Typology of Tourism Destinations

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Abstract
There are many forms of tourism destinations: they depend on the forms of tourism and are identified separately and promoted as visiting sites where tourism products are coordinated by one or several identifiable authorities, coast areas, urban or rural areas that attract tourists wishing to enjoy man-made or natural resources. Though the classification of tourism destinations is difficult because one and the same destination can be classified in one or several main categories of tourism destinations, they can be heritage and cultural destinations, destinations for tourists only, cities for business and conferences, large tourism cities, coastal areas, rural areas with many green areas and fresh air that supply facilities for the practice of hunting tourism, horse riding, white sports, or hiking. Each area can become a local tourism destination if visitors spend at least one night in the area and if there are tourism products supplied as services and attractions and mainly as tourism resources.

Keywords: tourism, tourism destinations, typology.

1. Introduction*

Tourist destinations have as many forms as tourism types; the European Commission defines the following forms [1-4]:
- Areas identified separately and promoted as places to visit where the tourism product is coordinated by one or more identifiable authorities or organisations;
- Coastal areas that attract tourists to enjoy the sea and sea-related activities;
- Rural areas that attract tourists to enjoy mainly the rural environment and the activities related to agri-tourism farms. In such a tourism destination, agri-tourism provides small-scale tourism facilities, particularly accommodation, on animal farms or on equivalent rural properties providing the experience of rural life;
- Urban areas that attract tourists to enjoy mainly anthropic resources mainly in small and large towns and activities related to them.

Many of the phrases related to tourism – tourism destination, impact on tourism, sustainable tourism, and cultural tourism – suggest the use of geographical methods in tourism analysis.

Tourists are attracted by one or several of the following features of tourism destinations:
- Natural and man-made attractions;
- Accommodation;
- Climate;
- Cost of visit and living;
- Local culture, including food and drink;
- Events and entertainment;
- Facilities for the development of activities or business;
- Transport and communication networks;
- Landscape.

The popularity and attractiveness of tourism destinations can be affected by such factors as [5-7]:
- Accessibility;
- Cost of the visit;
- Availability of attractions and of other tourism facilities;
- Political factors;
- Image and promotion;

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- Destination management. Different tourism destinations attract different tourist types:
  - Couples;
  - Families;
  - People who travel for business purposes;
  - Aged people;
  - Young people;
  - Special interest visitors;
  - Specific need visitors.
Some authors divide tourists into 12 different categories [8-10]:
  - People interested in history wish to find out about the past of a destination: they see travel as a way of living what they studied and read;
  - Culture seekers are fascinated by different life styles: they are interested in the way other people express culturally through traditions, food, art, etc.;
  - Ethnic travellers resemble culture seekers but they wish, more than everything, to explore the culture of their ancestors;
  - Religious pilgrims seek experiences related to their spiritual beliefs;
  - Environmental travellers are attracted by the landscape and the beauty of the places and can be divided into ecotourists (who wish to see the Brazilian tropical forest whose flora and fauna are endangered) and campers (who wish to experience a natural place, be it from a well insulated tent);
  - Recreational travellers wish to practice such sports as golf, tennis, snorkelling or skiing;
  - Adventure seekers prefer more challenging sports and activities such as mountain climbing, white water rafting, mountain hiking, diving (frequently to places not visited by others previously), skydiving, surfing (forms of “hard” adventure tourism);
  - Entertainment seekers are attracted by night clubs, concerts, dance, gambling, parties, theatre;
  - Shopping addicts who adore going shopping while travelling and, since for them shopping is an entertainment or an adventure, they can be considered a sub-category of the two previous categories;
  - Sensual travellers wish to satisfy their senses with refined foods, sunbathing or spa treatments;
  - Status seekers define themselves after the places they visit travel to fancy, sometimes expensive destinations where they often spend significant amounts of money;
  - Interpersonal travellers travel mainly to socialise and know other people: most of them are just visiting their relatives and/or friends.

2. Material and Method

Because tourist destinations have as many forms as types of tourism, their classification is difficult mainly because one and the same tourism destination can be classified in one or several categories of tourism destinations. This study aims at analysing the main categories of tourism destinations and classifying them taking into account the forms of tourism practiced worldwide and the changes in destination management for sustainable development of areas with natural or man-made tourism potential.

3. Results and Discussion

Choosing a tourism destination is done, in most cases, depending on the availability of transport means and on their implications:
  - The quality and commodity of the travel (for instance, time of departure, connections between different transport means, etc.);
  - The cost of the travel;
  - The duration of the trip;
  - The services available during the travel (for instance, service category, assistance for people with special needs, etc.);
  - Safety and security of the trip.
The 2nd Millennium has brought about extraordinary changes in destination management [11, 12]:
  - Employing experts in disaster management because of the increase of the number of human tragedies and of natural calamities caused by political and environmental instability (mad cow disease, bird flu, etc.);
  - Amending traditional patterns in the field of business in order to keep the pace with the evolution of new technologies, with innovative advertising strategies, with the changes on consumer market, with the increase of global competition;
  - New approaches for the establishment of competitive advantages with the increase of the need for change, of new visions on destination
marketing and of the need to explore innovative partnership forms.
We believe that a change of attitude of the population towards the environment will lead, in time, to one or several of the following:
- Re-evaluating existing tourism destinations and developing new destinations that observe environment-friendly principles;
- Increasing the offer of ecotourism activities even in the urban environment;
- Stimulating the use of alternative sources of energy (wave energy, aeolian energy, solar energy).

