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Consumer Behaviours on the Tourism Market

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Tekst jest udostępniony do wykorzystania w ramach
dozwolonego użytku.

ism services market as a determined set of purchasers and suppliers of tourism services making market transactions, the subjects of which are tourism services.³

From the narrow perspective, supply on the tourism services market is defined as the volume of goods and services offered to tourists. From the broad perspective, it is the whole of activities of entities doing business aimed at satisfying tourism clients' needs.⁴ The unique character of the tourism services market is related to the fact that, as opposed to other markets, it is not the product that comes to the client, but a client/tourist comes to it. Supply on the tourism services market can be examined from the point of view of tourism-related enterprises or tourism-related areas. In the first case it includes goods and services offered (for a fee or free of charge) by enterprises, whereas in the second case it includes the ones offered by a given area.⁵ Similarly, the tourism product, which is the subject of supply on the tourism services market, can be diversified and it is most often defined as a package of material and non-material elements making it possible to carry out a tourist trip.⁶ The most common differentiation was introduced by W. Middleton,⁷ who differentiates the general (complete) tourism product – meaning an idea, expectations or a mental structure existing in the tourist's mind at the moment of making the decision about travelling and based on the idea of spending time in a destination; and the specific products – meaning particular goods and services offered to a tourist. The differences between tourism products offered by entrepreneurs and regions are conveyed well by the view of L. Mazurkiewicz⁸ who examines the tourist product on a micro and macro scale. On a micro scale Mazurkiewicz treats the tourism product as any services and material goods offered to a single tourist in a tourism area, whereas on a macro scale the tourism product includes services and material goods offered to all tourists in a tourism area. The tourism product has the characteristics of a service such as complementarity,

³ *Marketing usług turystycznych i rekreacyjnych*, A. Panasiuk (ed.), PWN, Warszawa 2013, pp. 32–33.

⁴ *Ekonomika turystyki i rekreacji*, A. Panasiuk (ed.), PWN, Warszawa 2011, pp. 203–204.

⁵ *Turystyka*, ed. W. Kurek, PWN, Warszawa 2008, p. 360.

⁶ B. Marciszewska, *Produkt turystyczny a ekonomia doświadczeń*, C.H. Beck, Warszawa Wydawnictwo 2010, p. 42.

⁷ A. Niezgoda, *Obszar recepcji turystycznej w warunkach rozwoju zrównoważonego*, Wydawnictwo Akademii Ekonomicznej w Poznaniu, Poznań 2006, p. 65.

⁸ L. Mazurkiewicz, *Produkt turystyczny w ujęciu marketingu terytorialnego*, in: *Konkurencyjność produktu turystycznego*, K. Pieńkoś (ed.), Wyższa Szkoła Ekonomiczna, Warszawa, p. 83.

complexity, intangibility, unity of production, exchange and consumption processes, the lack of possibility for producing beforehand and storing and seasonality.⁹

Tourism demand is (next to supply) the main element shaping the tourism services market. It is defined as “the sum of tourism goods and services which tourists are willing to purchase at a particular price and in a particular period of time”.¹⁰ Tourism demand is a complex category and includes various tourists’ needs which, in general, are satisfied at the same time. The unique character of tourism demand consists in the fact that purchasing tourism goods means purchasing the right to make use of these goods: the sun, water, clean air or examining of pieces of art.¹¹ The main features of tourism demand are:¹²

1. Mobility, which means the tourists’ necessity of moving from a permanent place of living because tourism demand is declared at a permanent place of living, but it is satisfied in a destination of a tourist trip and/or during the trip.
2. Complexity, which means that tourism demand occurs in the form of a conglomeration of needs and wishes which appear because of a tourist trip, among which there is a relation of generating further needs by those which have already occurred. The needs are, among others, the need of sleep and shelter, food, movement, relaxation and rest, physical activity, health, information and learning, entertainment, culture, safety, aesthetics.
3. Flexibility, which defines the extent of sensitivity of demand to changes of market factors, among which the most important remains the purchasers’ income. Income flexibility of tourism demand is a relative change of tourism demand to a relative change of people’s income; price flexibility of tourism demand is a relative change of tourism demand for particular goods or services to a relative change of price of these goods or services; mixed flexibility of tourism demand is a relative change of tourism demand for particular goods or services x as a result of a relative change of price of goods of services y . In each case, the level of flexibility depends on types and kinds of tourist trips.

