

The significance of the cultural homogenization process tourism essay



Culture is defined in many ways and different authors have different views about culture for example Hofstede (1994) defines culture as “ the collective programming of the mind, which distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from another”. (Cited in Needle, 2004) where as Belhassen and Caton (2006) have difined culture as “ the sum total of learned beliefs, values and customs that serve to direct the consumer behavior of members of a particular society”. According to Richard(1994) culture is the blend of values, morals, behavioral norms, cuisine, and language. Therefore in this essay we will analyze the process of “ Cultural homogenisation” to global tourism and hospitality industry.

Needle (2004) indentified globalization as a practice to describe the growing dispersion of cultures to become homogenous which results in advance technology and announcement. Products and services are becoming more identical because of the growing list of product all over the globe and also in spite of common cultural differences Levitt (1984). According to (Scheytt) 2007 the past of globalization can be seen as early as 14th century but most dramatic changes were observed in 1960s. Latter WTO (1999) bought about shift in occupation from agricultural to manufacturing because of the industrial revolution. As a result the common restructuring of Western Europe and America that was well known by accumulating industrial production of goods and services which is known as Fordism. Baum (2006) distinguishes fordism by mega consumption and production of goods, cutting down of hours and with high wages. According to Sharpley (2003) the basis for modernity was established by the 19th century at the time of industrialization and urbanization of the society. Therefore the tour operators

pounced and started providing package tours which involved major hotels like Hiltons and Sheraton in us who thereafter took their business to Mexico, Florida and Caribbean which was observed by Holloway (2006).

However it was noted by Milkula (2004) that in early 1970s that the system of mass production and consumption started encountering problems faced because of the fordism management because of the excess production. Likewise the upcoming countries like Taiwan, Korea and Japan faced high price competition from the western economies. This together resulted in high oil prices by the oil exporting countries which resulted the world economy to stabilize as the US power weakens which led to static and highly inflated economies as per Baker (2004). As a result Pizam (2005) realized that the oil prices in 1970 were a threat to deep shipping industry which leads to major crisis. However Pizam (2005) noted that in 1980's and 1990's by getting the labour from the third world countries allowed deep sea shipping to be more established which added to progressive stabilization of oil prices and also cutting down of labour cost.

Ritzer (1993) defines Mc Donaldization as the process by which the principles of the fast-food restaurant are coming to dominate more sectors of our society. Walton (2009) says that cultural homogenization is called as Mc Donaldization he also added by saying that they consist of four foundation they are efficiency, calculability, predictability and control. The main objective of any company is to go multinational to maximize profit through low labour as well as marketing advantages says Tribe (1995). Further Youell (1998) says that globalization is mostly seen in tourism and hotel industry,

where on the other side multinational companies operates global level. For example Star alliance and World alliance.

Lucas (2004) added by saying that the term globalization has been repeatedly used to portray that modern technology and communication channels has made world smaller and this consequently is a concept of a global village. According to Sharpley (2003) globalization process is observed internationally in the society that indicates that world is becoming a global village. As globalization has a major part and spread all over the world through media, business etc. Mandell and Kohler (1990) points that information technology has a major role in compressing time and place, as a result the enterprises are able to do their business on a global scale through internet. He also stated that developed and developing worlds has allowed for interdependencies among nations due to the facilitation on cultural exchanges. Page and Connell (2006) further added by saying that tourism helps to support and preserve culture by generating financial support and by instigating community pride. He also adds by saying that the emerging of western culture creates a major problem to developing nation to to adapt different views, attitudes and behavior etc. for eg tourist places like Kathmandu and Nepal have seen noticeable westernization oh home culture. Bocoock (1993: 78) also points that the present world brands that are made, packed and sold in a particular fashion of that particular cultural values of that country. The organization which uses global marketing techniques always keep in mind the culture of that region where the particular organization is held and accordingly products are being manufactured and sold in that particular region. A good example which clearly indicates that

value of a particular region is shown up by Mc Donalds. The name Donald Mc Donalds is very much famous in Japan than Ronald Mc Donald just because the “ R” sound is not used in Japanese language. The menu which served in Mc donalds is totally different which are served in Mc is US or UK . The meal which served in Mc is corn soup and green tea flavored milkshakes.