The decline of tourism destination can occur in any part of Europe where tourism knew a particular development in the past and it affects, in general, destinations with a certain tourism tradition. These destinations are characterised by one or more negative trends:
- Significant decrease of elements defining the previous quality of the destination;
- A considerable decrease of the competitive success of the destination;
- A considerable difficulty in ensuring sustainable tourism.

A **destination** is “a geographical area where there is a cluster of tourism resources rather than a political barrier.” Thus, we can distinguish three types of tourism clusters politically:
- **The section of a political frontier**;
- **A political frontier**;
- **Beyond political frontiers**.

The term **cluster** means, here, “an accumulation of resources and attractions, infrastructures, equipments, service providers, other support sectors and tourism administrative bodies whose integrated and coordinated activities provide the customers with expected experiences in the destination chosen to be visited” [13, 14]. Authors prefer synonyms of the word cluster, such as beach-resort integrated association, district with recreational activities, tourism district, enclave, precinct, tourism shopping village, area with tourism destination, and peripheral tourism area.

Some authors [15-18] present succinctly the evolution of the concept **tourism destination**. Thus, in its classical acception, they distinguish the following main types of tourism destinations:
- **Classical tourism destinations** are, in general:
  - Towns/cities chosen for their rich cultural heritage (architecture, history, etc.), well suited for the spending of holidays or for longer visits;
  - Mountain resorts;
  - Sea-side resorts;
- **Natural tourism destinations**, chosen for their landscapes or for the contact with their flora and fauna;
- **Business tourism destinations**;
- **Short-stay tourism destinations**, small towns whose heritage makes them attractive.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tourist type</th>
<th>Tourist number</th>
<th>Adaptation to local destination</th>
<th>Decreasing tourist impact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Explorer</td>
<td>Very limited</td>
<td>Totally adapted</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elite</td>
<td>Rarely seen</td>
<td>Totally adapted</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eccentric</td>
<td>Unknown, but visible</td>
<td>Well adapted</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mass, incipient</td>
<td>Constant flows</td>
<td>Seeks Western comfort</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mass</td>
<td>Continuous inflow</td>
<td>Expects to enjoy Western comfort</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charter</td>
<td>Massive arrivals</td>
<td>Asks for Western comfort</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: adapted from different authors

To evaluate tourism destinations, we need to take into account a number of variables of categories of elements:
- **Basic elements**: architecture, climate, natural conditions, geographical location, historical sites;
- **Natural peripheral elements**: general ambiance, neighbourhoods, local population;
• **Created peripheral elements:** food service facilities, accommodation facilities, entertainment facilities, transport infrastructure, commercial facilities;
  - Four elements:
    • Access routes;
    • Facilities and services;
    • Image;
    • Attraction points.

Though the classification of tourism destinations is difficult, the main categories of tourism destinations in the world are:
- **Heritage and culture destinations** – large and small towns/cities, villages and resorts known for having preserved their history and the destination heritage and/or culture of the region or country:
  • Cultural capitals;
  • Smaller destinations;
  • UNESCO sites;
- **Tourism-built destinations**, that rely on all the necessary facilities in a single place:
  • Theme parks;
  • Large holiday villages;
  • Resorts;
  • Holiday camps;
- **Small and large business and conference towns/cities**;
- **Small and large tourism towns/cities**, known as tourism destinations for their memorial houses, cathedrals, art galleries, museums, parks, and theatres, can be:
  • Capitals;
  • Other towns/cities;
- **Coastal areas**, with natural attractions such as sand beaches, picturesque rocks, and few built attractions, can be:
  • Islands visited particularly for the coastal area;
  • Coastal resorts;
  • Self-content areas;
- **Rural areas**, with many green areas and fresh air providing facilities for horse riding and skiing, incorporate a certain number of features – hills, lakes, mountains, forests – but not entire mountain ranges.

**4. Conclusions**

The popularity and attractiveness of certain tourism destinations can be affected by a set of factors such as accessibility, cost of the visit, and availability of attractions and other tourism facilities such as transport, accommodation, food, and entertainment. The choice of any tourism destination is done depending on the availability of the means of transport, of the safety and security of the travel, and of the services provided during the travel.

In order to remain competitive, tourism destinations should adopt sustainable policies that cause changes regarding destination management and marketing and the need for exploring innovative forms of partnership through the changing of one’s attitude towards the natural environment of the population and tourists. If, in their classical acception, there are four types of destinations – classical, natural, business tourism, or short-stay – in order to rate them we need to take into account three basic elements – basic, peripheral natural, and peripheral created – or four elements – access routes, facilities and services, image, and attraction points.

The main categories of destination can be classified into heritage and culture destinations, destinations especially built for tourists, towns/cities for business and conventions, coastal areas, rural areas, and small or large urban areas.

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