⁹ *Kompendium wiedzy o turystyce*, G. Gołembski (ed.), PWN, Warszawa 2009, p. 71.

¹⁰ A. Niezgoda, P. Zmyślony, *Popyt turystyczny. Uwarunkowania i perspektywy rozwoju*, Wydawnictwo Akademii Ekonomicznej w Poznaniu, Poznań 2003, p. 38.

¹¹ *Kompendium*, op. cit., p. 38.

¹² A. Niezgoda, P. Zmyślony, op. cit., pp. 45–68.

4. Seasonality, i.e. repeated regular quantitative changes (qualitative changes to a smaller extent) of tourism movement occurring most often in the annual cycle and which causes can concern natural (most often), social or economic issues.

Tourism demand is also defined in foreign literature as “a total number of people who travel or want to travel in order to use equipment and services available outside their workplace and whereabouts”.¹³ However, it is a definition which is more relevant to tourism movement, defined most often as “the whole of voluntary, temporary and spatial movements outside a place of living taken in order to fulfil recreational, cognitive, health and entertainment goals”,¹⁴ which together with tourism expense can be treated as a measure of effective tourism demand.¹⁵ Such an approach makes it easier to present and compare statistical data representing tourism demand equated with the number of travellers (and expenses connected with a tourist trip that they have to incur) which is relatively easier to quantify than to assess the quantity and quality of reported and fulfilled tourists’ needs. Tourism movement is not yet identical to tourism demand – it is the subjects of tourism movement that are the carriers of various needs and, in consequence, the source of tourism demand for goods and services.¹⁶

The tourism services market is a market where the number of participants of tourism movement and their expenses are still increasing. The number of tourists in 2012 reached 1,035,000 (in 1990 it was 436 million people, in 2000 677 million and in 2012 954 million) and the biggest increase was in Asian (7%) and African (6%) countries. Europe, still being the world’s biggest destination (over 550 million people in 2012), reported an increase of 3%. The number of tourists is forecast to increase to 1.4 billion by 2020 and to 1.8 billion by 2030. For several years the steadily most popular tourist destinations have been France (83 million tourists), the USA (67 million tourists), China (57 million tourists), Spain (57 million tourists) and Italy (46 million tourists). Also in the top ten of the main tourist destinations are Turkey, Germany, the UK, Russia and Malaysia. The highest tourism expenses per tourist are characteristic for tourists from Australia, Canada and Germany (over 1000 US dollars), and when it comes to the absolute

¹³ *Turystyka*, op. cit., p. 355.

¹⁴ *Kompendium*, op. cit., p. 26.

¹⁵ A.Niezgoda, P. Zmyślony, op. cit., p. 168.

¹⁶ *Ekonomiczne podstawy turystyki*, A. Panasiuk (ed.), Fundacja na rzecz Uniwersytetu Szczecińskiego, Szczecin 2004, p. 36.

numbers, the largest amount of money is spent by the Chinese (102 million dollars), Germans (85 million dollars), Americans (84 million dollars), the British (52 million dollars) and Russians (43 million dollars). The largest increase of expenses is noted by Russians and the Chinese – more than 36% in 2011/2012.¹⁷

2. Tourist as a consumer

Creating the best possible conditions for building an offer and providing services for customers on the tourism market is an impulse, encouraging attempts of grouping tourists into relatively homogenous groups (tourist segmentation process). Due to similar characteristics, these groups display a similar demand for particular products on the tourism market.¹⁸ There are many possible criteria and their combinations that allow conducting consumer segmentation on the tourism services market depending on an established objective. The following criteria are considered to be universal and standard tourist segmentation criteria:¹⁹ demographic (e.g. the tourists' age directly affects the specialization of an offer for particular tourist age groups, thus the tourism operators that target their offer at young tourists (18–25 years old) have the words “student” or “youth” in their names, which preordains the nature of the offer as entertaining or active. The accommodation offer of youth hostels is mainly aimed at the same segment, as those types of businesses provide basic services which are most often shared rooms – something unacceptable for people in older age groups,²⁰ due to socio-economic, psychological or the nature of consumption. Aforementioned criteria do not comprise a closed list of possible tourist segmentation rules. It is possible to extend the segmentation by geographic, geo-demographic, destination, sought after benefits or other criteria as it depends on the objective that an entity conducting the segmentation has.²¹

¹⁷ <http://mkt.unwto.org/publication/unwto-tourism-highlights-2013-edition> (accessed on 6.02.2014).

