

Stereotypes and the tourist role tourism essay



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

\n[[toc title="Table of Contents"](#)]\n

\n \t

1. [Introduction of tourism industry](#) \n \t
2. [Contribution of researchers in tourist studies](#) \n \t
3. [Various roles of tourist as depicted by researchers](#) \n \t
4. [Stereotyping and prejudiced views of tourist role](#) \n \t
5. [Rethinking the tourist role](#) \n \t
6. [Conclusion](#) \n

\n[/toc]\n \n

Introduction of tourism industry

The hospitality and tourism industry is the world's largest industry that has been growing significantly in the last few years. The noteworthy augmentation of the industry is attributed to many factors such as development of easy modes of transportation, changing demands of the people to visit various destination places, increasing need for exploring adventurous and artistic places worldwide and creation of tourist destinations in numerous countries for making the tourism industry an integral part of their economies (Bender, Gidlow & Fisher, 2013; Wang, 1999).

Since the tourism industry has gained huge importance, it has become a major area of study of the leading scholarly researchers. These specialists are doing extensive studies on the industry, the factors impacting its performance and the impact of tourist role on the destination images created by the tourism authorities in each country (Lim, 2007; Prentice, 2004). In

order to study various aspects of the tourism industry, one school of thought is focussing on the socio-demographic characteristics and needs related to the specific styles of vacations or tourist roles (Cohen, 1974; Kim, 2009; McCabe, 2005).

For instance, Yiannakis and Gibson (1999), cited by Nicoletta and Servidio (2012), established that the tourist role's preference is linked to the place where a person lives in his/her adult life. On the other hand, second school of thought is analysis the impact of stereotyping of tourist role on the discriminatory practices that are created by the authorities in the destination places (Lee, Law & Murphy, 2011; Jacobsen et al., 2012). Hence, there is an enormous collection of work on the tourism industry, tourist role and the challenges faced by the players of the industry.

Contribution of researchers in tourist studies

In order to study the tourist role in the tourism industry, the researchers have utilised the ' anthropology study' to generate an extensive body of theory that can provide assistance in defining and delimiting the object of study i. e. tourist. The classical theorists such as Cohen (1979), Horne (1992), Kadt (2001), Pearce (1982) and Smith (1978), cited by Heimtun (2007), have ascertained the relationship that exists between guests and hosts which means that they are created by developing a series of dichotomies such as locals/foreigners, stability/transience, production/consumption and work/leisure.

Although these dichotomies do exist in the sector but it is important to conceptualize the role of tourist that has been mainly treated by the

researchers in a negative way (Caru & Cova, 2003; Frankin, 2003); the primary purpose is to make some beneficial contributions can be made in the field of research. The foremost aim of the studies related to tourists is not to defend them and close the eyes towards the negative aspects of the tourism but it should also highlight the positive aspects of the tourism and address the challenges that are encountered by the tourists during their visits in the destination places (Selstad, 2012).

Various roles of tourist as depicted by researchers

For decades, the tourists have been portrayed as the second-class citizens (Burner, 2001); this feeling of being considered as a dumb or unimportant person has been impacting the treatment of tourists worldwide. According to Jack and Phipps (2005), the local residents at destination places used to believe that tourists' activities are lazy, dumb and fatuous. However, these conventional views about tourist behaviours have been challenged and many researchers have successfully revamped the tourist roles in the destination places and the shift has been made on studying the tourist experience (Dann, 2000).

Uriely (2005) gave a review on the conceptual development of an excellent tourist experience that has received huge appreciation by the concerned authorities in the tourism industry. The researcher identified four developmental phases of the tourist roles:

The tourism should be viewed as a separate activity from everyday life routine.

There is a shift from the portrayal of tourists as homogenous people as a general form to multiplication of the depictions that are captured while tourism experience.

A shift in focus for the objects displayed by the industry towards the negotiation of meanings in subjective way for determining the level of experience.

A significant move from the decisive and contradictory academic information flow such as experience as moments of truths to harmonizing and virtual interpretations.

