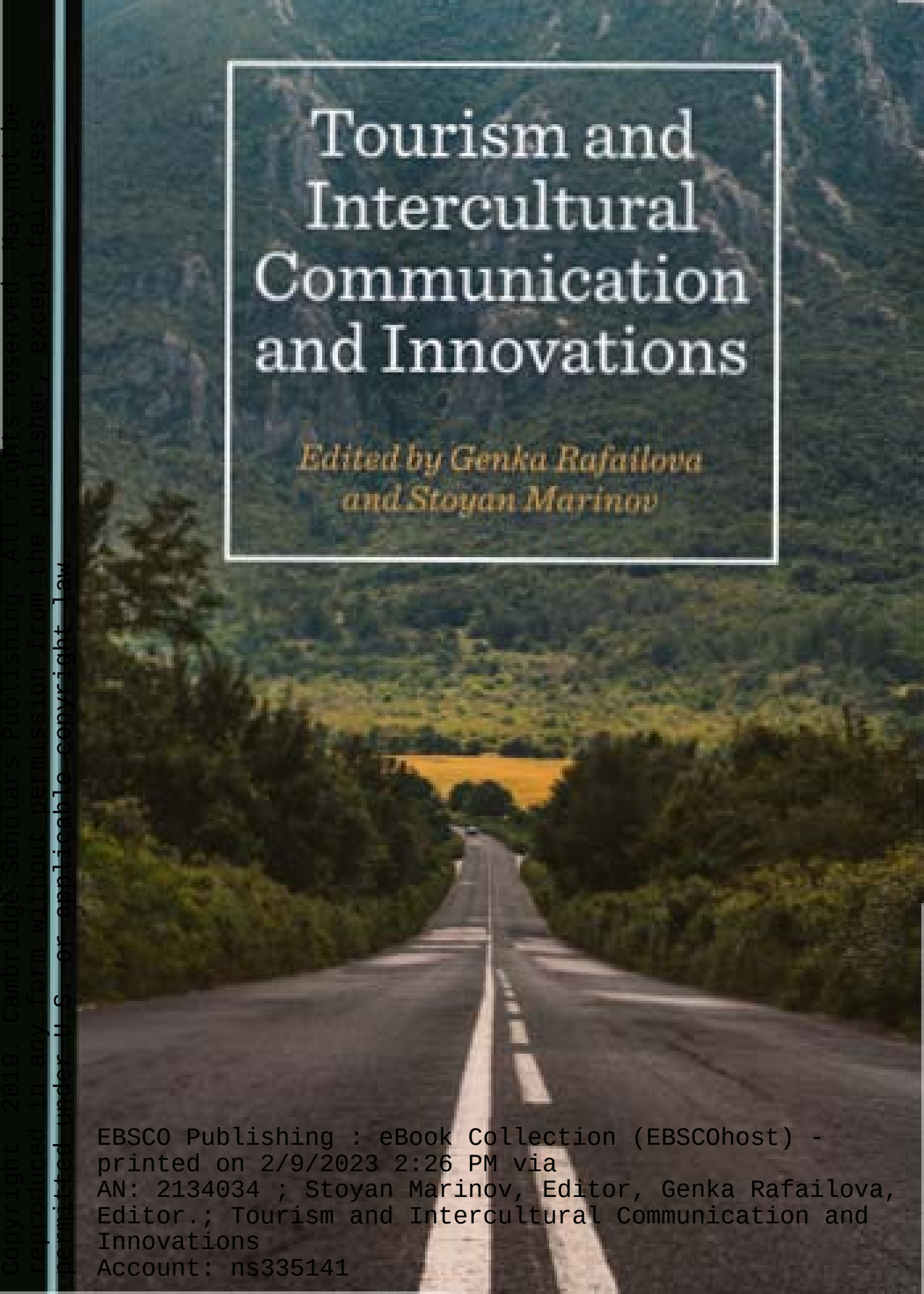

Tourism and Intercultural Communication and Innovations

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Edited by

Genka Rafailova and Stoyan Marinov

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Part I

PART I

CHAPTER ONE

REFLECTIONS ON THE CHALLENGES FOR THE TOURISM INDUSTRY IN A DYNAMICALLY CHANGING GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT

MARIYA STANKOVA

Abstract

Within the current work are suggested some arguments on those processes, flowing with high dynamics in the global economic environment, which are reflecting on the industry of tourism. Undoubtedly, they have to be known, predicted, and ruled as a part of the conceptual frame of strategic development. Accepting the tourism industry as a complicated phenomenon with a growing importance, the examination and analysis of the relevant processes in this case are framed on the basis of a holistic approach. This approach includes a macroeconomic analysis, directed at determining organisational boundaries, the movement of tourist streams, and their economic dimensions; a geographic analysis, ranging over the processes of dynamic territorial systems and demographic changes together with their complex effects on the environment; and a sociological and psychological study, exploring the level of mutuality between the tourism and global economic, social, and cultural transformations. In conclusion, it is noted that the influence of changes in the global environment through tourism multiplies and leads to the destruction of traditional values and standards, changes in the way of life of big communities, and in general leads to the permanent alteration of a population's behaviour in those countries opened for tourism, as well as that of the users themselves.

Keywords: tourism, transformations, challenges, global issues

Introduction

Since 2001, scientific and global attention has been concentrated on the global issues affecting both the interests of particular countries and the human race as a whole. Assigned to these issues are: determination of a lasting peace on Earth and eliminating the sources of international tension, preservation of the environment, prevention of natural disasters and ailments that are hazardous to health, rational usage of the natural resources and provision of the needs of food and energy, and developing the physical and spiritual power of the human. All these issues have a huge importance not only for the socioeconomic and cultural development of the individual countries, but for the progress of the human civilization in general. It is obvious that, in perspective, the global changes will become even more meaningful, exerting influence on all aspects of people's lives. Thus, in its aggregation there are inevitable projections onto the tourism industry, where none of the tourist destinations can be fully protected from the different challenges and threats. Likewise, through tourism, they provoke change in the way of life, as well as lead to permanent changes in the population behaviour of those countries opened for tourists, and of the users themselves.

Review of the Literature Based on the Topic

A review of the specialised studies in tourism shows that, in an attempt to analyse the topic of tourism's global issues and effects, leading authors give many alternatives without putting an end to the matter. Admitting the problem, during the period 1978–2005 and in the current moment, many tourism researchers offer different points of view. Ritchie (2004), for an example, offers a post-disciplinary approach, to which the current theme is holding on, accepting that understanding tourism management and tourist destinations in conditions of global transformation is possible only by knowing the available works, good practices, and the activities of effects in their previous cases. In regard to this, the current research is based on a macroeconomic analysis directed at the establishment of the organisational frames and movement of the tourist flow and their economic dimensions; a geographic analysis, including dynamic processes of the territorial systems and demographic changes, together with their complex effect on the environment; and a sociological and psychological study, examining the level of mutuality between tourism and global economic, social, and cultural transformation. The research of Bulgarian and foreign authors is examined, among which are works by Ribov (2017), Marinov (2011),

Neshkov (2012), Mileva (2016), Dimitrov et al. (2018), and Goeldner et al. (2000), as well as Porter, Barlett, Kotler, Brown, Dirlav, Zorin, Kabushkin, Kvertalny, Krivoruchko, and Krivoruchko (Devadze, Prokopenko, and Zhuravka 2018). The research, however, has a definite restriction – despite the orientation of the newest studies in the field of tourism to manage the changes, challenges, and threats through a proactive and strategic approach, it turns out that there is not enough specialised research which supposes a complex approach to knowing, restricting, and managing in the field of tourism and tourist destinations.

Methodology

The present study uses methods such as the analysis of literature sources on the subject, a logical method of research in order to draw judgements from objective realities, and synthesis, situational analysis, and observation. As the study focuses on the changing global environment and the tourist industry, it takes the view that, in the conditions of dynamic changes, a new management concept is needed as a strategic framework which is well planned, financially secure, and understood as a constant focus of development, as well as a permanent process in the economic and social life of local communities, for the direct and indirect consequences to be overcome.

Discussion on the Topic

From the review of specialised literature sources based on the subject, it is determined that today's peculiarities in economic and political development (including the tourism) are due to technical innovation and the formation of a new global community, realised during the previous two centuries. It is a fact that for a significant period of time in the Western European and North American countries market economic relations have developed, while in the Eastern World the principles of new economy are applied. With the stigmatization of the socialistic doctrine at the end of the 1980s, the principles of the market economy were imposed as a world paradigm. Of course, the merits of those kind of economy are well known and proven in history (Димитров 2009; Хънтингтън 1999; Lewin 1993), although there are serious disadvantages such as a limited solvent market, labiality of the economic growth, and the unpredictability of changes in the economic conjuncture. Together, they provoke such things as overproduction crises, bankruptcies, delays of economic growth, lowering of population life levels, social explosions, and the destruction of

commodity stock – nothing but negative consequences, designated as market risks, related to the lability and insufficient prognostication of the funds, financial credit, and commodity stocks. Not without importance are the effects of the so-called politics of "strategy for a state support" or "strategy for poverty reduction" carried out by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, developed for poorer countries, comprising four steps: privatization, independent salvation of the country's economics by capital market liberalisation so that the investment funds can come and go from the country freely (Паласт 2001), market price formation (or increasing foodstuffs' price, water and energy carriers), and free trade (Стиглиц 2011). In most of the established examples, the forced policy provokes political and economic crises for the corresponding countries, which are connected with social tension and ecological loads, with and irreversible consequences. As Stiglitz stated in 2011, the troubled countries from the Eurozone will not be able to keep their debts under control without the recovery of economic growth. Threats remain, and 2015 was marked by the Greek crisis and the New Course in Russian policy. Thereby, the heavy economic situation and political changes in Greece are shown as direct threats to tourism growth, such as the Greek government's decision to raise hotel accommodation VAT from 6.5% to 13%, which was likely to worsen the country's competitive power as a destination, following which tourists would be more likely to go to Turkey and Croatia.

In this regard, changes in the political situation undoubtedly cause effects on the industry of tourism, and it can even be accepted that they "determine" its growth, in the first place because legislation is defined to a great extent by the existing political position. The economic powers are another important component with a multilateral influence on the decisions taken in tourist destinations and those taken by the tourists. Changes in the general condition of economies follow the general model of business cycles, which have an influence on and suffer from supply and demand, purchasing power, the desire for purchasing, and consumer expenditure's intensity level of competition. That is the reason why the tourist destination needs information and to understand an economic power's acts. On the other hand, the quality of the environment – both the natural and that created by humans – is essential for tourism. The determination of the ecological and natural resource restrictions has a huge importance for the tourist industry. Their act has a direct relation to settling the possibilities for a steady control of tourism in general, and the tourist destinations in particular (Станкова 2010). It can be argued that, in

the contemporary conditions, industry's dependence on ecological restrictions parallels the growing importance of steady practices.

Identifying the basic environmental restrictions of tourist destinations allows for the creation of five major groups (see Table 1.1 below).

Table 1.1. Major restrictions for tourist destinations

Typology of the environmental restriction	Characteristic Features
Environmental - restrictions resulting from physical effects - restrictions resulting from *force majeure* effects	Conditioned by the changes in the natural environment Endangering the natural and anthropogenic tourist resource Endangering tourists' health and safety
Technological - restrictions resulting from the usual effects - restrictions resulting from catastrophic effects	Conditioned by technology and development, and their effect on the natural environment Pollution and other changes in the environment as a result of usual (flawless) business Pollution and other changes in the environment as a result of technologically provoked disasters, failures, and incidents
Social	Conditioned by the nation's and society's defensive reaction to overburdening the environmental problems by forming and developing an ecological and social environment
Normative	Conditioned by accepting a green legislation
Political	Conditioned by ecological public shares (by ecological organisations, political parties, the population) in regards to preserving the natural environment

Source: Adapted from http://www.esd.ornl.gov

Tourism ranks among the ecologically sensitive economic fields by increasing the practice of informational and communicational technologies. As a result of which the importance of regulating tourism's operation in the new conditions in principle increases, along with the economic activity of tourism in relation to preserving the environmental and ecological safety in particular. Especially sensitive is the connection with non-governmental organisations and the tools for mass communication in connection with the rise and publicity of potential ecological problems. An

example of this can be given from Bulgaria in 2017 with the case of the second cabin lift in the winter resort of Bansko, situated in the immediate proximity of the Pirin National Park – the second largest in the country and listed as part of the world's natural and cultural heritage – with the possible penetration of the territory of the park during construction activities and clearing of the forests. Protesting eco organisations and citizens insisted on the dismissal of the ministerial decision dated December 28, 2017 for a variation of the national park's management plan from 2004, which stops the political actions in that direction for an indefinite period of time (Ташкова 2017). Another example is given by the insurance sector in relation to decreasing the snow cover and problems of winter tourism related to it (Тодоров 2008). Because of global warming, at the beginning of the winter season there is no snow cover on the tracks, and the ski season's opening is being postponed or secured by machines creating artificial snow. In Bulgaria, the season in the winter resorts[1] of Bansko, Borovets, and Vitosha begins after the first week in December thanks to the artificial snow. In this connection, insurers elaborate on a new product for the tourists – the snowless policy. In similar situations, in the acknowledged ski destinations they have for many years been offering insurance, like the well-known "no snow guarantee" (Станкова 2003), with which insurers cover the risk of no snow in resorts above one thousand metres and pay back £20–50 per day to tourists as compensation. In Austria, for protection against such risk they offer the tourists a policy called "cancellation insurance" (for the price of around €100), which guarantees the cancellation of the reservation for the winter holiday and refund of the full amount.

