall, access to market knowledge and experience encourages and supports travelers in understanding the purpose and needs of their purchases and making more informed and accurate purchase decisions. Technological advances (social networking tools, software services, etc.), payment systems (micropayments), and economic crises are also fueling C2C transactions that have created joint trade as a particular form of social trade. Technology is certainly an important driver of communal tourism.

5. References

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