¹⁸ W. Alejziak, *Determinanty i różnicowanie społeczne aktywności turystycznej*, AWF Kraków, Kraków 2009, p. 80.

¹⁹ Ibidem, p. 80.

²⁰ A. Niezgodą, P. Zmysłony, op. cit., p. 150.

²¹ Ibidem.

Decisions made by consumers on the tourism services market are strongly influenced by their attitudes and approaches towards the subject of consumption (i.e. tourism travel or its elements) as commonly they have a decisive impact on market decisions. Basic categorization of tourists is based on the motives of going away from home and behaviours related to them, because they influence the level and nature of consumption. According to M.Bassand, we can distinguish tourists focused on²² fun and entertainment, sightseeing, exploring other cultures, contact with nature, visiting as many attractions as possible in shortest possible time. A broader version (by K.Przeclawski) identifies following types of tourists:²³

- cognitive, which includes people whose aim is to commune with nature, culture or/and people;
- integrative, which is related to people whose main objective is the relationship in the social group they travel with (family, friends, new acquaintances);
- task-based, when the trip is to serve as a tool to finishing a particular task, e.g. enlarging exotic mask or sea photo collections;
- entertainment or fun and leisure that encompass people who want to break away from the everyday humdrum;
- competitive, including people who look for different forms of active tourism (climbing, cycling, skiing tourism and others);
- health-oriented, for which attention to health and endurance is of crucial importance;
- contemplative, which includes people who participate in pilgrimages and those who want to find secluded places to meditate.

Empirical studies led to establishing four basic types of tourists based on the intensity of the contact with the visited environment. According to E.Cohen, following types of tourists can be distinguished:²⁴

- organized mass tourist – a tourist that participates in mass tourism, travels in an organized way, tied to the habits of their environment, does not identify himself with the culture of visited places in any manner;

²² *Marketing*, op. cit., p. 66.

²³ A. Niezgodą, P. Zmysłony, op. cit., p. 164.

²⁴ W. Alejziak, op. cit., p. 64.

- individual mass tourist – a tourist that participates in mass tourism but individually chooses popular routes/places/dates of travel, trying to get to know a local culture (even if only superficially);
- explorer – a tourist that travels individually, avoiding travel dates and routes of mass tourism, focused on experiencing new cultures, is willing to give up some habits but still requires the fulfilment of basic needs in terms of comfort and hygiene;
- drifter – a tourist set on maximum integration with the culture of the visited region, willing to completely give up habits; makes decisions about travelling spontaneously;

Both organized and individual mass tourist heavily depend on the producers and sellers of tourism offers, as well as use packages offered by travel agencies or ready-made products available on the market. Explorers and drifters travel individually or in small groups and avoid organized tourism. They practically do not use tourism broker services and try to purchase necessary products and services from direct producers.

Tourist behaviours on the market are heavily influenced by the diversity of motivation and destinations as well as preferred behaviours at tourism-related destinations, affecting the choice of:

1. method for organizing travelling: individually or via a travel agency;
2. destination, which is connected not only with selecting a tourism region, but also (in a direct or indirect manner) implies used means of transport;
3. products and services and the way and time of purchasing them.

The choice of a way of organizing travelling is of crucial importance for consumer behaviours on the tourism market, because it usually determines other decisions made by a tourist. Independent organization involves making decisions individually and being able to modify them virtually at any time (including resigning from a trip or changing its destination). All consumer decisions about each service or stage during travelling are made freely (before departure and during travelling). The costs can be incurred at all stages. When choosing a trip organized by a travel agency, a tourist mainly chooses an organizer who will provide the services and a particular offer that usually includes a comprehensive service. In such a case, a tourist makes the majority of decisions before the departure (and incurs most costs), while decisions about less important elements (optional events, souvenirs) are made during the trip.