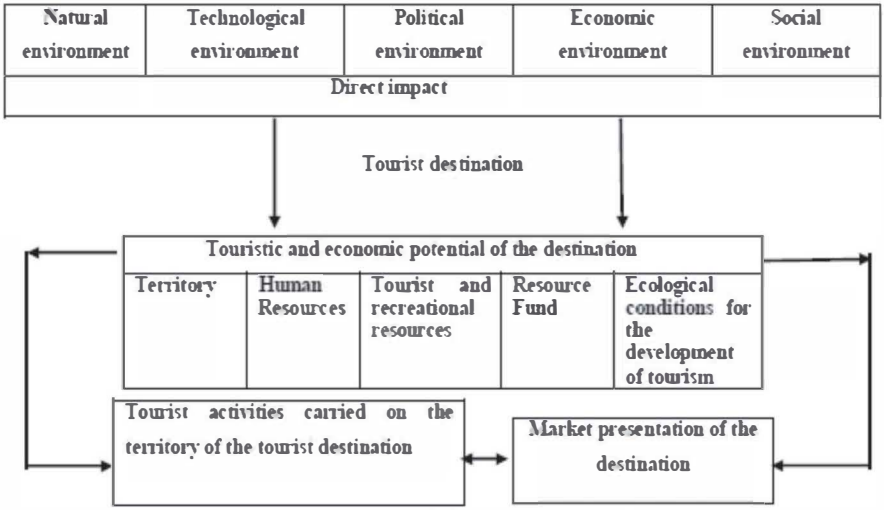
Technology's negative influence on the ecological conditions of the realised activities in tourist destinations is revealed as being tangible mostly in those parts of its territory which have increased their ecological sensitivity, and where the ecological conditions become a significant part of its professional business potential. Resolving the ecological problems is therefore of huge importance for the competitive power of the tourist destination, which has to take into consideration each one of the tourist's and other's actions realised on its territory through observing the exact ecological parameters. Thus considered, the process of establishing ecological restrictions is directly connected with planning and undertaking concrete actions to overcome and prevent them.

[2] The term "resort" is being used in its popular meaning, rather than the methodology of the NSI.

A totality of management practices and decisions regarding changes in the global environment has been imposed as a new part of the general management theory, and despite the presence of a number of unresolved and barely surmountable problems, the first steps in this regard are strongly appreciated by the consumers of the tourist product, and are of worldwide importance. In this direction, Bulgaria is a country that is developing tourism and ought to observe European directives to harmonize successfully its practice with the other members of the European Union. Moreover, important anti-crisis strategic documents affecting the industry of tourism are developed within the union.

Within the most general frame, the spontaneous influence of global changes on the tourist destination can be presented by the scheme, shown in Fig. 1.1 below.

Fig. 1.1. The impact of restrictions on the tourist destination



Source: Adapted by Станкова (2010) (Stankova 2010, 33)

Undoubtedly, the interrelations between tourism and the environment are complex. On one hand, the environment restricts tourism's development, and on the other tourist actions, realised at the destination, can have a negative effect on the environment. Most of these influences are connected with the ecological and social characteristics of the global environment, more specifically with the building of infrastructure like roads, airports, tourist equipment, including resorts, hotels, restaurants,

shops, golf courts and yacht ports. The negative influences of tourism can gradually destroy natural resources, and the development of tourism depends on them as well as leading to changes in social models, parts, and services to create tension and conflicts in the communities that are welcoming the tourists. At the same time, tourism has the potential for creating useful influences on the environment by contributing to its protection and preservation. That is to say, tourism contributes to increasing people's knowledge of environmental values, and at the same time can be used as a tool to finance projects for the protection of natural areas or increasing their economic importance.

In that connection, the studied negatives in the current work have common and complex manifestations. On one hand, they can be provoked in connection with the economic, political, ecological, and social changes and functioning of the tourism industry, and on the other they can restrict its development. All of them have the nature of threats with specific acts and aspects, provoked by the drained natural resources, soil, water, and air pollution, physical effects, natural disasters, and economic, political, and religious changes.

The tourism industry has however proven its flexibility and timely adaptivity to the threatening changes. As a result, development is progressive and irreversible, embracing new and different spheres and areas, with the realisation of a steady tourist's models, consistent with restrictions and threats in the global environment.

Conclusion

Summarizing what has been written, the conclusion is that the success in tourism's development and of tourist destinations is to a great extent connected with the environmental condition around which tourist activities are realised. But here it must be emphasized that the connection between tourism and the environment in which it develops is bilateral. Disregarding the existing complex dependence during the 1970s and 80s brought about the excessive loading on a number of tourist destinations (especially maritime ones in Europe). In such situations, tourism has shown that, despite the high short-term speed of development, in the long-term plan the management problems in regards to conditions, convenience, and visitors go deeper. The last are even more conscious today as regards the importance of global issues. An inference can be made that in conditions of the dynamically changing global environment, the consumer-tourist is faced with new challenges restricting their choice. In this awareness, they change their consumer model as initiator of actions, with the purpose of

fighting the problems created as a result of tourists' actions and affecting both the social and private sectors. This, in tum, reflects on the local communities in destinations that are welcoming tourists. They are influenced, and as a result of which tum out to be vulnerable towards different social and cultural conflicts, for which they have no capacity to handle. They proceed from here with the necessity of developing and applying tourist politics which are steady and responsible for the environment and the countries concerned with it.

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CHAPTER TWO

TOURISM BEYOND HUMANS: ROBOTS, PETS, AND TEDDY BEARS

STANISLAV IVANOV

Abstract

Tourism is universally considered as an activity specifically reserved for humans. Although not explicitly stated, all definitions of tourism assume that the tourists are human beings. However, the advances in animal ethics, artificial intelligence, and experience economy in the last decades indicate that this fundamental assumption might need revision. Travel agencies already offer trips for teddy bears, hotels have special pet policies, companies sell stones as pets, while social robots will force companies to adapt to the new technological realities. This paper focuses on these non-human travellers in tourism (home robots, pets and toys) and the specific strategic, operational, and marketing issues they raise for tourist companies.

Keywords: robots, pets, toys, experience economy, non-human travellers

Introduction

After the 1990s, Tourism has been universally considered as an activity specifically reserved for humans. Although not explicitly stated, all definitions of tourism assume that the tourists are human beings (see, for example, United Nations and UN World Tourism Organisation 2010). But should it be so? Recent advances in animal ethics and wellbeing (Armstrong and Botzler 2016; Fennell 2012; 2013; Markwell 2015; Sandøe, Corr, and Palmer 2016), artificial intelligence and robotics (Bhaumik, 2018; Miller and Miller, 2017; Neapolitan and Jiang 2013; Russell and Norvig 2016), and the experience economy (Andersson 2007;

Kirillova, Lehto, and Cai 2017; Pine and Gilmore 2011) indicate that this fundamental assumption might need revision. Travel agencies already offer trips for teddy bears (e.g. http://www.teddy-tour-berlin.de), hotels have special policies for the pets of their guests, and companies sell stones as pets (e.g. http://www.petrock.com), while social robots will force companies to adapt to the new technological realities (Agah et al. 2016; Ivanov 2017; Nørskov 2016). The presence and the future influx of these non-human travellers in tourism (home robots, pets and toys) requires that we broaden our perspective on who the traveller is, how they are involved in tourism activities, and how travel, tourism, and hospitality companies should address the specific strategic, operational, and marketing issues these non-human travellers raise. This paper contributes to the body of knowledge by focusing on the non-human travellers in tourism, their specific characteristics, the challenges faced by travel, tourism, and hospitality companies in regard to these non-human travellers, and the ways to cope with the challenges.

Table 2.1. Non-human entities in the tourism and hospitality industry

		Type of non-human entities in tourism	
		Animate	*Inanimate*
Role in tourism/ hospitality industry	*Service providers*	✓ Animals in zoos ✓ Animals for safaris, photo safaris, riding, etc. ✓ Fish for pedicures	✓ Chat bots ✓ Self-service kiosks ✓ Robots
	Service consumers	✓ Pets	✓ Robots ✓ Toys ✓ Pet rocks

Source: Author's compilation

Non-humans are actively engaged in tourism and hospitality services. Table 2.1 above provides some examples of the animate and inanimate entities involved in the provision or consumption of tourist services. The animate non-human entities have a long history and important role in tourism (e.g. animals in zoos, animals used for safaris, photo safaris or riding, or pets travelling with their owners) (Carr and Broom 2018), while due to technical reasons the inanimate entities (like chat bots and robots) have only recently been adopted for the provision of travel, tourism, and hospitality services (Ivanov, Webster and Berezina 2017). However, the delivery of tourist services for non-animate human entities is nearly non-existent and mostly anecdotal. Non-animate entities are actually perceived

as objects, items, or things that lack consciousness, needs, wants, or desires, and hence are excluded by default from the list of potential consumers of travel, tourism, and hospitality services. Nevertheless, the owners of these entities consume travel, tourism, and hospitality services and travel together with their non-animate entities, and thus tourist companies need to provide certain services for these entities (e.g. robot-friendly hospitality facilities, repair services, storage, etc.) in order to be able to serve their human customers. Moreover, some owners of inanimate non-human entities send them on trips (or "pseudo trips"), probably due to the need for ego enhancement (Ivanov 2008; MacCarmell 2002) through stories in social media of their toy/robot undertaking a "tourist" trip, a sense of belonging to a specific social group, special emotional attachment to the entity, or as a substitute or an extension of the owner when they cannot personally undertake such a trip to the destination. While the research literature has abundant studies on travelling pets (Gretzel and Hardy 2015; Hung, Chen, and Peng 2016; Kirillova, Lee, and Lehto 2015; Taillon, MacLaurin, and Yun 2015) and has already started to pay attention to robots and chatbots as service providers in tourism (Ivanov and Webster 2018; Ivanov, Webster, and Berezina 2017; Ivanov, Webster, and Garenko 2018; Kuo, Chen, and Tseng 2017; Murphy, Hofacker, and Gretzel 2017; Tussyadiah and Park 2018), our review of the related literature has not yet revealed a study that deals with inanimate non-human travellers, besides two notable exceptions. Ivanov and Webster (2017a) focuses on the design of robot-friendly hospitality facilities and emphasises that the ability to serve guests' own mobile robots would be a key competitive advantage for accommodation establishments in the future. In another paper, the same authors (2017b) elaborate on the role of robots as consumers of services and set a research agenda for further studies in the field. This paper tries to partially fill in this gap and delve deeper into the field of non-human travellers, i.e. the non-human "consumers" of travel, tourism, and hospitality services.

The Non-human Traveller

Scope

The non-human travellers in tourism include all those animate and inanimate entities that may or may not accompany (or be accompanied by) a human traveller, but for whom their owner and/or the accompanied (accompanying) human traveller requests the provision of (a) specific travel, tourism, and hospitality service(s). These non-human entities may

include pets (dogs, cats, rabbits, guinea pigs, horses, and other animals, or even plants), robots, toys (mechanical, stuffed, or other), and pet rocks. The participation of a non-human entity in a trip might be: (a) the result of a deliberate decision of its owners to send their non-human entity on a tourist trip (e.g. an owner of a teddy bear sends it on a trip); (b) a result of a decision of the owner to take the entity on their own tourist trip (e.g. a family taking their dog on vacation with the RV); or (c) a consequence of the inability of the owner to leave the non-human entity at home during their trip, i.e. a forced decision to take it on a trip (e.g. a guide dog for a blind person, or a couple taking their cat on a weekend trip because they could not find someone to take care of it during their absence). The owner on the non-human entity is emotionally attached to it (Elder 2018), although fifty shades of grey may exist in the level of this emotional attachment.

Common Characteristics

The non-human travellers share some common characteristics:

✓ First, the non-human entities do not take their own decision about whether to participate in a trip or not – it is their owner/caretaker who does this.

✓ Second, the non-human entities do not take their own decision about which services to consume – the decision is again taken by their owner/caretaker and/or the service provider. Although, provided the choice, a pet can decide to eat one type of food instead of another, non-human entities do not initiate the service process and do not order the service – the service initiation and the determination of the service scope is within the authority of their owner/caretaker and/or the service provider.

✓ Third, for obvious reasons, non-human travellers do not pay for their own trip. While we cannot expect this to change for pets, pet rocks, or toys, the advances in robotics might lead to a future situation when a robot is recognised as a legal entity (although not necessarily a human entity), which can receive and authorise payments. This would make robots consumers *per se* (Ivanov and Webster 2017b).

✓ Fourth, the level of satisfaction with the consumption of a travel/tourism/hospitality service by a non-human traveller cannot be determined and is associated with the level of satisfaction of its owner/caretaker. It is evident that toys and pet rocks cannot be "satisfied" with a service. Some advanced robots, for example, can identify human emotions and react accordingly (Perez-Gaspar, Caballero-Morales, and

Trujillo-Romero 2016; Zhang et al. 2015), but they do not experience emotions. Hence, the robots cannot indicate their level of satisfaction with a service they have "consumed." The increased cognitive skills of robots in the future may change this situation, but for the time being they cannot determine the level of their own satisfaction with a service. The case with animals is less clear cut. While research firmly indicates that animals do have emotions (Anderson and Adolphs 2014; Panksepp 1998), and can identify and react to human emotions (Müller et al. 2015), especially dogs, cats, and non-human primates, interspecies communication cannot always clearly identify the degree of satisfaction of the animal with the service, especially when the travelling pets include less sentient species like frogs, fish, and hamsters. Therefore, tourism service companies need to focus on the level of satisfaction of the owners/caretakers of the non-human travellers as it can be explicitly expressed, and thus managed.

