

Typologies of tourist behaviour tourism essay



It is important to have knowledge of peoples travel motivations and its association with destination selection plays a critical role in predicting future travel patterns.

Tourist motivation can be defined “ as the global integrating network of biological and cultural forces which gives value and direction to travel choices, behaviour and experience”. (Pearce, Morrison & Rutledge, 1998)

Some of the motives which determines a tourists travel choices are recreation, pleasure, new experiences, cultural interest, shopping. The adjectives and categorizations of tourists based upon motivations may differ in number, but recurrent themes emerge. For example the need to escape from everyday surroundings for the purpose of relaxation, and discovering new things, places and people are often alluded to.

Many have viewed motivation as a major determinant of the tourist's behaviour. Theories of motivation is the concept of needs and they are seen as the forces that arouses motivated behaviour and in order to understand human motivation, it is necessary to discover what needs people have and how they can be fulfilled and Maslows hierarchy of needs theory is the best known motivation theories. The push and pull concept is another line of travel motivation, while Plog's allocentrism/psychocentrism model will help explain phenomenal rise and fall of travel destinations.

Cohen (1972) in his early studies, draws attention to the fact that all tourists are seeking some element of novelty and strangeness while, at the same time, most also need to retain something familiar. How tourists combine the demands for novelty with familiarity can in turn be used to derive a typology.

According to Johns & Gyimothy (2002) Cohen distinguished tourist using sociological principles into organised mass tourist, individual mass tourists, explorer and drifter.

In this essay, we shall discuss different author's approach for travel motivation and typologies of tourist's behaviour and shall critically review and compare these theories and typologies.

Travel Motivation

According to Crompton (1979), as cited in Bello & Etzel (1985), the need for relaxation, exploration, social interaction and enhancement of kinship relationships act as dominant push motives in the vacation decision.

Reversely, pull motives are aroused by the destination and include factors like scenic attractions, historical sites. Push factors are thought to establish the desire for travel and pull factors are thought to explain actual destination choice. Seaton (1997) suggests that the push factors include avoidance of work, cultural/social pressures at home. The pull factors include seeking leisure /play, freedom and escape.

According to Maslow, there are five needs forming a hierarchy, progressing from the lower to the higher needs. Maslow argued that if the lower needs [physiological {hunger, thirst, rest}, safety {security}, belonging and love {affection, giving and receiving love}] are fulfilled the individual would be motivated by needs of the next level of the hierarchy [esteem {self-esteem and esteem for others}, self-actualisation {personal self-fulfilment}].

Cooper et al (2005) criticises Maslow's theory saying that why and how Maslow selected the basic five needs remain unclear, although Page (2003)

feels that it has relevance in understanding how human action is understandable and predictable compared to research which argues that human behaviour is essentially irrational and unpredictable. Cooper et al (2005) also questions the arrangement of the needs. Though Cooper et al (2005) criticises much about Maslow's theory, he feels that tourism industry has borrowed a lot from Maslow because he provides a convenient set of containers that can be relatively labelled.

Hudman (1980) as cited in Davidson and Maitland (1997) argue that Maslow's (1943) hierarchy of needs provides a useful framework for understanding psychological motivational factors in tourism. Thus, for example, although the apparent purpose of a trip may be to visit friends and relatives, the underlying psychological motivation may be a need for belonging and the desire to reunite and reinforce family links.

Iso-Ahola (1982) says that tourists will switch roles while on holiday, and that over time different needs will arise. Single motivation may not always act as the determining factor for travel. If within the holiday, the initial needs are satisfied, other motivations might emerge. Indeed, it is congruent with Maslow's theories of needs to argue that if initially there is a primary need for relaxation while on a holiday, the satisfaction of that need will create awareness of other needs such as exploration of place as a means of acquiring a sense of belonging or to enable processes of self-actualisation to take place.