Standard consumer behaviours can be identified on the tourism services market. They arise from travelling preferences, which are related to tourists' permanent place of living. Such stereotypes, while they are not true for whole nationalities, allow for a quite accurate characteristic of behaviours of most nationalities in the world. Europeans are thought to have completely different characteristics and behaviours than non-European tourists, especially the Chinese, a nation that is becoming more significant in world tourism. There were almost 100 million Chinese who went abroad for touristic reasons in 2012 (estimates show a more than twofold increase by 2020) and they spent more than \$102 billion on travelling abroad (the highest amount in the world). This nation's increased interest in travelling is primarily a result of middle class wealth grow, more moderate visa regulations in most countries across the globe and higher exchange rate of yuan. Despite the fact that the Chinese are perceived as uncivil, bad-mannered, belligerent, noisy and focused on "doing" as many tourist attractions as possible in the shortest time available, most countries try to attract them due to expected financial gain. The consumption structure of Chinese tourists is slightly different from that of European ones, as most of their expenses on tourism products and services (accommodation, food, transport) are relatively lower than those of other tourists but in the end they do their shopping at shopping centres buying expensive branded products.²⁵

Nowadays, the term post-tourist is becoming more common. It describes a person who is aware of the fact that there are neither authentic experiences nor authentic tourism products around them. Such a person accepts tailor-made pseudo-events and chooses from a variety of tourism offers.²⁶ Modern tourists mainly search for otherness and freshness and it pertains destinations to the same extent as experiences connected with travelling. Their decisions on the tourism services market are supposed to reflect their preferred value system and express their consumer identity. Following phenomena can influence modern customer behaviour on the tourism services market:²⁷

²⁵ <http://www.forbes.pl/jacy-sa-chinscy-turysci-,artykuly,160114,1,1.html> (accessed on 6.02.2014), http://www.e-hotelarstwo.com/branza/rynek_turystyczny.html (accessed on 6.07.2014).

²⁶ *Marketing*, op. cit., p. 72.

²⁷ *Ibidem*, pp. 73–74

1. Ephemeralization – a constant pursuit of new sensation; it implies that old tourism offers will constantly be replaced by new ones.
 - a) Tourist profile change, which means the disappearance of the traveller model, where travelling is an active strive to cognition, and its replacement by a tourist model, where travelling is a passive search for sensations.
 - b) Individualization
 - c) Standardization
2. Happynomics (the economy of happiness) the goal of which is to attain an internal harmony through conscious consumption.
3. Determinants influencing consumer behaviours on the tourism market

Consumer behaviours on the tourism services market are shaped by a set of varied factors that can be grouped into external factors (influencing a consumer) and internal factors (characterizing a consumer). The external factors for tourists are economic, demographic, geographic, legal and political.²⁸ Internal determinants influencing consumer behaviours on the tourism market are social and psychological qualities that characterize a consumer and motivations that are inextricably connected with them, which evolve during a person's lifespan as their social and psychological profile changes.

Tourism goods purchasing process has five stages during which various determinants shape the decision-making:²⁹ needs identification, information gathering, options evaluation, purchase decision, behaviour after the purchase. Research conducted by TNS OBOP in 2009 showed³⁰ that the process of purchasing tourism services in a form of a package/tourism event on average takes a few weeks (even in the case of “last minute” offers, as over 20% respondents planned such a trip at least 3 months before the purchase), and the most popular pattern of tourism event purchase (and information sources used) is as follows:

- Stage I – looking for an idea/inspiration for travelling (Internet 65%),
- Stage II – selecting a destination (Internet 58%),
- Stage III – selecting a travel agency/tour operator (own experience 53%),
- Stage IV – looking for an attractive price for a trip/comparing offer prices (Internet 61%),

²⁸ A. Niezgoda, P. Zmysłony, op. cit., pp. 70–71.

²⁹ *Marketing*, op. cit., pp. 65–67.

³⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 79.

- Stage V – making a final decision to purchase a trip (a personal visit at a travel agency 63%),
- Stage VI – looking for useful information about the destination after a trip was chosen (Internet 76%),

The differences in the decision-making process between “last minute” and “first minute” offer are presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1

Last minute vs. early planners

Last minute	Early planners
<p>Shorter decision-making process; almost half of respondents purchased a trip one month or less after coming up with such an idea</p> <p>Price is a more important factor than usually and information is looked for by comparing prices</p> <p>They refer to Internet forums as sources of information</p> <p>Price comparison websites are treated as a more valuable information source</p> <p>Such people like to have the possibility to compare many offers</p>	<p>Long period between coming up with an idea for a trip and its purchase</p> <p>They use a visit to a travel agency as source of information less often</p> <p>TV commercials are completely rejected as an information source</p> <p>The main advantage of the Internet is providing information quickly and without leaving the house</p>