Specific Characteristics

Of course, non-human travellers are not a homogenous group and they all have some specific characteristics. *Pets* are by far the most popular non-human travellers, and many hotel companies are offering pet-friendly facilities (see Figs. 1 and 2 below), which, considering the large number of people owning pets, is a source of competitive advantage for many of them. Like any biological entity, pets require their physiological needs to be taken care of, which sometimes goes to extremes like offering afternoon tea for dogs (see Fig. 3 below). Pets have their own daily regimes, dietary requirements, and preferences (probably most often determined by their owners rather than the pets themselves), and are also subject to different vaccinations, microchipping, and special regimes for travel across borders.

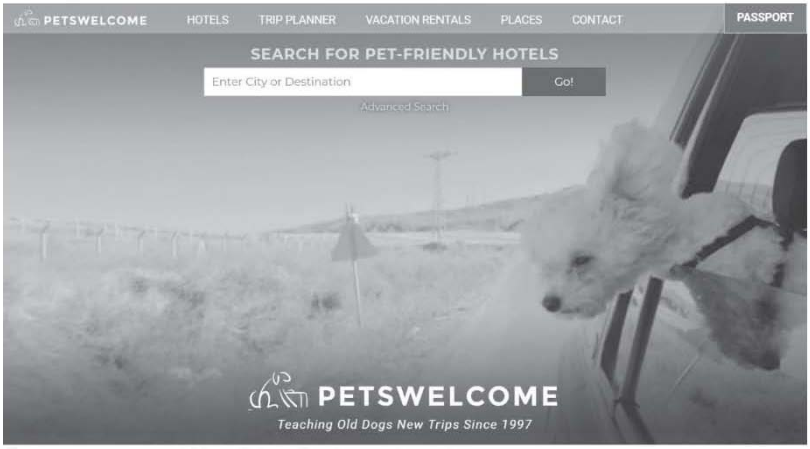
Pet rocks are marketed as the only pets which "you will never need to feed, walk, bath, groom or neuter" (see Fig. 4 below). Although they have no physiological needs, do not get old and die (a pet rock in ten years would be the same as now, although the first might be more emotionally charged), and not subject to travel regulations, the instruction manual from the company which first started offering them in 1975 emphasised that the pet rock is a sensitive, devoted friend and companion with an individual character (Dahl 1975). From a tourism perspective, the pet rock is even sold with a special travel case for protection.

Toys are inanimate non-human travellers for whom travel companies already organise trips (see Fig. 5). Unlike pet rocks, toys (especially stuffed toys) are subject to significant wear and tear, and thus guides need

to take special care to protect them from damage. Furthermore, a recent report (*Daily Mail* 2018) shows how Mexican fans attended the 2018 FIFA World Cup in Russia with a cardboard cut-out of their friend whose wife did not allow him to travel and attend the matches. Hence, from a tourism perspective, this cardboard cut-out needs to be treated as a travelling toy as well.

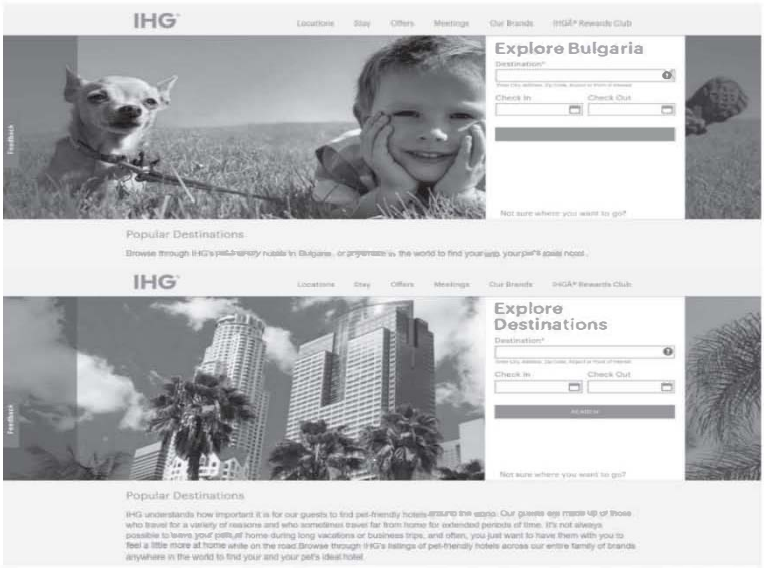
A *robot* is an "actuated mechanism programmable in two or more axes with a degree of autonomy, moving within its environment, to perform intended tasks" (International Organization for Standardization 2012). Robots can be classified into industrial or service robots, depending on their intended task. Ivanov and Webster (2017a) indicate that tourists would be travelling with mobile personal and domestic service robots (see Fig. 6 below) rather than with stationary and industrial ones, and companies need to design robot-friendly hospitality facilities for them. Although robots do not eat or drink, they require electricity, maintenance, and repair, digital maps for navigation around the premises of the hotel, and can interact with humans and other robots.

Fig. 1. Search for pet-friendly hotels on Petswelcome website



Source: screenshot from https://hotels.petswelcome.com

Fig. 2. Search for pet-friendly hotels on IHG website

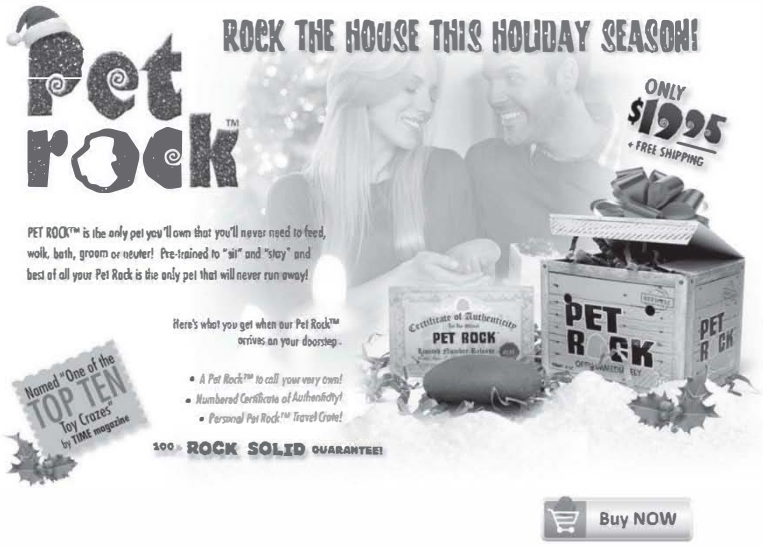


Source: screenshots from https://www.ihg.com/destinations/us/en/pet-friendly-hotels

Fig. 3. Afternoon tea for dogs: Coed-Y-Mwstwr Hotel, Bridgend, Wales, UK

Source: screenshot from https://www.townandcountrycollective.co.uk/coed-y-mwstwr/dine/dog-afternoon-tea

Fig. 4. Rocks as pets



Source: screenshot from http://petrock.com

Fig. 5. Tours for teddy bears by Teddy Tours Berlin

Our tour through Berlin

Just click on the image if you want to know which way we take through Berlin.

Our Specials

Teddy 's Gay Tour

Special wishes? Further Cities?

Does your cuddly toy want to visit a flee market or the castle of Charlottenburg? Or does it like to go swimming in the beautiful lake Wannsee? No problem! It is also no problem if your cuddly toy want to visit other cities like Munich, Dresden, Frankfurt. TEDDY TOUR BERLIN tries to fulfil even your most unusal wishes. We calculate the additional costs in advance – so there won't be any unexpected costs for you!

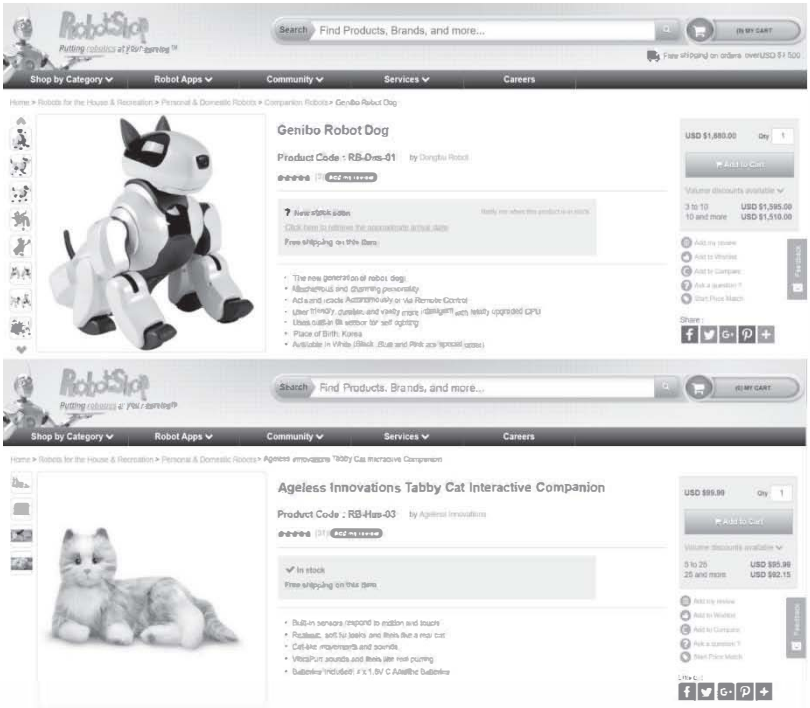
The following city tours and offers are at your teddy's disposal:

	paparazzi registration ~~voucher~~	compact registration ~~voucher~~	exclusive registration ~~voucher~~	deluxe registration ~~voucher~~
TV-Tower at the Alexanderplatz	X	X	X	X
Red Cityhall	X	X	X	X
Cathedral of Berlin	X	X	X	X
Brandenburg Gate	X	X	X	X
Chancellor's Place	X	X	X	X
Reichstag (Parliament)		X	X	X
Victory Column		X	X	X
Bellevue Castle			X	X
Potsdamer Platz			X	X
Checkpoint Charlie			X	X
The Wall			X	X
Gendarmenmarkt				X
Zoo station				X
Ku'damm				X
Church of Recollection				X
House of World Cultures				X
Stelenfeld				X
Famous construction site				X
Group-picture in front of the Brandenburg Gate	X	X	X	X
Picnic in Berlin's central park	X	X	X	X
Included donation to nestwärme e.V.	5,00 Euro	5,00 Euro	5,00 Euro	5,00 Euro
Pictures	X	X	X	X
CD-ROM			X	X
Relaxing massage				X
Costs (in Euro) if coming from:				
Germany	39,00	59,00	79,00	109,00
European Union	49,00	69,00	89,00	119,00
Rest of the world	69,00	89,00	109,00	139,00
Additional special-tours:				
Ask us for the Teddy's Gay-Tour	Visit the heart of queer Berlin! Information here! Additional costs for this special-tour: 30,00 Euro			

To top

Source: screenshot from http://www.teddy-tour-berlin.de/25.html?andL=1

Fig. 6. Personal and domestic robots



Source: screenshots from https://www.robotshop.com/en/dasa-robot-genibo-robot-dog.html and https://www.robotshop.com/en/ageless-innovations-tabby-cat-interactive-companion.html

Serving the Non-human Traveller: Strategic and Operational Issues

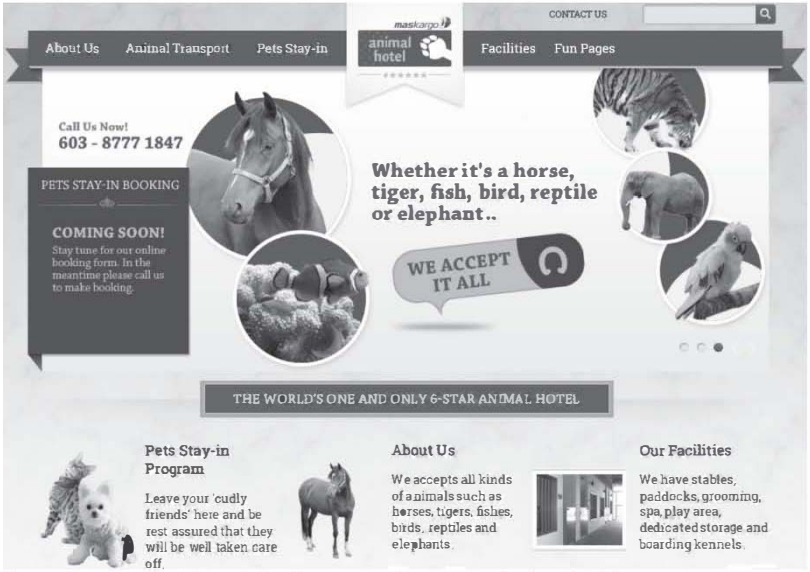
Serving human travellers is difficult, but serving non-humans is even more difficult considering the common and specific characteristics of the non-human travellers which were discussed in the previous paragraph. In this section, we shall outline some of challenges travel, tourism, and hospitality companies face in regard to serving non-human travellers and how to cope with them.