Beard and Ragheb (1983) stated four motivational needs as derived from the work of Maslow (1970). These are intellectual component which assesses the extent to which individuals are motivated to engage in leisure activities

which involve activities such as learning, exploring, discovering, thought or imagining; the social component which assesses the extent to which individuals engage in leisure activities for social reasons.

This component includes two basic needs the need for friendship and interpersonal relationships, while the second is the need for the esteem of others; the competence-mastery component which assesses the extent to which individuals engage in leisure activities in order to achieve, master, challenge and compete. The activities are usually physical in nature; the stimulus-avoidance component of leisure motivation which assesses the drive to escape and get away from over-stimulating life situations. It is the need for some individuals to avoid social contacts, to seek solitude and calm conditions; and for others it is to seek to rest and to unwind themselves.

These four motivations form the foundation of their Leisure Motivation Scale which has been replicated in other studies, for example by Sefton and Burton (1987) and Loundsbury and Franz (1990). The original Ragheb and Beard Scale contained high-loaded items such as 'to use my physical skills' and to develop physical skills and abilities'. In the scale these are associated with competition and keeping fit. According to Ryan (1997) competency and mastery can also be demonstrated in other ways, including intellectual pursuits.

Macintosh(1978) also identified four basic groups of motivations, which owe something to Maslow's ideas: physical motivators(health, tension reduction); cultural motivators(art, religions); interpersonal motivators(visit with or to

friends and relatives); status or prestige motivators (esteem, personal development).

Hudman and Hawkins (1989) listed 10 main ones: health, curiosity, sport (participation), sport (watching), pleasure. Believe destinations with a combination of natural resources (such as beaches, mountains, forests, rivers) and man-made facilities (ski-lifts, swimming pools, hiking paths), attract visitors whose principal holiday purpose is physical activity in any form, from simple walking or fishing to bungee-jumping, or even physical inactivity, such as sunbathing and relaxation], visual flight rules, professional and business, self-esteem, and religion.

Schmoll (1977) grouped motivations into six combinations: educational and cultural (according to Davidson and Maitland (1997) general sightseeing-appreciating the natural and built environment, particularly when the latter is of historic interest-may be the motivating factor. It is certainly the been there-done that' factor which is popular with many overseas visitors who undertake the London-Oxford-Stratford-Chester Lake District-Edinburgh-York-London circuit at the pace which astounds many of the British themselves); relaxation, adventure and pleasure; health and recreation; ethnic and family; social and competitive (including status and prestige).

Iso-Ahola's theory asserts that personal escape, personal seeking, interpersonal escape and interpersonal seeking motivate tourism. According to Snepenger et al (2006), personal escape meant to overcome bad mood, to have a change in pace from everyday life; interpersonal escape meant to get away from stressful environment, to avoid interaction with others; personal

seeking meant to tell others about my experience, to feel good about myself; interpersonal seeking meant to be with people of similar interests, to meet new people.

Dann (1981) has identified seven elements of tourist motivations: travel as a response to what is lacking yet desired; destination pull in response to motivational push; motivation as fantasy (engage in behaviour and activities that are culturally unacceptable in their home environment like prostitution and gambling); motivation as classified purpose(VFRs); motivational typologies; motivation and tourist experiences; motivation as auto-definition and meaning (the way in which tourist define their situations and respond to them).

P. Pearce (1988) lists five travel motivations which he calls travel career ladder where tourists develop varying motivations of relaxation, stimulation, relationship, self-esteem and development, fulfillment. Page and Connell (2003) feels that it is in essence that tourist motivation is an ever changing process and we move up the ladder' as we progress through the various life-cycle changes.

In Pearce's model, the motivations listed can be divided into two categories. The needs may be self-centered or directed at others. Thus, for example, relaxation may be a solo exercise where the holiday-maker seeks a quiet restful time alone for bodily reconstitution, or it can be relaxation in the company of others, springing from the need for external excitement and desire for novelty.

