

Motivation and tourism

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As it is a human right to have a holiday, this report discusses the motivating reasons and the appeal factors why people choose their tourist destination. The report will start with definitions of tourism and motivation, followed by a few theories of motivation, and ending with a conclusion. These theories are relating to the push of individual/s to embark on a holiday, and the pull of the tourist destination.

Definitions

- According to the UK Tourism Society and cited in the BTEC National Travel and Tourism book, by Elise James, Joanne Thirlaway and Ursula Woodhouse. (2007, pg3) Their definition of tourism is as follows. “ The temporary, short-term movement of people to destinations outside the places where they normally live and work, and their activities during their stay at these destinations.”
- Motivation as defined in the in the book Tourism: Principles and Practices. By Cooper, Fletcher, Gilbert, Shepherd and Wanhill, 2nd edition. (1998, pg32) Is “ Derives from the word ‘ motivate’, which is to cause a person to act in a certain way, or to stimulate interest”.

Definitions of Tourism and Motivation

There're as many different types of holidays and tourists destinations, as there are people. Personality traits have a lot to account for in the decision making process, of where we choose to go on holiday. Mr Stanley Plog in 1974 (Holloway 6th ed, 2002) developed a theory, which classified the general US public into two descriptive groups.

- Psycho-centric A tourist that is more concerned with himself or herself, more than often is anxious about the security of travelling. They enjoy a resort or group package style holiday. Would more than likely be a return visitor for the comfort of familiarity. Example of this would be a Packaged style holiday to Spain. Were the tourist has purchased the transport and accommodation as one product.
- Allocentric

A tourist that seeks excitement, novelty, and mostly likes being out of his or hers comfort zone. They would have no qualms of travelling alone to or from a destination by them selves, or stay outside the resort or hotelenvironment. Examples of this would be a backpacker, staying at a hostel in Budapest. Not only is it a non-English speaking country, it is also out side of the European Union. Making it more exciting to the true allocentric.

As this is only a theory, one cannot just place every body into two boxes. So of course in practice, holidaymakers fall somewhere in between these to extreme examples as mid-centric. Plog's theories are also discusses in Tourism: Principles and Practices (Cooper et al, 1998 pg35) they suggest his theories are hard to apply inside the tourist industry. " Tourist will travel with different motivations on different occasions."

They also follow on to suggest, that out of these individuals that gravitate more towards the psycho-centric are of a lower incomes. This in turn would limit the style or type of holiday they would go on. There motivations wouldn't be different just the tourist destination. It would just mean that having a domestic holiday would be more appealing to savemoney.

The family might opt for a low-key holiday like going camping in the Lake District, or to a Butlins seaside resort.

Incomes are one of the major factors in deciding where to travel. As we have briefly discussed a budget holiday and Plog's theories. He would suggest that on the other side of the scale tourists with more expendable funds would certainly have different destinations in mind. But with money comes affordability, which fashion and trends are a by-product of. Just like keeping up with the latest clothes fashions, is the appeal of some destination. This would be the chase, and not wanting to stereotype here. But for or the young generation there will always be the seduction of the four S's. This will most definitely appeal to most 18 to 35, which are looking to partake in an atmosphere that is more carefree. Escaping to destinations that are away from the judgement in their local environment. This trend will pull tourist to places like Ibiza, which offers sun, sea, sand and sex.

But like all clothes they go out of fashion and tastes change. As Holloway says, "that all products, including tourism will experience a life cycle of growth, maturity, saturation and eventually decline". Being young is just one place in the Cycle of Life. It is human nature to evolve, to grow in all areas of life and seek better things. Wells and Gubar (1966) (T: PP 2nd ed Cooper et al pg 41 1998) cauterised the life cycle of families in the USA, from bachelor to retired stage as seen in the graph. (Figure 3) What was appealing to a young person will certainly change when one has more obligations, to their employer and maybe their family. They theorize that as an individual moves through the life cycle there needs and wants as a tourist will change.

The tourist needs are the psychological needs they are not the essential needs of survival. In explaining these need better Abraham Maslow (1966), came up with a hierarchy of needs. (See Figure 1) The graph shows that if more of the Basic and Safety needs are achieved. We'll then move on to more Social, Esteem, and Self-actualisation needs. These needs are for well being, such as the need to relax, to have fun and to be in love. The need maybe is to escape their daily route, or to have sought better weather.

These are like the push factors or the motivators, to take the time to have a holiday. Figure 4 shows a range of other motivators for overseas travels from the UK. As explained in Holloways book (Holloway 6th ed 2002) these Push Factors are the General Motivators that arise out of our individual perception, of what will satisfy our needs. He also talks about general motivators as a broad reason to travel, and is the start of the decision making process. Examples of this would be someone seeks change, maybe from urban environment. They mite looking at going away to the rural setting, perhaps a weekend in the Cotswolds, (See Figure 5) or vice versa.

Holloway also follows to say that along with General there is a Specific motivation to travel. The consumer has, in some way got a perception of the destination in mind, will meet their specific needs. The destination in mind might havehealthbefits to the tourist. The attraction to Bath spa might just be, to have a day of relaxation to rest the body in the warm water. The tourist enjoys Broadway musical, so a trip to London's West end it could be (See Figure 6). Or there is a certain attraction that's pulling yourself or maybe your family.

Like a trip to Disneyland, where the attraction is the destination. Places like these are very convenient, as the accommodation is nearby or on site of the attraction. Maybe it's the mode of transport that has your attention, like a train trip on the Glacier Express? Whatever the motivation there is a process to explain it, and it is illustrated in this simple flow chart. (See Figure 4) The chart briefly outlines the consumer's needs, the attraction of the destination, then ending motivation.

Conclusion Just start off by saying that yes it is a human right to travel, and have time off from work. But being a tourist to some people is a luxury they just can't afford. There is always going to be two most important factors of becoming a tourist, that's time and money. If either one of these two things is lacking, it makes it very difficult to involve in any tourist activity. But in saying that one doesn't need to travel far to become a tourist in one's own country. Looking back at Plog's theory, it would suggest that one is more allocentric domestically, than international.

The motivations in relation to travel is very diverse, the push to go on holiday is always going to exist. It's the biggest industry in the world and customer and consumers are only going to increase. The pull of the destination will change as we all move through our lives. Our life choices, our attitudes, and the perceptions of other destinations will change. Through the media and other people's influences, will shape the type of holidays we choose. The appeal in going to a certain destination is forever going to be up to the individual. And just like the freedom of rest and leisure, we have a freedom of choice.