Marketing

The main marketing challenge is to create a hospitality service/experience that is attractive for the owner/caretaker of a non-human traveller. Here, differentiation is the key. A company offering services to non-human travellers is already differentiating its product and gaining a competitive advantage. Currently, there are tourist companies that serve pet animals nearly exclusively. Some hotels, for example, have special pet-friendly policies which allow a pet animal to be accommodated with its owners, thus freeing the owners of the worries of where and to whom to leave their pet during their trip. Other hotels go even further with the differentiation and experience design by offering special afternoon tea packages for pets and their owners (see Fig. 3 above). The ultimate pet-friendly experience is a dedicated animal hotel (see Fig. 7 below), where animate non-human travellers are the only guests. Considering that pet-related expenditures (supplies, food, veterinary, and other services) are income limited (Ehlert 1997) and the low level of competition in offering pet-friendly services, tourist companies that offer such services can charge high prices. Besides the usual marketing communication channels (e.g. website, social media), the tourist company can reach its target customers through various pet owners' clubs and associations, veterinary clinics, or pet exhibition organisers.

Marketing tours for toys are another story. While there is a real necessity to take care of travelling animals, there is no existential need to provide tourist services to toys, even less to cardboard cut-outs, even if they are human shaped. As mentioned in the Introduction, these tours actually satisfy the needs, wants, and desires of their owners (ego enhancement, aspiration to belong to or be associated with a specific social group, showing special emotional attachment to the toy, etc.), and therefore the tour companies need to develop promotional messages reflecting these needs, wants, and desires. Such tours are offered with different itineraries, languages, and price tags, depending on the country of origin of the owner – exactly as they would be offered to human travellers. The company that organises the Teddy Tour Berlin even offers a gay tour of the city (see Fig. 5 above). This human-level treatment of the toys, further evidenced by the photos the toy owners receive, contributes to toy owners' level of satisfaction with the service. Furthermore, the uniqueness and unusualness of the tourist service (tours for toys) create media attention and facilitate a company's marketing communication efforts. The same marketing issues and solutions are valid for pet rocks as well.

Fig. 7. Animal hotel



Source: screenshot from http://www.maskargo.com/animalhotel

In essence, offering tourist services for robots is the same as for toys. Considering the current low cognitive skills of home robots, they are not much different from regular toys. However, as already mentioned, the advances in robotics would force tourist companies to focus on delivering services for robots. The low penetration of home robots and the even smaller number of people travelling with them do not contribute to the attractiveness of this market segment for the moment. Nevertheless, the situation will change in the next five to ten years, fuelled by the plummeting prices of home robots. Similar to pet owners, robot owners can afford to pay for extra services for their robots. Some of them, including companies that use service robots, go to extremes and buy clothes for their robots, treating them as kids (NHK World – Japan 2018). Therefore, the robot owners would have low price sensitivity, could afford to pay higher prices, and would be profitable customers for tourist companies.

Human Resource Management

During the last few decades, most societies matured and started to accept people with different disabilities, sexual orientations, or unusual behaviours or appearances. Taboos are being replaced by the "new normal" and accessible tourism (Darcy and Dickson 2009), corporate social responsibility (Cragg, Schwartz, and Weitzner 2016), and business ethics (Crane and Matten 2016; Eagle and Dahl 2015) are actively contributing to the removal of barriers in people's minds. Employees in the travel, tourism, and hospitality industries serve people of various nationalities and ethnic, religious, and cultural backgrounds, with various preferences, sexual orientations, and disabilities, and need to treat them with due respect. Employees should not be surprised if they have to serve a robot, an animal, a stuffed toy, or a pet rock, but should consider this as part of the whole experience they create for the customers. Of course, resistance is inevitable, and many employees may not feel comfortable serving non-human travellers, which is quite understandable. However, their negative attitude does not mean that they should by fired, but their efforts should be directed towards serving human travellers, while employees with a broader perspective of who the traveller is should serve the non-human tourists. Proper training and employing people with the suitable service mindedness are advised. For example, employees may need training in how to operate and communicate with robots or how to take care of pets.

Operations

Serving non-humans raises several operations management issues – facilities design, scheduling and executing operations, and managing capacity. Obviously, pet rocks and toys do not require specific facilities, but this is not the case with pets and robots. Pets need cages, hutches, aquaria, waste disposal/litter boxes, furniture scratches, crates, beds and blankets, bowls and feeders, play toys, accessories for grooming and bathing, leashes, collars, harnesses, apparel, odour control, travel equipment like carriers, and many other things. While these are usually bought by the pet owners, pet-friendly hotels may consider keeping a stock of a few items of this equipment and providing them to the guests when necessary. Accommodating pets in a hotel requires amendments in the operation procedures, e.g. it would take more time to clean a room if a dog/cat is accommodated together with the guests because of the hairs, waste, and odour left by the animals. Additionally, staff need to be trained

in how to deal with larger animals, like some breeds of dogs (e.g. Dobermann, Rottweiler), a face-to-face encounter with whom might be stressful. For the physical and psychological protection of employees and other guests, hotels need to introduce special operational procedures and rules regarding the movement of animals within the premises, e.g. rules about the usage of a carrier or leash in public areas, forbidden areas like the spa/fitness centre, a dedicated space for pet owners such as a playground for dogs, or even considering a dedicated pet-friendly room where only guests with pets are accommodated. Vaccinations and potential allergies must be taken into consideration as well.

Serving robots requires companies to design robot-friendly/robot-inclusive facilities. Tan, Mohan, and Watanabe (2016) define the robot-inclusiveness as how much the design of the environment takes into account the robot therein, i.e. whether it helps the robot fulfil its tasks. The robot-friendliness of the hospitality facilities is determined by their design, cleanliness, tidiness, signage, lightning, noise, barriers (e.g. doors, doorsteps, stairs), the presence of people and the dynamic of the environment, the presence/lack of predetermined routes for robot movement, and the presence/lack of (artificial) landmarks and sensors to help robot navigation. Ivanov and Webster (2017a) point out that accommodation establishments need to consider many issues in order to make their facilities robot-friendly, such as: the external and internal physical accessibility of premises, the provision of a digital map of the premises for robot navigation, landing pads for drones, the shape and surface materials to be used for the swimming pools, electric power for charging robots, rental and repair facilities for robots, and liability insurance for robots. It is evident that the robot-friendliness of facilities would be expensive. However, it would be a competitive advantage for the companies that offer it. Moreover, the legal requirements for wheelchair accessibility in hotel premises actually facilitate the robot-friendliness of these facilities, because the mobile robots have the same requirements towards the external and internal physical accessibility of the premises as people who need a wheelchair.

Conclusion

This paper focused on a neglected niche of tourists – non-human travellers, consisting of pets, robots, toys, and pet rocks. Some of the ideas may seem far-fetched, but in search of a competitive advantage, tourist companies need to go beyond the conventional borders of thinking and search for new and creative ways to design and deliver experiences for

their guests. This paper elaborated the scope and characteristics of non-human travellers and the challenges they raise for companies and how they address them. Tourism managers and employees would need to adopt a broader perspective of who the traveller is and what services they can consume. As the business environment is changing, so is the tourism industry. One day we may witness the advent of the ultimate representation of non-human tourism – a robot guide making a city tour for a stuffed toy! Future research may focus on the characteristics and motivations of the owners of non-human travellers to send them on a trip and their level of satisfaction with it, the non-human traveller-centric service design in tourism, managing front-line employees who deliver services to non-human travellers, the design of hospitality facilities, and managing service operations that involve non-human travellers, among others. In any case, we hope that the paper lays the foundations of a new future domain of tourism research – the non-human traveller.

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CHAPTER THREE

CONTEMPORARY TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATIONS IN TOURISM

HRISTINA SANTANA

Abstract

This paper's aim is to reveal how the tourism industry has been developing over the past few decades due to the dynamic changes in tourist preferences and market trends. The entire vision of the sector has rendered to the concept of the importance of innovation. The process starts with translating an idea or invention into a tourist good or service that creates value for the tourist – a value that will make them pay. And the new tourist is in a constant search for innovation – this may be a product or service, the process of delivery or supply, technological innovation focusing on travel gadgets, or appealing to all tourist tastes. All of this requires travel professionals to start "thinking out of the box."

Keywords: the new tourist, technology, innovation, gadgets

Introduction

The worldwide travel and tourism industry is enormous, accounting for almost ten percent of global GDP and responsible for one in every eleven jobs. The more we look ahead to the future, the more the relevance of travel and tourism is only going to increase. With a projected annual growth rate of four percent globally, the industry could become even more important for some countries as it grows faster than many other industries, including financial services, transport, and manufacturing. In spite of some geopolitical tensions, such as the rise of terrorism and the spread of disease, which are extremely worrying for the travel and tourism industry, especially in affected countries, the sector maintains constant growth. All

of this is due to the capability to adapt "through shocks" and follow innovative trends and technologies to attract more tourists.

The object of the current report features tourism and its development through innovations, and the main subject of the study is the technological supply in the travel and tourism industry. The initial purpose of the report is to examine the technological implications in the travel and tourism industry to specify and improve certain inputs in order to propose a new vision for the industry – a vision assisting the preparation of the industry to meet its customers' desires in full.

The author therefore undertakes a short review of some respected literature to emphasize current trends in service models, and technological improvements implied in the travel and tourism industry. Using the methods of induction and deduction, analysis, and synthesis, the aim is to present a general study of the effects of innovation influencing customers and managers in making decisions.

Travel and Tourism Industry and Technological Innovation

Informational technologies (IT) are mostly referred to as an abundance of methods and technical services, combined in a technological chain. Their initial purpose is to supply all kinds of information by collecting, accumulating, analysing, storing, distributing, and implicating, bringing it all to the audience in an understandable way. The aim is to lessen the adversity in the processes that use informational resources, thus increasing efficiency and effectiveness (Danjko 2003, 171). The contemporary technological evolution is constantly bringing change to all sectors of human life, as well as the way people use their time for travel and leisure. It influences not only social and personal relationships but leads to greater changes in tourism and the whole industry. The travel and tourism industry is using great amount of various IT that bring positive effects to the organisation and management as well as increasing the total utility of the services supplied. They have often been devised as a thorough and complex system of computerized and communicational technologies (Popova 1995, 27). Technological transfer is important, especially in terms of contributing to and building technological capabilities for organisations, leading them to create new technologies (UNCTAD 2015). As a direct and influential factor, the emergence of the internet is also considered to have supplied all sectors of life with a worldwide accessible platform, assisting informational exchange, communication, and electronic business and sales. The travel and tourism industry has also been effected by the

evolution of the internet and all its utilities, and has often been referred to as an instrument that has brought about a radical change in business models (Kazandzhieva 2013, 45).

No doubt that with greater innovation in information technologies and the presence of the internet and all direct links with travellers' sharing channels such as TripAdvisor or venting on social media such as Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn, tourists can reach a narrower audience of like-minded co-travellers who have greater receptiveness regarding feedback and experiences. The current social media channels represent a substantial field for easily-accessible commercials for cheap holiday offers, numerous value-for-money packages, do-it-yourself airline tickets, and all kinds of gadgets to facilitate a journey or travel plans. The previously stated "actors" have great participation in the enormous scene of the online market and are often referred to as "new players" in the tourism sector. They introduce an entirely new structure in the process of supply and sales, adding new value to the customer (Kazandzhieva 2013). If the industry starts identifying consumer needs and develops the right product, pricing, distribution, and promotion as effectively as possible, the result will be an attractive product and a satisfied tourist (Kotler, Bowen, and Makens 2014). It is currently said that you can win tomorrow's consumer by mobile and "emerging market consumers" (www3.weforum.org). From the increasing purchasing power in emerging and developing countries, demographic shifts, and the growing importance of the mobile and online sector, the industry is doing its best to adapt and stay on top of the pyramid. Indeed, research shows that a family trip is the second-highest priority for the booming middle classes after buying a car. And today, China is the largest market in terms of international tourism expenditure. In China, for instance, mobile travel sales accounted for forty percent of the business of the most important online travel agencies, namely Ctrip and eLong (www3.weforum.org).

Following this trend, respected online magazines and newspapers present separate pages of top-rated destinations and top trending places or attractions to visit. The online editions try to combine both news and advice to their readers, offering basic information of the tourist sites, facts, and reviews of current political and economic situations. Useful tips have been displayed in separate articles, accompanied by colourful photos and even business comments.

A logical sequence of this boom requires greater improvement in service models and quality methods to be implied. The role of the helpdesk, the back of office keeping standards up to date (Fletcher et al. 2013), in looking after the whole process of the journey of making and

buying a holiday goes beyond just answering questions and solving problems. The new tourist is in a constant search for innovation while planning the entire travel scenario, which undoubtedly leads to a new vision for the tourism business.

Travel professionals keep on improving selling channels, being either a web-based air-ticket selling platform keeping a close relationship with a hotel web provider and a transfer and shuttle transport company, or an insurance company, advertising travel insurances and all levels of coverage. The classical type of tour operator or travel agent meets the fast-growing independence of the airline companies combining several channels in order to offer a full package of services to their direct online customers. For example, for several years Wizz Air had a close partnership with the National Express transport agency, assisting their customers in booking directly with the transfer service while booking the airline ticket itself. Recently, a new collaboration has been established, with a direct link to Booking.com provided. While seeking the best fare to Barcelona, choosing the best seat and suitable luggage, and deciding whether to buy priority boarding and insurance for example, a pop-up browser with a list of recommended hotels and accommodation facilities in the city is also displayed. Moreover, if the customer has downloaded the free application of the airline they are bombarded by newsfeeds and reminders for discounts on a daily basis, or discounts for certain dates and destinations.

Dealing with a busy and hectic traveller is not something unfamiliar to the travel industry. In a computerized and technological world, waiting has always been torture. Customers, especially at the airports, have always complained about the wasted time in waiting for the luggage at the baggage-claim area. Though speed and procedures in provision have been developed and increased, customers are relatively happy with the total experience, while some often complain at the airport authorities. A smart hint was provided by the Houston airport professionals where, instead of trying to reduce the waiting time, they moved the arrival gates away from the main terminal and routed bags to the outermost carousel. The innovative idea made travellers walk further to get their bags. In Madrid-Barajas, the traveller arriving at the main Terminal 4 needs to catch an internal train to the baggage-claim area. The examples show how optimising and innovative a service can be without using technological devices in doing so.