Therefore this example says that globalization has caused uniformity but does not always undermine national cultures. Shaw and Williams (2004) also says that marketing plays a vital role to send such information to the local audience. He also adds by saying that the improved technology and vast media images has made so easy for the audience to know about the products and their services. Shaw and Williams (2004) says especially in tourism industry internet plays such a vital role that it provides all the information to the people and also helps in promoting particular destinations. According to Schiffman and Kanuk (1991) the supplier use means of communication to convey the message to the consumers and also make the consumers reacts in a desired way.

According to Holloway (2006) there was big decline in late 1980's where the global market which more behaved in a individualistic way. As per the increase demand for consumers and because of the improved technology the demand of the consumers increased dramatically. People were not just happy with sun bathing they were looking for more adventure in their holidays. Page and Connell (2006) came out with an new idea of heterogeneity which allowed the homogenous products to be delivered in that way. Looking at this trend of heterogeneity Thomson (1992) named the above trend as post modernity that came in late 1980's and 1990's. he also

add by saying that as the name suggest post modernity, the people will look for more different varieties and also for more individualistic products.

Holloway (2006) further added by saying that because of improved technology and also a vast source of information through internet consumers have become more knowledgeable and therefore they know the place to travel. Walker and Miller (2008) noted that the global market has a tremendous increase in the niche tourism products like ecotourism, heritage tourism etc. Sharpley (2003) examined that the difference between the reality and portrayal of reality has declined in post modernity for example Cindrella castle in Florida and Lego Land near Windsor. The new ideas what tourism and hospitality industry has bought is the packages for ageing tourism, green tourism, gay tourism which allows people from all category to explore the tourist places all over the world.

Today's niche market for ageing population is increasing considerably. The trend of changing demographics has lead to observe the international arrivals from this senior group will account for over 1: 6 of global trips says (Smith and Jenner) 1997. The tourism market serves accordingly to the consumer's needs and wants as the market is segmented on disposable income and travel habits of this mature market. For example specials deal for older people. Toursh and Hargie (2004) that UK firm SAGA has tapped this market totally globally. Similar Swarbrooke and Horner (2004) says that even package holidays and fly drive holidays are in so much of demand to meet the consumers needs and wants. He also adds by saying that this package holidays allows the consumers to be more flexible. Fly drive packages are those holiday packages which allows the consumers to pay as

u go and select their own accommodation provided by the operators. And this market has not only impacted in that particular region or country but it has been used in the global market in today's world. Swarbrooke and Horner (1996) have also put light on the green consumers which deals with the environment issues very seriously. For example TUI it's a leading German tour operator company which provides environment checklist to all the hotels in which they provide services. And another example is of British airways where they try and create an environment awareness of various issues related to ecotourism. Swarbrooke and Horner (2004) has examined that more and more consumers are more into the packages than the early counterpart. As this package provides everything for the customers from meal to accommodation and also for all types of customers from two to three starts hotels to leisure travelers.

As noticed by Holloway(2006) gay and lesbians markets are one of the upcoming markets in hospitality and tourism industry. They are also named as " Pink Market". Therefore the importance is given to this category of consumers as well where they take one domestic and two foreign trips per years. Holloways also adds by saying that outlet 4 travel UK is the first call centre who caters to such markets.

Thus in conclusion to this essay we can say that due to such advance technology and communication in hospitality and tourism industry globalization do facilitate the homogenization of consumer's needs and wants. As the example shown in the essay about the fast food viewed differently by American and the Korean we can say that the homogenization of culture was also evident, but there were exceptions where consumers

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from different cultures perceived things differently. And on the other side due to such advanced technology and mass promotion it is very easy for the consumer to get information and get more educated and sophisticated and gain different experiences which led to cultural heterogeneity as opposed to the concept of globalization and cultural convergence.