Source: http://obop-arch.tnsglobal.pl/uploads/6451/PL_ROPO_Travel_szczegolowy_raport_z_badan.pdf (accessed on 23.02.2014)

Among all determinants influencing consumer behaviour on the tourism services market, changes in the lifestyle of society that have greatly increased the significance of tourism activity for contemporary people should be considered crucial. As a result of these changes tourism activity, which was still treated as a rare element (occurring about once a year) not so long ago, is currently a constant and rather standard element of life treated equally with other activities. Decisions about travelling are made a few/several times a year and are usually considered first in terms of spending free time actively.

New and gradually stronger trends that shape customer behaviours on the tourism services market include³¹:

³¹ B. Meyer, *Nowe trendy w kreowaniu produktów turystycznych*, “Acta Scientiarum Polonorum, Oeconomia” 2010, No. 9(4), p. 317.

- a) an increase in the number of tourists and trips while their length is shortened; as a consequence there is a demand for more tourism products and their constant modification as well as launching new products, because even if tourists choose the same destination, they expect new/updated products in the offer.
- b) recreational democracy proliferation which means that new social groups (families with small children, disabled, elders, business travellers, single travellers) can participate in tourism and there is a need to create appropriate products for them.
- c) deeper diversification of tourists' needs which means that the diversification of needs related to travelling is wider and it requires a more varied range of tourism products.
- d) gradual increase of demand for services and their quality (even when the number of tourists does not change).
- e) growing impact of trend-setting media (which usually create seasonal trends) that create a demand for particular types of activity, destination regions, types of trips (i.e. all inclusive or 7+7³²).
- f) changes to a preferred lifestyle that promote health and ecological living. As a result, ways of spending free time (active leisure time instead of passive leisure) have been changed and the expectations in terms of environment quality in a tourism region are higher.

Conclusion

Continual changes on the tourism services market are caused by an increasing number of tourists and constant diversification of their travelling interests. There are a few universal trends that set the direction of changes in consumer behaviour on the tourism market. The main trends seem to be a progressing diversification of tourist needs connected to different expectations of various tourist groups (examined from the point of view of different nationalities and societies) and a stable growth of demand for tourism services, which changes faster than the travellers growth suggests. Trend-setting media have more and more influence on the decisions made by consumers on the tourism service markets,

³² A trip that has 7 days of sightseeing and 7 days of leisure.

but they affect it both positively and negatively. However, new trends that create a healthy and ecological lifestyle have an absolutely positive effect on customer behaviour on the market because they build ecological awareness in tourists and may contribute to a change in consumer behaviours on the tourism services market. This may decrease the negative impact of tourism on visited regions.

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ZACHOWANIA KONSUMENTÓW NA RYNKU TURYSTYCZNYM

Streszczenie

Rynek usług turystycznych jest rynkiem zróżnicowanym i stale rozszerzającym swój zasięg, zarówno przestrzenny, jak i produktowy. Turyści i odwiedzający stanowiący

główną grupę konsumentów usług turystycznych podejmują decyzje dotyczące podróży pod wpływem zróżnicowanych czynników, o charakterze wewnętrznym i zewnętrznym, a coraz częściej również pod wpływem chwilowego impulsu. Dostosowanie oferty do oczekiwań konsumentów jest coraz trudniejsze i wymaga szczegółowej identyfikacji determinant podejmowania decyzji wyjazdowych przez turystów. Wyraźnie zaznacza się kilka uniwersalnych trendów wyznaczających kierunki zmian w zachowaniach konsumentów na rynku turystycznym. Głównymi z nich wydają się postępująca dywersyfikacja potrzeb turystów związana z odmiennymi oczekiwaniami różnych grup turystów (rozpatrywanych w różnych kontekstach-grup narodowościowych czy społecznych) oraz stały wzrost zapotrzebowania na usługi turystyczne, rosnący szybciej niż wskazywałyby na to wzrost liczby podróżujących. Coraz większy wpływ na decyzje podejmowane przez konsumentów na rynku usług turystycznych mają media kreujące modę oraz trendy, których celem jest zmiana trybu życia na zdrowy i proekologiczny.

Słowa kluczowe: turysta, rynek turystyczny, konsumpcja turystyczna