However, there are obviously factors that are beyond the control of the industry, such as the weather, but like most other industries there is room for innovation. Before starting a trip or an excursion, every single person

starts with checking the forecast. The experienced traveller undertakes quick but thorough research through a couple of weather channels, starting with a phone application, then browsing the web. For the last-minute buyer, the resort website displays the current forecast of the destination and for the following days. Even tour-operator agencies aiming to improve their internet performance start with a forecast box at the top or bottom of page of the requested destination point. There are usually no certain plans to make if the climate is complimentary – the tourist can either go for a hiking trip, or prepare for a mountain-cycling tour, go rowing in the rivers, or just plan a relaxing time at the beach. However, if the weather channel starts buzzing with cloudy days, or rain or wind activities, the tourist creates a full-day plan of the forthcoming holiday. Exchange channels and travel blogs provide a great amount of information on the topic of "what to do and where to go" while it is raining. A list of museums to visit, a choice of indoor action parks to pick from, or castle tours provided by local travel agencies are all put together, along with useful tips for walking or driving directions – all things the internet can provide.

If we stick to the weather matter and the holidaymaker has planned a whole week at a seaside resort – a plan that the weather is about to ruin – there is a niche to fulfil here. The role of the entertainment industry comes in here in order to meet the tourist's needs and arrange the relaxed and untroubled holiday trip. Every respectable tourist complex presents an entire list of services to their guests, comprising entertaining programs, indoor pool gymnastics, billiards and table tennis tournaments, and theatre performances, for example. Unlike the well-known way of booking an activity by contacting the chief organiser, by going to their desk or calling them by phone, technology has had a major impact on the service. Tailor-made, web-based schedules and lists of programs and activities to participate in are included in an e-list provided to all customers by a local e-channel. The tourist receives an advantage to interact remotely and very quickly with the hotel staff. And it all started with an example given by the Kempinski Hotel Mall of the Emirates, which had great success by implementing operational efficiency through technology innovations. The management provided tablet-based express services – iPads in the hotel restaurants and limousines – assisting easy contact with the restaurant waiters, concierge, or the personal driver. Employees instantly respond to guest on-the-go queries, and also manage check-in and check-out process with greater efficiency, hence improving the total experience. Such an example gives the Andaz hotel in Manhattan, New York, where the host greets the customer at the lobby, offers them a glass of wine, and enters their name into a tablet. Avoiding glacial queues and tedious forms, just

swiping the credit card and providing the card-key, the host escorts the client to the room, no boring chitchat to endure after a long and tiresome flight (Melissen et al. 2015).

Today's tourist is quite different from the previous customer and consumer generations. The new tourist is not only tech-orientated but is also expecting service quality, along with the need and want of the real experience to go with it. This new type of customer forms an entirely new category of tourist – "the online tourist." They are always eager to know more and communicative, and possess vivid individuality and personality (Marinov 2004, 116). Given the unlimited access to information, web platforms of the travel industry, and the general selling platforms combining all kinds of offers, even social media, the traveller knows perfectly well what the gold standard is, and how to seek and ask for a higher service. More importantly, they are highly open to sharing experiences, opinions, and participating in ranking systems by rating any part of the travel industry, such as the aircraft industry and transport companies, hotel complexes and restaurants, entertainment teams, and even local guides. All this socializing influences and even shapes our behaviour (Myers 2013), stimulating further actions.

The journey starts when the consumer chooses the destination of travel and continues with a choice about the exact provider to facilitate the best holiday ever. From then on, the consumer acts as a tourist, replacing their constant residency with a temporary one (Neshkov, Marinov, and Kazandzhieva 2014), trying to reach an experience that suits their preferences and fulfils certain expectations and desires. Despite the boom in the travel industry and new quality systems implied in the travel and hospitality business, with continuously increasing numbers of international global travellers in the past few years, there is hardly anyone who has not complained about a single thing while travelling. This might concern the flight-booking process, the hotel accommodation, the transfer service provided, the airport-accommodation-airport transfer, a non-English speaking driver, or the not-so-fussy hotel maid. It may be the non-burger or non-pizza serving restaurant at the accommodation spot, or, on the contrary, the too great variety of fish and chips and fast food and a lack of fresh green food. There are numerous examples of replacing certain restaurants or picking up others due to vegan menu preferences, natural and bio-products included, or choosing from a variety of hotels and finally going for the most close-to-nature, ecological, environmental-friendly accommodation facility.

So a logical question arises: how can the industry make the experience more pain-free? The easiest answer that comes to mind is through innovation in service and technology.

Innovative Trends and Technology

While many people are aware of some of the interesting innovations that are changing the way to experience not only ways of living but also travel, many are still uncertain. The following examples represent several models that have a great influence on contemporary tourists, but have major effects on the travel and tourism industry as well.

Homes to share: a significant change in the last few years in hospitality is the sharing economy. The leading or mostly known representative of this trend is Airbnb, but there are many other companies that are playing the game. While there are still regulatory issues around this new consumer model, it provides accommodation to tourists who may not otherwise be able to afford it, or clients in need of something different from the typical hotel model. Hotels commonly provide standard room accommodation with no greater opportunities for families, youth companies going on a summer or skiing vacation together or budget tourists seeking higher standards than hostel accommodation, who do not need daily cleaning or the abundance of breakfast offers, but a cosy spot to stay in which is close to the main attractions.

Airbnb.com transformed into a web platform giving opportunities to not only the tourist with the chance to have the best accommodation at a reasonable price, but also the owner, with benefits by sharing their vacant residence to gain some extra income. The host is often ready to meet the customers at the airport, arranging a transfer service, and is highly open to sharing additional information about places and attractions to visit, and restaurants and local pubs to taste the traditional cuisine.

Of course, the tourist can always benefit from the TripAadvisor.com info-tips and ratings of restaurants, cafeterias, and local attractions, along with a map and directions, and most importantly the opinions and photos of real-time customers. Published ratings and commentaries of the specific place of interest often lead to the final decision over whether to spend money on that place or look for something else. Real tourists' photos describe the actual condition of the interior, room sizes, or even the food served. As today's tourist is keen on documenting each step they undertake, a whole photo excursion is displayed either in the social media

or on the tourist-sharing channel, and is open to be viewed and further commented on.

Today's tourist is highly tech-orientated. All kinds of gadget-assisting travel are well appreciated, as several tips concern the tourist when arranging a journey.

Keeping track of the traveller's bag: the biggest concern when a certain travel is undertaken is losing the suitcase and personal belongings, and being left stranded for a business meeting while in sweatpants. Bigger companies provide a list of procedures to follow, where to go and whom to address, and what actions need to be undertaken. However, the regular tourist rarely comes to the idea of keeping a list of procedures; instead, they rely entirely on innovations. Why, if we have smartphones, can't we have smart suitcases? Well, now we can. Different companies are looking at different solutions, whilst airports like Las Vegas' McCarran Terminal 3 are starting to attach a radio frequency identification chip to suitcases to ensure they don't get lost; Bluesmart has created a carry-on suitcase, which can be controlled and tracked using an app on your phone (Melissen et al. 2015). The need for such gadgets requires greater attention and improvement in distances to cover, which in turn creates a niche for programmers' developments and innovations.

Another hard moment for the tourists is the security issue at the tourist site. Robberies are still common problems at certain destinations, and keeping personal belongings is a matter to prepare for before undertaking a trip, and to address this, several manufacturers have created the anti-theft cross body sling bag. An interesting gadget for tourists to benefit from is the smart digital wallet. With a single card, the tourist replaces all their cards, including membership cards and gift cards. In addition to the convenience, the card gives access to reward points on purchases, thus allowing tourists to earn points, which can be used on brands like Hilton, Oakley, McDonald's, and Gucci. While on a trip, the owner can even do card-to-card money transfers or erase all data remotely in case of loss or robbery. The positive effects of such products create a new audience demanding more and looking for the best innovative solutions on the market.

The Gadgetflow channel and The Savvy Globetrotter offer all kinds of products, such as capsule pocket-size cameras, a minimalist portable coffee maker, an app-controlled pod camera that sticks and unsticks anywhere for the perfect hands-free shot, or even the all-in-one portable water purifier bottle, giving access to clean water anywhere tourists look for adventures. Most interesting for any tourist seems to be Spectacles, a

product which is not just good looking and actually protects the eyes from the sun, but whose main function is to record snaps of the day and sync them to Snapchat Memories, which makes it a fun travel accessory, whether playing tourist in your own city or heading overseas. Garmin have combined style and adventure with the Garmin Fenix 5, with a wide range of tracking capabilities plus built-in GPS and smart notifications. This versatile, lightweight device assists tourists whether skiing in the Alps, swimming in the Med, of hiking off the beaten path in Nepal.

Technology aims to go beyond any border to cover all existing demands and create new ones. The smart tools are just too much fun to miss, and others add extra convenience to our experiences and open up new realities in the world of technology while becoming lifesavers for today's tourists.

To stay connected: we actually live in a hyper-connected world, where in-flight wi-fi is present (weforum.org 2015). You do not need to be a first-class customer to benefit from such a service anymore. Qatar Airlines, for example, started a promotional campaign by giving free minutes of wi-fi high to all their passengers. If the passenger remains satisfied with the service provided, they can simply request a prepaid voucher against the extra charge. Many other airlines offer the internet to passengers, but it is not a perfect science and not free. The main vision is related with the passengers' needs and the passenger is given a choice, which was not an option at all a couple of years ago. Airlines also added power outlets so that passengers can charge their devices throughout their flights and not arrive at their destination with a "dead" phone, laptop, or tablet. All such services can be checked online directly from the airline company's website. The ones at an extra charge can be ordered and paid for in advance, so the passenger can directly benefit from the services once on board.

Do-it-yourself: today's tourist barely talks to anyone when going through the airport. With the available technology, the traveller books the flight online, and has the boarding pass downloaded in the wallet of their phone. When arriving at the airport, self-check-in machines and kiosks are available. One swipe of the passport and presenting the boarding card code on the scanner provide the passenger with a luggage tag to attach to their suitcase. The tourist can simply go through automated clearance gates and even validate their boarding pass to board the plane. For the arrival, self-passport clearing cabins are provided. The tourist needs only to present their passport, as no IDs are accepted as yet, and needs to be tall enough so

that the scanner is at eye level. These innovations have made navigating airports much more efficient, if you are tech savvy. Still, given that security is at the forefront of our minds, gate and security agents are present to make sure travellers can have a seamless experience. Moreover, if travelling with children, the standard queue and passport control are still the only option.

Another interesting trend is Uber. This peer-to-peer ridesharing and transportation network company, strongly disputed by different authorities and competitors, actually operates in 633 cities worldwide. Its platforms can be accessed via its website or mobile app. While waiting for the luggage at the baggage-claim area, the tourist can order a car in less than a minute. Uber has been the subject of protests and legal actions, but it brought real changes to the transportation industry by becoming the leader in the so-called transport sharing economy. Their plan is to move beyond ride sharing, adding public transit tickets, rental cars, and even bike sharing to create a global logistics platform, which might deliver a sandwich or a truckload of goods, as well as provide a city transfer or a regular car to any tourist at reasonable rate.

Guiding your experience: guidebooks like Lonely Planet used to be the tourist's bible, but have become irrelevant in a world of websites and crowdsourcing sites that provide us with advice and reviews on hotels, tours, and restaurants. Traditional online travel agencies like Expedia and Priceline have provided alternatives. However, new players are on the market too. Peek puts a tour guide in your phone, while HotelTonight is a last minute hotel-booking tool. Other players are also thinking differently about the issue, such as AnyRoad, which helps us connect to incredible guides and avoid travel agencies.

All of the above have been examples of the contemporary trends in tastes and desires that have influenced customers "to buy or not to buy," and have brought different effects to the travel and tourism industry on one side and to tourists to the other.

Table 3.1. Positive and negative effects from IT innovation

POSITIVE EFFECTS	NEGATIVE EFFECTS
TO THE CUSTOMER	
24/7 access	helpdesk answers in working hours
almost worldwide access	spamming of email account or public profile
fashion	electronic payment
lower costs	risk of fraudulent use of data
Fun	subjective views on social media
convenience	tech-orientation
variety in services	excess of offers
option for thorough review in private	lack of personal touch and empathy
TO THE MANAGEMENT	
efficiency	human-to-human psychological factor
24/7 appearance	24/7 back of office
market presence	increased costs for IT-support
influence	constant updates
competitiveness	participation in rating channels
worldwide distribution	strong competition
lower advertising costs	annual fees for participation in GDS or CRS
improvement in performance	vision for improvement

Source: Author's compilation

Table 3.1 above sketches out the basic effects on managers and customers, revealing the effort to explain the influential character of innovations in the travel and tourism industry today. Considering the practical experience, having a close relationship with tourism managers and travel consultants, exchanging working ideas and having a constant view of current trends in travellers' needs, the author has exposed just a few examples of how technological innovation provides a new course for contemporary tourism. To evaluate the "concept of the customer value" (Kumar et al. 2012), critical for any organisation, the author has revealed useful tips, gadgets, and online applications in order to describe the models and trends that are highly appreciated by the tourists in future business projects.