The main problem in theories about the experience of tourist was that they lack focus on the term 'tourist role'. Hence, the modern theorists started studying the tourist attitudes and behaviours that were depicted by their experiences in the destination places along with the stereotypes that were created among the tourist groups belonging to similar ethnic groups, religion, race, culture and etc. (Iverson, 2010).

Stereotyping and prejudiced views of tourist role

Since many researchers classified the tourist roles on the basis of their analysis, they created certain stereotypes about the tourist roles so that the tourist studies can be flourished. For instance, Cohen (1979) classified the tourist roles into four categories i. e. the explorer, the individual mass tourist, the drifter and the organised mass tourist. Jafari (2003) emphasised that the better classification of tourist roles can be stereotyped by adding behavioural characteristics such as takes photos, visits well-known places,

pleasantly purchases souvenirs, tries local food, stays for some in one location and explores numerous destinations privately.

From the studies of contemporary researchers, it is evident that they defined the role of tourists in accordance to their purpose of tourism; when there was increased focus on the tourism, there was less emphasis on treating tourist an individual. Cohen (1979) classified tourists into four broad groups such as recreational type, experimental type, existential type and experiential type. In each mode of tourism, the tourist wants to have some time off from everyday routine so that the energy can be revitalised and explore the culture and aesthetic offerings of the other countries that have distinctive norms, values and societies (Chok, Mcbeth & Warren, 2007).

The postmodern theorists have emphasised that the tourist roles have to be studied from the negotiated and subjective characteristics rather than rigid and reductionist perspectives that were done by contemporary researchers; their entire focus is on the tourist roles, meanings, attitudes and experiences. The recent terminology coined by Jacobsen and Munar (2012) is 'anti-tourist' attitude which shows that the tourists want to be viewed in the role of tourist but want to keep a power distance when in this role.

According to these researchers, the conception of anti-tourist role seems to challenge the tourist's sense of individuality and identity; the role distance becomes of utmost importance to them as they want to maintain a feeling that each individual has different experience that can be entirely distinctive from all other players and occupants of the role (Litvin, Goldsmith & Pam, 2008). It is believed that each tourist will have different sense of feelings in

varying situations as each one of them has distinctive values, beliefs, preferences, attitudes and behaviours (Yang & Wall, 2009).

Most of the researchers have challenged the concept of stereotyping the tourist role on the basis of cultural differences or nationality because sometimes they often lead to misconceptions about tourist groups. For instance, it is believed that Japanese people cannot speak English and the tourist guide has to provide them assistance when communicating among the local residents; it is untrue in many situations as there are many Japanese people who can easily communicate in English.

Likewise, there is a belief that Asian people like to eat their food items and don't prefer to try out the local food items of the destination place; it is a myth as well because there are many people who are looking forward to try out the new food items of the destination place (Selstad, 2012). Hence, the tourist roles should not be confined to the limited set of observations as every tourist has distinctive features and prefers to be treated in accordance to the individual personality possessed by the person.

Rethinking the tourist role

With the robust growth and development in the field of Internet, the tourist roles have changed to a great extent as the tourists have become information seekers and proficient in developing their own travelling packages. As they have easy access to the extensive range of details about various destination places, they ensure that they select the places in accordance to their own choices so that they have a marvellous time during their complete tourism (Selstad, 2012).

The concerned authorities have to ensure that they even make proper use of the advertising mediums so that right message is communicated to the tourists. One key point that has to be given adequate attention is that the tourists should be treated as individual beings and they should be presented many alternatives so that they can have a sensational travelling experience.

Conclusion

From the studies of a wide array of theorists and researchers, it is evident that the tourist roles cannot be stereotyped as the tourists prefer to be treated as distinguished individuals and they avoid being viewed as aliens or strangers in the destination places. The tourism industries have to ensure that they offer the most astonishing experience to the visitors and offer them unlimited opportunities for carrying out their activities within the ethical boundaries of the country in accordance to the Law.

Hence, the stereotypes have immense impact on the tourist role and it should be changed so that the tourists are willing to visit the place on repetitive basis and any conflicts in their views about tourism in the respective place are tackled properly.