Stimulation can be self-directed which springs from the concern for own safety, or it can be directed toward others arising out of the concern for other's safety. Relationship can be self-directed which means giving love and affection and maintaining relationships, or it can be directed at others which means receiving affection, to be with group membership. Self-esteem and development maybe self-directed like development of skills, special interests, competence and mastery, or it may be directed at others like prestige, glamour of traveling.

Fulfillment is totally self-directed as it fulfils individual dreams, understands oneself more and experience inner peace and harmony. There are some criticisms against Pearce's travel motivations by Seaton (1997). For example, Pearce argues that stimulation may be understood along a dimension of risk and safety of self or others. However, it might be argued that there is a real and distinctive difference between these two motivations. To actualize a concern about the safety of others might mean placing oneself at physical risk in an attempt to help those who are in danger. The willingness to do this, it can be argued, is a characteristic of those who are certain in their own psychological maturity.

Pearce & Lee (2005) opines that in the Travel Career Ladder framework, the term 'career' suggests that many people systematically move through a series of stage or have predictable travel motivational patterns. Some may predominantly ascend' the TCL whereas others may remain at a particular level, depending upon contingency and other limitations like health and financial considerations.

Typologies of Tourist Behaviour

Cohen (1972), in his early studies, draws attention to the fact that all tourists are seeking some element of novelty and strangeness while, at the same time, most also need to retain something familiar. How tourists combine the demands for novelty with familiarity can in turn be used to derive a typology.

Cohen (1972) the sociologist, identified four types of tourists:

The organizational Mass tourist who buys tourists packages or all inclusive tours in order to visit classical mass tourism destinations, where everything is predetermined before hand and has a low degree of participation and involvement in the travel search for information. There is no sense of adventure or exploration. He/she belongs to an institutionalized type of tourism where the contact with the organizers of tourism industry is a constant.

The individual mass tourist is similar to the organizational mass tourist, however this one is flexibility on his/her decisions and want to participate more in the process. The tourist strongly depends on the tourism industry but want to try some new things out of the closed and predetermined packages.

The explorer is more adventurous, he wants to find his/her own experience participating actively in this decision choice. He arrange most of the elements of the travel by himself/herself, however sometimes he/she has to turn to a travel agency or tourism professionals to get some comfort or security amenities.

The drifter looks for intensive experiences and he want to feel immerse in local communities. He/she completely abandon his relations with the institutions of tourism systems planning everything by him. He practiced a non institutionalized type of tourism.

With this classification of tourists Cohen established an interesting link between the need of living unique experiences and the need of the perception of security. The more secure a tourist wants to feel, the more he will trust on tourism specialist and thus he will live less unique experiences (more standardized).

Stanley Plog (1974 cited Plog 1991) developed a similar psychociological model designed to explain what type of people prefer what type of destination according to its psychographics characteristics. To the author, tourist population could be divided into a continuum of personalities distributed along the Gauss curve; from psychocentrics, individual travelers whom look for the unexplored, in one extreme to allocentrics, mass tourism tourists, in the other.

After Cohen and Plog, researchers such us Dalen (1989), Smith (1989) or Urry (2002) for instances; they have attempted to create new categories of tourists based on their subject of research. It has to be pointed out that all the models proposed until now they are just descriptive and not relevant to the general tourism demand. They are just focused in one area of study and not in the bigger dimension where the tourist is immerse. In addition, they also fail in the same thing: they do not take into account the factors which determine the different types of tourists (Sharpley, 1999). These factors

might be grouped into demographic and socioeconomic factors such as age, life cycle, gender and income; and structural social factors such as the existence of non tourists and capitalist tourism (Sharpley, 1999).

Every person goes through different stages in life, and depending on the age, familiar circumstances or income tourist will change from one typology to another. Moreover, in these classifications it is not always the tourist who can decide what tourist is going to be, but it is the society who is going to classify you (Swarbrooke and Horner, 2007).