Conclusion

The new tourist is more educated and sophisticated. They have not only travelled a lot, gaining a great deal of experience and expectations, but are inclined to apprehend a variety of trends, leading them to all kinds of travel patterns. To enjoy recreational or adventure tourism activities, undertaking business trips or family holidays, the new tourist is in a constant search for innovation. This may be in products and services, the process of delivery or supply, or market and entrepreneur innovation focusing on travel gadgets appealing to tourist preferences.

Being a dynamic and competitive sector of the national economy, the travel and tourism industry has the ability to adapt to the changes of customer needs and desires. As a typical service sector, whose main resources are the society, culture, and environment, its primary focus comprises customer satisfaction, safety, and enjoyment. The tourism industry has been delivering a great service for a long time, and tourism is in a deep and constant relation with tourist trends, preferences, and newly occurring needs. The entire vision of the sector has rendered to the concept of the importance of innovation. The whole process starts with translating an idea or invention into a tourist good or service that creates value for the tourist – a value that they pay for. While people may believe that the travel and tourism industry "works on its own," this is not the case. On the contrary, it is an extremely complex industry and requires inter-ministerial, international, and inter-agency coordination, and often international and public-private partnerships. These specific interactions result in a new type of competition – cooperation. This new model aims to establish better communication with customers and business partners, using not only corporate websites, but search engines, tourism channels, and social media. In regards to the entire review of the contemporary trends and innovative ideas covering the virtual and real market, revealing customer needs and technological gadgets at their disposal, the author has made an attempt to introduce the idea of the greater implementation of innovation in the travel and tourism industry. All of the above meet the necessity to establish better communication and real understanding between the partnering national boards and industry managers, to start thinking out of the box, improving and developing working mechanisms in a close relation to the continuous changes and demands of the modern world.

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CHAPTER FOUR

THE ROLE OF INNOVATION FOR IMPROVING OPERATIONS MANAGEMENT IN TOURISM

ELENITA VELIKOVA AND JACKLIN COHEN

Abstract

The research subject in this paper is innovation as a process in which the scientific idea is brought to a point in which it ceases being just an idea but can be successfully implied in practice. The paper looks into the specifics and principles of tourism innovations and their main characteristics. The new content of the investment process is revealed and the trends in the innovation and investment activity are clarified. The impact of technological innovations on business processes, customer service, business conditions, and the overall performance of organisations to achieve high goals have been explored. Based on the study of innovation practices and their implementation, the aim of this paper is to provide useful guidelines for improving operations management in tourism.

Keywords: innovations, investment activity, tourism, operations management

Introduction

In the modern era of business development, tourist companies are looking for new ways to increase accessibility and increase the attractiveness of their services. At the same time, the competitive environment in the tourism industry stimulates the demand for modern solutions that will boost the development of tourism enterprises. The emergence of innovative technologies, integrating them with management systems, has led to revolutionary changes in this sector. The research of the innovation processes, causes of high demand for modern technologies,

and the development of methods for their implementation represent an important scientific and practical interest.

The innovations in the tourism industry have been growing rapidly. It is up to the owners of the tourist companies to achieve maximum sales and to gain as many tourists as possible, winning permanent guests. Achieving these tasks is accomplished not only by modernising technology and implementing innovation, but also by changing the minds of those employed in the sector. The dynamic and constantly changing tourist environment requires preserving the competitive position of the tourism company by introducing technological innovations in the form of new or improved products and services. Applying innovation to management processes is the basis for improving management systems and an effective way to guide tourism.

The innovations allow tourist organisations to respond to customers' needs, take advantage of strategic market opportunities, express their strengths, and surpass their competition. The crucial factors for success which influence the innovations of improving operations management in companies can be summarized as: financial factors, firm size, industrial factors, technological capability, consumer preferences, economic factors, culture factors, management skills, market orientation, competitive advantage, learning capability, and developing and creating new knowledge on products, processes, and services (Bayarçelika, Taşelb, and Apakc 2014). Novikov (2007) differentiates the fundamental factors which define the national development in tourism as: market situation and competition in national and international markets; the environment (science and technology level of development; the law-making and law-enforcing framework; political and economic stability); human resources; and other resources (natural, production, financial, science and technical, technological, tourist infrastructure growth). The purpose of the novelties is to establish new processes or products, perfecting and creating new materials, equipment, technological processes, products, services, and methods; and modifications of management systems, which allow for the improvement of activities in the tourist company.

The following research aims to reveal the importance of innovation activity in tourism, to explore innovation and investment as an opportunity for their realisation, and to point out the impact of technological innovations on the processes in tourism. The subject of the research is the innovation activity and the object, and its role in the improvement of the operations management in tourism.

Literary Analysis of Tourism Innovations

The scientific papers of the Bulgarian scientists on the theory of investments and innovation – Yordanov, Yovkova, Emilova, and Gatovski – are used for the purposes of this analysis. The works of foreign specialists from the same subject area – Pancholi, Yigitcanlar, Guaralda, Dzhandzhugazovaa, Blinovaa, Orlovaa, and Romanovaa – have been explored. The theoretical speeches of Chase, Ekinline, and Jacobs, chief production and operations management specialists, as well as Russian authors from the same field – Pivovarov, Maximev, Rogva, and Hutieva – have also been taken into consideration.

In clarifying the specifics of tourism innovations, it is necessary to research them in the reproduction process where innovation improves the qualitative and quantitative characteristics of each element of the tourism system. In connection with this, there is a problem of revealing the nature and peculiarities of the innovations in the sector and their nature, caused by the determination of the nodal points of the reproduction cycle.

Today, in the tourism sector, material factors such as hotel room price give way to non-material criteria, such as individualizing the supply, and accelerating the service process. A major role for the performance of such services is due to the different innovative technologies applied in the tourism industry. It provides fast, accurate, and operational work on behalf of not only the staff but also the entire tourist enterprise. Thus, they become a prerequisite for improving the operations management of the tourist enterprise.

Tourists in the modern world are particularly sensitive to the quality of the service they receive. The needs of today's customers are constantly changing. According to Tsvetkova (2014b, 105), consumers are looking for the quality of the service offered, based on the price, staff, equipment, and image of the company, or all that they can see and judge. Visitors are no longer satisfied with the standard service or the comfortable hotel room, which requires looking for new routes for quality service, and new approaches, concepts, and methods for providing unique travel products. This can be done by using the opportunities of technological innovation.

It is really interesting to see how scientific ideas can be successfully implemented in the tourism system, where innovation-investment processes are endless and dependent on the constantly changing needs of the consumers. The successful implementation of a novelty is called "innovation."

The literary analysis highlights market novelty, the properties of which can be used for expanding the customer service (tourists, in this specific case), increasing the number of product functions (e.g. the product being

accessible to locals and tourists) and modifying the tourist needs as the most important characteristic of the innovation.

Towards innovation in tourism, Emilova (2017) identifies those innovations that lead to: reconstruction and development of the spiritual and physical forces of the tourist; qualitatively new changes in attraction properties; increasing the efficiency of the functioning of the tourism infrastructure; increasing the sustainable management of tourism in the destination; increasing the efficiency of the processes of formation, provision, and consumption of tourist services; a progressive change in production factors (for example, reducing road time by introducing new, faster modes of transport, improving the working conditions of workers in the tourism industry, and introducing new progressive mechanisms for transforming production factors into services); increasing the image and competitiveness of the tourist enterprise; and stabilization and improvement of the quality of the physical-geographic environment used in tourism.

The innovations in tourism should be seen as systemic events that have a quality innovation and lead to a positive development, ensuring the sustainable functioning and development of the industries in the region. Thus, the discovery of a complex of small museums that do not even produce significant profits can boost the development of tourism and thereby contribute to creating additional jobs and increasing the incomes of the population.

Amabile (1996) defines innovation as the successful implementation of creative ideas in any organisation or company, and believes that the creativity of an individual or a group is the starting point of every innovation. According to the same author, innovation is important for several reasons:

- lifestyle is changing rapidly, and therefore the development of innovations should be adapted to it
- innovations that manage flexibility are part of the creation of agreements regarding the operation of enterprises. Innovations thus require originality, flexibility, and creativity

The nature of the innovations defines them as evolutionary and radical. The evolutionary innovations can be classified according to: functioning subject and influence on production process and tourist-firm activity, and the nature of the satisfied necessities. The traditional approach to the type of novelties classified in the functioning subject is their differentiation in product innovation and process innovation. Product innovations are presented as fundamentally new or improved products. Process innovations

are related to technical, production, or management improvement, which leads to lowering the costs in the production of tourist products and perfecting the service offering methods.

In addition to the abovementioned innovation in tourism is what can be determined as the material and technical creation of new materials, products, services, and technologies; the economic emergence of new markets caused by the introduction of new products and technologies; innovation in organisation and management – modern solutions and approaches to managing or organising the work process; legal innovation – new laws and regulations; social innovation – new concepts based on expanding types of tourism; and marketing – advanced or improved marketing methods, including design and product packaging changes, new pricing strategies, and so on (Dzhandzhugazovaa et al. 2016).

The innovation activity in tourism is developing in three categories:

1. Introduction of innovations (organisational innovations), related to the growth of the company and the tourist business in the system and structure of management, including reorganisation and stabilization on the basis of modern technologies; human resources policies (change of personnel, increase of qualifications, pre-qualification, and the motivation of employees); and rational economic and financial activities (introducing new forms of accountancy).
2. Marketing innovations, allowing for covering the needs of wanted customers and attracting new clients.
3. Periodic innovations (product innovations), targeted at the change in the customer properties of the tourist product and its positioning (Novikov 2007).

The close link between the elements of tourism determines the necessity of introducing innovation in each of them. For example, the use of the latest models of high-performance passenger transport requires the development of advanced passenger-facing coverings, advanced road-traffic regulation schemes, and increased safety measures (Gatovski 2016).

Innovation as a process is characterized by irreversibility, direction, and regularity. Only the simultaneous presence of these three properties in these changes connects them with the process of development, e.g. it classifies them as a realisation of the "development functions" in relation to the particular object of management. In this way, the adoption of novelties needs a systematic approach to managing the domestic and external environment of the tourism company, for the mechanism of

absorbing innovation, and to provide resources. The implementation of the innovation activity is inextricably linked with its provision. This requires the consideration of the investments as a basis for their realisation.

Implementation Strategy for Innovation

Innovation processes that ensure the transition from a qualitative state of the product to a higher one require resource consumption, investment, and time. In this consideration of the development of tourism in terms of the principle of the new approach, oriented to the combination of tourists' needs, extended scientific knowledge, and organisational and economic decisions, a new approach has been invested for these purposes.

Typically, when we say investment, we understand the embedment of financial resources with the idea of earning income in the future. This approach to considering investment is predominant in economic literature (Yordanov 2014).

In tourism, investments mean the use of financial resources in the form of long-term (over one year) capital deposits in the tourism sector, both in the country and abroad, in order to obtain the desired profit from these funds. In other words, investments in tourism are a process of creating new tourist sites with the help of capital, as well as the modernisation or reconstruction of the existing ones, which are able to provide certain types of tourist services.

An important source of investment in the development of the sector in the region can be a certain activity of the population (the use of personal funds, property, intellectual potential in the form of gratuitous contribution to culture, sponsorship, etc.), creating new values. The source of investment is the financing of social projects from budget and extra-budgetary non-trade funds (Yovkova 2014).

It should be noted that the greatest investment activity in the field of tourism is currently observed in those areas where the sector is declared a priority for a socially significant type of entrepreneurial activity, while the weight of the consolidated budget investments is small.

The analysis of the regional tourism development programs shows that all the problems of the sector are limited to the necessity of building new hotels that are related to the most capital-intensive element of the infrastructure. Special reductions at country level are often required. Such a paradoxical situation where a highly-profitable sector needs concessions and donations does not exist anywhere in the world. There is another issue. The attraction of investments, including foreign ones, is sustained in a number of cases, not because of the absence of financial sources but

because of the absence of materials and documents (e.g. single tourist cadastre, main scheme for the placement of tourist objects, power and valuation of tourist resources), confirming the investment attractiveness of these or other tourist sites.

The new content of the investment process in tourism is that:

- The sector's financing should include the external and internal territorial environment in which tourism is being developed.
- Targeted investments should be geared towards solving tasks stemming from the objectives of sustainable tourism development in the region as a systemic entity, with particular attention paid to the management of external relations, their activation, and the search for own and attracted capital.
- In a high level of connectivity, elements of tourism as an investment system must be complex rather than selective and cover all vital elements of the infrastructure of the sector (it is absurd, for example, to build a hotel in a free territory without securing its own infrastructure).
- Investment processes must be continuous regarding objective and subjective factors (e.g. changes in the needs of tourists, the moral and physical aging of elements of the tourist infrastructure, and the need for their extended reproduction).
- The investment process must precede customers' needs and also provide for the decommissioning of any elements of the infrastructure capable of disrupting the operation of the whole system. This determines the creation of reserves.
- Capital must be focused on these elements and their properties, which give the greatest synergistic effect and prevent the occurrence of negative synergy (Pancholi et al. 2015).

Innovative investment resources, which are the most important factors for sustainable tourism development, determine the need for innovation expertise and the development of an innovation strategy. The combined and targeted system use of funding allows for a reduction in the significance of probability nature factors and an increase of those with a complex, planned, and sufficiently foreseeable nature. Therefore, there is a need to plan and manage innovation-investment activity in the sector, ensuring the extended reproduction of the interconnected elements of the tourism system, which in turn ensures its sustainable development.

Application of Innovation in Operations Management

Also interesting are the opportunities for innovation to improve the processes in tourism. They can be sought in improving the delivery of services that is directly related to operations management. The implementation of innovation can be sought in several directions. Tsvetkova points out that innovation, regardless of the field of application, creates a resource. Innovation is a means by which entrepreneurs use change as an opportunity in a business or service (2017, p. 151).

Innovations have a specific impact on the technological process of service in tourism. The exact choice of technology in the process of shaping and improving the management of the tourism organisation is the basis for "production" and the provision of services. Technology means a set of organisational actions, operations, and techniques directed to the production, maintenance, repair and/or operation of a product with rated power and optimal costs, determined by the state of the art, technology, and society as a whole (Pivovarov et al. 2011).

As an activity related to development, usage, and improvement of the production systems, which are responsible for the productions of the main capital and services of the tourist company, operation management is the part of the business with best-defined management functions (Chase et al. 2004). In the tourist organisation, the resources are under the management process. This includes entrance; for a company, entering resources can be determined as: information (non-material assets and communications), personnel, finances, and production (including material assets, labour resources, and labour objects); production functions – the march of their implementation resources are transformed into products and services; and the exit of production processes and results from the outside environment to the consumers. The results of the production process are reaching the predetermined goals by the tourist firm, with a character of materialistic (goods) and non-materialistic (services) (Pivovarov et al. 2011).

One of the main tasks of operations managers is to make decisions that will ensure the successful operation of the travel company. In the course of tourism, they monitor the problems arising from the technology used in the provision of tourist services and also take into account the new opportunities for the company that have emerged as a result of innovation. The improvement of the technology is related to strategic changes in the service and equipment, and the rapid adaptation of the employees directly related to the service and their readiness to accept the changes along with their motivation. The practical use of the new achievements of science and technology is aimed at increasing the productivity of the tourist enterprise

and satisfying the tourist needs, and hence preserving the competitiveness of the company.

For the successful conduct of their business, managers in the tourism industry should have information about the potential opportunities that the innovations used. Modern technologies find three areas of application in the tourism company:

- Developing new products and services that are valuable to the client. Their creation aims to increase the volume of sales in the lifecycle of the older products. Offering a new or renewed service before competitors is a source of competitive advantage.
- Improving ways of producing goods and services. The most effective method of introducing new technologies is to simultaneously improve the product or service and the way it is offered. This requires specialists to improve the tourist product itself and specialists to improve the technology for its delivery. Good practice for such a collaborative work in the field of innovation is the complex automated production (CIM).
- The role of technology in the process of creating value for consumers.

In the case of technology, the working methods of the travel company are considered. Their perfection allows for the creation of new services that are valuable for tourists. Different automation systems are used to quickly respond to market changes. A good example of this is the use of expert systems. These allow the quality of the tourist service to be improved by using a database that includes the knowledge of tourism-industry experts.

The introduction of innovations in tourism is linked to the need for the serious training of specialists. The change in technology is in line with the changing behaviour and thinking of employees. Therefore, the behavioural aspect of the planned changes is subject to analysis and discussion among the managers of the tourism organisation. The goal is to create a corporate environment that will make the enterprise open to introducing innovation of all kinds. It is necessary to build such a microclimate within the workforce which will stimulate employees to not only accept the innovations but also encourage them to seek ways to improve the process of providing a tourist service. This means encouraging their technical competences and creating favourable conditions for the adoption of new ideas (Pivovarov et al. 2011).

Corporations guided by the principle of continuous improvement are always looking for new ways to implement innovative solutions. Innovation and operations management is of paramount importance for the development of the sector and its effective functioning. The innovation activity should be carried out mainly in the directions which determine the level of its technical development and which to a great extent determine the quality of work and the productivity of labour (Tsvetkova 2017, 153).

Innovation in tourism is very much focused on the information flows with which the sector operates. Reducing costs and improving the quality and speed of service delivery operations are linked to the ability of a tourism organisation to manage and process the flow of information. The relentless development of electronics over the past decades has also entered the service sphere with the use of a variety of new technologies. They can be summarized as follows:

- Office Automation – integrates various technologies to improve service processes. It includes personal computers, text editors, spreadsheets, email and voicemail, and conferencing. These tools are used to quickly and efficiently transmit and distribute the information.
- Image Processing Systems – advanced digital and optical technologies used for scanning, inputting, storing, and reproducing images. The system increases the accuracy of paid-for services.
- Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) – a company's information system is converted into the input data of another (e.g. sales) information system without delay. This technology provides an effective means of rapidly exchanging information between the suppliers of products or services and their users.
- Decision Support and Expert Systems – provide support in the decision-making process and sometimes even replace this process.
- Network Computer Systems – PCs and computing machines connect to a single network. This allows customers to use the hardware, programs, data, and other resources (Chase et al. 2004).

The positive economic and social impact of innovation is reflected in higher education and workforce culture, the intellectualisation of work, creating new productions and jobs, improving the service sphere, meeting needs more efficiently, and improving the lifestyle and living standards of people. But innovation has a dual manifestation in the social sphere, and can also lead to some negative consequences related to cutbacks in service departments, workforce release, and so on. This can lead to resistance to

innovation. Therefore, the result of any innovation needs to be well appreciated, especially in the social sphere (Tsvetkova 2014a, 15).

However, we must not miss the fact that the introduction of innovations in tourism is associated with significant investment. Before acquiring any technology, the tourist company must make a thorough analysis of the financial and business benefits of this acquisition. Assessing the economic feasibility of the investment is a difficult task because the purpose of investing in innovation is not just a reduction in labour costs but an increase in quality, an expansion of the range of products and services offered, a reduction in the timing of new products, and increasing the flexibility of the production process. Additionally, the introduction of new solutions does not necessarily reduce production and labour costs. Innovations may prove to be economically impractical. Moreover, the gradual development of innovative technologies leads to a rapid aging of the acquired equipment, and this makes a cost-benefit assessment an even more complex task.

Chase, Ekinline, and Jacobs determine the material and intangible nature of the benefits of introducing new technologies. Material advantages are criteria in traditional methods of financial analysis, the results of which can be used together with the assessment of intangible values. They are applied for economic and strategic justification by investing capital in innovation. This reduces production costs, involving: the automation of processes leading to a reduction in labour costs; new technologies in the cost of materials allowing alternative materials to be used which are cheaper than the old ones or provide higher yields; inventory costs and quality assurance costs; transport and delivery costs ensuring close contact with suppliers and users and reducing the costs of selling and transporting the product; and other costs, where innovation reduces maintenance and repair costs, energy costs, etc. (Chase et al. 2004).

Pointing out the peculiarities in operation management in tourism and taking in mind the special features of the tourist product (intangibility, seasonality, inflexibility, inventory, inconsistency, and others) requires the suppliers of tourism services and tourist firms to search for new ways of attracting clients – in other words, innovations. The implementation of modern ideas and practices requires the establishment of flexible, adaptive management system which can coordinate the actions of all participants in the deliverance of tourism services. Transport, medical and healing-rehabilitating machines, computer technologies, and the internet are all resources from other infrastructures, but they all find a place in the tourism industry. Along with innovative methods for exploring the market and

gathering information, the modern means for popularizing the product and the service, the means which improve the quality and the safety of the tourism product are very important to the marketing innovations (Tihomirova and Andreeva 2015).

In conclusion, we can point out that, in the automatization of administrative management activities, the expert and computer system can find a purpose in all levels of management in a tourism company. Throughout them, the activity of cooperation between the different departments of the company and the communication between the employees are increased. These methods allow for the speeding up of client servicing, reduction of costs, and fast execution of orders. The integration of the database and the faster forwarding of information through communication channels open new opportunities for the practical implementation of IT. Co-operators in direct communication with the consumers have access to the clients' information from the database of the company. This information allows them to service the clients in the best way possible.

The systems of management and automatic information systems used in the hotel business allow for the automatization of all steps of servicing the customers, starting from the ticket reservation, through check-in, to final payment, and also allow for the automatization of the main business processes – from the housekeeping work to the accountancy organisation. With the usage of this automatization, the time needed for each operation is significantly shortened, the speed and effectiveness of communicating with the guests are improved, and in addition the process of the service is also shortened. These management systems, along with global and alternative systems of distribution, are subject to future research.

Discussion and Conclusion

Innovation in tourism can be a significant source of competitive advantage as long as it is applied in the most appropriate way. Thanks to the introduction of innovation, the competitiveness of the tourism company is improved by increasing the efficiency of tourism and reducing costs. New technologies have an impact on the operations priorities for the implementation and operation of the service processes. In particular, they are achieved by: minimizing costs; improving the quality and reliability of services; reducing service or delivery times; reliability of supply; the company's ability to respond to changes in demand; and the flexibility and speed of use of new technologies.

A source of competitive advantage is the ability of a travel company to offer a new or renewed service before its competitors. In this way, innovative solutions can achieve a significant advantage. Imovative solutions reduce the length of the production cycle and ensure the company's ability to react quickly to changes in market demand. They provide flexibility to the operating system to meet the demand of tourists. The time needed for the tourist enterprise to develop new products or to transform existing ones is reduced. Flexibility leads to lower costs for business processes, a better quality of the finished service, contributes to greater reliability and security, and impacts on speed and time performance.

Imovative technologies provide openness to the operating system and change the service process and equipment. They directly affect resource inputs – material, financial, informational, and human – providing input competitiveness;

- Feedback: enhancing the technical competencies of staff, the volume of financial and material resources, the development of information channels, complaints, the relationship with tourism service providers, etc.

- By influencing the input, IT influences the outcome of the service process in the form of goods of a material nature (commodity) and non-material character (service).

The innovative activity in the tourism environment is targeted and the creation of new or modifying already-existing products, new forms of service, or the improvement of old service methods in the tourism industry are directed at the perfecting the technological processes. Novelties modernise the transport and tourism services. New markets are formed and new clients are attracted thanks to the implementation of new products. The innovation processes lead to the implementation of leading informatic and telecommunication technologies and modern forms of organisation and management activities.

The innovation process in tourism is specific. It receives recognition, on the one hand, through the tourist market and the level of customer satisfaction, and on the other mainly thanks to the joint decision making by the tourism enterprises, the sector's governing bodies, the local authorities and the public organisations whose activity is tourism, investors, financial institutions, contractors, suppliers, etc., as well as thanks to the sector's assessment of the local population. Only such interaction between all the elements (subjects and objects) of the innovation process can lead to the emergence of a significant synergistic effect expressed in the growth (development) of tourism. The complexity and transformation of discoveries, when the introduction of the new in one

area produces an effect on another, constitute their essence in the sector because they need a scientifically grounded organisation and management.

The tourism innovation process has started moving upwards, particularly with the increasing development of information and communication technologies and the availability of the internet that greatly assist the development of innovation. The innovation process in tourism enterprises contributes to their greater competitiveness, and, besides new products and services, innovations are also reflected in new ways of conducting business and the reformation of organisational structures.

Conclusion

In order to maintain their success on the tourist market in the long run, tourist companies have to constantly improve their products and services. The preservation of their competitiveness is guaranteed by investing money in innovation. The implementation of leading technologies, motivation and training of staff, and building a favourable corporate environment are factors that increase the efficiency of tourism activity.

In our opinion, the application of innovative technologies opens new opportunities for tourism enterprises to improve the quality of services offered, and new ways to improve customer service. The high data collection and processing speed allows for the gathering of information about the tourists' preferences. This allows them to serve needs in-depth and build loyalty programs. Information systems simplify the process of rendering the service, enable staff to work flexibly and effectively, and are a way to quickly meet emerging needs. Modern products offer new markets, and create opportunities to attract new consumers to cover unoccupied market niches. Innovative practices change the organisational structure of tourism enterprises, and create new concepts and approaches to governance, along with new laws and regulations.

The integration of information technologies with the automation of administrative and management activities leads to greater operational efficiency, the optimization of processes, and greater accuracy in the execution of operations. The achievements of technical progress ensure reliability, flexibility in the process of providing the service, product quality, and speeding up customer service rates.

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CHAPTER FIVE

THE VIRTUAL SPACE AND THE INNOVATIONAL APPROACHES TO THE FORMATION OF REPUTATION IN THE FIELD OF TOURISM

BORIS BORISOFF

Abstract

This paper's aim is to provide a review of how companies which operate in the field of tourism can increase their competitive advantages through the use of the competent management of their reputation, especially in the virtual space. This article provides innovative strategies and concrete, practical recommendations and solutions for maintaining and managing corporate reputation online with examples from Bulgarian destinations.

Keywords: governing reputation on the internet, tourism, Bulgaria

Introduction

There are two main factors which are crucial for successful management in the field of tourism. They are determined by the answers to the questions: what do we know about the destination (in this article, destination is a collective term for everything from a hotel to a city or a country), and to whom can it be applied (i.e. what is the target group of tourists)? However, to achieve the needed stable dynamics, a third factor, which sometimes, if not always, can cast a shadow over the first two, is absolutely necessary. This third component is reputation. The important question about this is: what makes the destination recognisable? Is recognition even possible? Here, an innovative approach is applied, and the article starts with the conclusions in the introduction.

The answer to the issue of recognisability implies that reputation is the crucial factor in success. This factor is not uniquely valid in the service sector, where the information space is oversaturated with images and symbols. This factor is valid for all professional areas in our world. It is precisely such reasoning that leads to another conclusion – that the act of creating and managing public reputation can be characterised as an exciting process, accompanied by many and sometimes difficult-to-measure awards. In this article, the importance of public reputation is precisely the small detail, defining the only difference between professionalism and the dominating institutionalism.

Regardless of the field of one's professional career, the ability to create and manage reputation is vital in order to achieve maximum success. One of the proofs in this direction is the differentiation of the celebrity industry segment, which we could define as a celebrity formation industry, or the industry for forming celebrity status. Currently, the most obvious example for a product of this industry is Kylie Jenner, who used her reputation created through her family, who are also a product of this industry, and *Forbes* magazine gave her the title of the youngest self-made billionaire. Jenner has turned herself into an institution. She has 112.5 million followers on Instagram alone. Just one of her posts on social media can create or destroy a reputation. This is the reason why her posts are considered to be one of the most well-paid for advertising products. Jenner has not just created her own reputation but turned into a machine for creating other's reputations across the internet. This highlights how important it is for one to invest in their good name, especially online and through social networks.

Creating a good reputation in the tourism sphere using the internet is a question with multiple solutions. The vast majority of these solutions are differentiated as a result of public assessments, based on a wide range of economic, moral, and social criteria. The already built reputation has always been of the upmost importance in the corporate world, as well as in all other major areas of human activity. In this sense, online publications can be seen as a component of identity, which is modelled by other subjects.

Prerequisites for Managing the Online Reputation in the Field of Tourism

There is no need for further proof that reputation has immense influence in the digital world, where sometimes even one negative search result can dramatically change the public opinion of a person, an

organisation, or a brand. While it is true that there are specific moments that increase the importance of online reputation, maintaining a positive reputation in the virtual space requires constant efforts. The main reason for this is that the need for a good reputation can arise at any point in time.

The theoretical attempts to manage reputation in the virtual space in this article should also be supported by some examples from real life. A survey was specifically conducted for this article at the end of 2017. The main question of this survey was to what extent having an internet presence helps or causes ill fortune for the tour operators. In the current moment, a big proportion of tour operators' ventures are online. According to the survey, 78% of the users of the tourist market start their research in the virtual space. These people do not just search for what they need but also focus on the online reputation of the websites for the different tour operators before reserving their holidays and making payments. The results show that clients, to whom the reputation of the tour operator is of critical importance, are 81%. Therefore, a good online reputation is of the upmost importance in order to secure a tour operators' survival.

Changing Reality as a Consequence of Changing One's Reputation

The popularity of a tourism destination does not depend only on those working in the sphere of tourism but also on the members of the local governments. This naturally brings up another question: "what steps must be taken by the local governments in order to improve not only their image but to offer the tourists a more attractive destination?" According to Philip Kotler (1993), "there are enough spatial and financial constraints, which influence various stages of the decision-making process during a marketing campaign process." Based on these constraints, in this article we will attempt to distinguish two main approaches for governing the reputation of tourism destinations in the virtual space.

The first of these options is the strategic approach. The strategic approach is related to changing the image of a tourist destination, which could also lead to a change in the reality. This approach takes the view that "the main problems of the destination will be solved initially and only then will it [the destination] be promoted in the tourist market" (Kotler et al. 1999). In implementing the strategic approach, change can be accomplished in several stages:

- in-depth monitoring of the specific tourist destination. On the basis of this monitoring are the infrastructure, local services, and existing attractions
- diagnosing the reasons which led to the existing problems. The diagnosing of the needs of not only the tourists but also of the permanent residents and the tourist business in its entirety must be examined detailly
- building a strategic vision for the change needed. Here, one has to take into account that if the quality of the services offered is not at the needed level then the campaign for governing the reputation will only lead to a loss of effort and resources
- planning actions in order to accomplish the vision. Such planning should be relative to the opportunities for success – financing, building new attractions, improving the quality of life, improving the attractiveness of the destination, and providing the necessary human, infrastructure, and other resources.

In Bulgaria, a positive example from recent years is the city of Burgas, where all these steps have been undertaken. The infrastructure was improved by adding high-speed sections which allow for faster crossing of the city and reduce the traffic. The Sea Garden has been turned into a modern museum, which provides knowledge about the city's history but also breath-taking views of the city and fun attractions. There are a few photo-frame locations, which people can use. The posts on social media increase the positive reputation of the city and promote it to the other social-media users. Even spa tourism is easily accessible, such as the sea-salt baths which are accessed through tourist eco-buses. Such innovations lead to the increase in the number of tourists and economic benefits to the city and its citizens.

Therefore, creating a new strategical vision must respond to the pre-existing attitudes in the target tourist population, which will in turn use these components. In the target groups, local residents must be included, and their opinion should be considered of key importance. In short, the new strategic vision should depend on investing in infrastructure, education, and culture. This ensures the long-term quality of the services offered.

The second option is the so-called cosmetic approach. This approach is related to the attempt to change the image of a destination without any real-life changes. Basically, this approach can only be applied once the strategic approach has been completed, as the cosmetic approach is appropriate for destinations which do not have any "big" issues (e.g.

infrastructure), but the problem lies in the lack of the good representation of the destination. Therefore, the destination should be made more attractive. Hence, this approach mainly relies on good marketing, which, as previously mentioned, in recent years means a good online reputation. The different online marketing strategies will be discussed in greater detail in the following sections.

Key Actions in Managing the Reputation of Tourist Destinations

The main factors, for which more effort should be applied, in the governing of the reputation of tourist destinations (which themselves do not have a favourable image) are usually connected with:

- an unacceptable or underdeveloped business sphere
- an undeveloped infrastructure
- a weak and undeveloped property market.

Precisely such problems are often underestimated by specialists in the area of governing the reputation of a specific tourist destination. This is what imposes the active involvement of the local governmental authorities in solving these problems, which are in the public's interest, especially in regions which are highly dependable in terms of income from tourism. The gravity of these problems and their solution are directly related to understanding that the bad reputation of a specific location requires creating strategies which are mostly connected with the belief that people (from a broad public point of view) could be *taught* to positively evaluate a specific tourist destination. This leads to the idea that the efforts in solving this problem should be directed to the people outside the destination. The prerequisites for such actions are based on the fact that the local community and authorities are well aware of the already-existing bad reputation. It is often that their opinion is formed by negative comments from people who do not live in the specific destination. Even before modern technologies were available, in 1982 Philip Pierce proved that visiting a tourist destination positively changes the perceptions of the tourists of the location. Today, using modern technologies such as comments on social-media websites and blogs, it is even easier to change the opinion of potential tourists, even before the tourists have visited the destination.

According to Nigel Morgan and Annette Pritchard from the University of Wales (2001), the change in the existing problematic situation in tourist

destinations requires uniting "the efforts of the local governments, the local business, the organisations with ideal purposes and the local citizens." Such a union could lead to a large-scale transformation. It must be noted that such a cooperation should be supported by quite a large amount of funds, connected with the hiring of specialists in the governing of reputation. It is crucial that all four sides of the union are well-represented in the social-media websites to allow potential tourists to find out about what is offered as well as see the opinions of other tourists who have already visited the destinations.

There are quite a few examples for successful unions between private business, regional or national tourist organisations, and members of the local government, which have led to changes in the reputation of specific tourist destinations. In Bulgaria, such a successful union exists in Varna. Ever since its creation in 1991, the Varna Chamber of Tourism (http://www.vct-bg.org) has put constant efforts into the stable development in different areas of the tourism sphere in the northeast region of Bulgaria. These organisations are monitoring the sector by gathering, processing, storing, and propagating current information which is important for the destination. A key part of the actions undertaken by the Varna Chamber of Tourism concerns the analysis and evaluation of the existing infrastructure as well as the needed changes to the infrastructure. In this way, Varna has turned itself into an undisputed leader in terms of the number of tourist visits in the north Black Sea region. The only problem with the Chamber of Tourism is that its website is in Bulgarian only, which limits the international tourists by depending on a Google translation of the website. However, such unions have their positives and are formed in other Bulgarian cities such as Burgas. From the mountain resorts in Bulgaria, Bansko is a good example for the effects of such unions. Bansko has participated in the World Ski Cup in recent times, which has led to a good online reputation for the destination. Such unions are on the basis of creating a positive reputation of every destination.

Changing the Reputation of a Tourist Destination

A team of international prestige, including Philip Kotler, has determined four groups which actively influence the marketing of the tourist destination:

- local participants from the public and private sectors, including the mayor, members of the municipal council, managers of tourist

bureaus, representatives of travel agencies and the hotel business, and citizens from the area

- regional participants, such as leaders in the local economic development, district governors, and representatives of regional tourism boards
- national participants, including regional policy leaders, directors of investment agencies, and heads of the national tourist boards
- international participants, who could be representatives of the foreign consulates and representatives from international agencies for investments

According to this article, from the aforementioned groups, the group with the biggest importance and at the same time that is most often underestimated is that of the local participants. It is time to agree that, from the point of view of building a reputation, it is important to listen to the opinion of the so-called "local elite" or national government structures involved with the marketing actions and governing the brand of the tourist destination. Local residents have specific knowledge about the characteristics of the location and can provide support, the value of which is underestimated but at the same time is invaluable in terms of creating and applying the needed marketing plan. The only drawback comes from the fact that it is hard to coordinate the different governmental, local and non-government organisations, corporations, and private citizens. Regardless, it is absolutely crucial that all the interests are heard and involved in the creation of the strategy. It is hard to take a few very different points of view and make them all part of the public interest. It must not be forgotten that the bigger the level of coordination of the separate actions, the more likely it is that the marketing plan will tum a big profit, as previously demonstrated for Burgas, Vama, and Bansko.

Creating and Developing Public Relations (PR)

For the purpose of this article, the classic definitions of public relations given by Philip Kotler is used. This definition states: "Public relations is the effort to build good communication interactions with the public, on the part of individual organisational structures by gaining favourable publicity, building a good public image and processing or diverting unfavourable audiences and real events" (Rein et al. 2006). Public relations (PR) is among the main actions when promoting a certain tourist destination. This implies relationships with the media, organising public events, and even lobbying. Regardless of which of these three instruments

is leading in a specific case, the focus of this paper is only on PR in the way it uses media in an effort to get more popularity for a specific tourist destination.

Using different types of PR in tourism shows that most often PR actions are undertaken by a speaker or a press attaché as well as through a specialised outside agency. It is common knowledge that when a PR expert manages to present a good story in the media it will have a positive effect on the specific destination, which is promoted in front of a somewhat heterogeneous audience. It must be noted that PR is considered an instrument which has a lower financial value but is more reliable than advertising. This leads to its massive use due to its higher pragmatic value.

Increasing the credibility, in terms of the presentation of a specific tourist destination, forces experts in PR to work on both the positive and negative aspects of the given destination. It must be ignored that, in addition to popularising the positive sides of a location, it is equally important to prevent or lower the impact from negative news published about the destination. For instance, New York is a destination whose reputation from the beginning of the twentieth century was of a mobster city, whereas nowadays it is one of the most famous and popular tourist destinations in the world, even after surviving the most infamous terrorist attack in history. In Bulgaria there are no such PR problems to face related to the criminal sector, but there is an example of dealing with the consequences of a terrorist attack on tourists. The Burgas local government as well as the national government did not allow the terrorist attack from 2012 to make other tourists feel unsafe. It is important to be open about the big crises but also offer quick and reliable solutions.

Marketing of Tourist Destinations in the Virtual Space

Today, the internet allows access to numerous websites that contain information about tourist visits and tourism investors. In the public space there is multi-layered information available for the general tourist services offered at a specific location, as well as information for specific hotels or tourist attractions. Last but not least, marketing is used to exert an influence on the educational services (for instance, advertising through prestigious universities in the area), in addition to the low unemployment rates, the existing infrastructure, and hosting different sport and cultural events. For example, the Burgas Municipality has put a lot of effort into winning the "best city" in Bulgaria competition organised by Darik Radio.

In comparison to conventional opportunities in PR, the internet offers many different advantages, such as flexible design, access to the target

groups of tourists, concise information, and the crucial feedback. Websites (Google Maps, Booking.com, etc.) offer not just a map of the tourist destination but an opportunity to research in full detail the images, create virtual tours, and get personalised advice specific to each tourist. The websites create a vision of the location while offering hyperactive links to other websites of the local partners – hotels, restaurants, attractions, and nearby tourist destinations. These links are created based on the unions which were previously discussed.

Using multi-layered communication, the internet encourages the receiving and use of feedback between organisational structures and tourists, and the tourists themselves. This leads to the conclusion that "an Internet website must make it as easy as possible to communicate with the outside stakeholders" (Димитрова 2014). The web allows people, who are otherwise engaged with governing tasks, to look for the opinion of the tourists on any question that could be of importance. For instance, a public vote could be used to choose a logo, look for the symbols which make the location unique, or simply pick the most attractive slogan. In this way, the positive change happens on two levels: the tourists are well informed about the locations, and are shown that their opinion is highly valued.

Conclusion

This article describes and summarises some of the significant opportunities for transforming the reputation of tourist destinations in the virtual space. Examples are given for the correct use of such strategies in Bulgaria and specific attention is given to Burgas, Vama, and Bansko. Among the conclusions is the fact that building a good reputation is a long, complicated, and in no way low-budget process. Such multi-layered procedures require the coordination of many factors, instruments, resources, and the pivotal help from reputable experts.

The classic writing of a strategic plan to change the reputation of tourist destinations requires one to define the goals and target audience according to the specific characteristics of the location. The main components of such plans include the creation of the logo, the advertising message, and the mandatory visualisation of the site through appropriate symbols. In its final stage, these components should be chosen using different social-media websites in order to obtain the fullest feedback from past and potential new tourists.

The efficient and effective management of each of these components will have a significant impact on the transformation of reputation and its popularisation. The instruments and techniques presented in this article

largely depend on the objectives set – from the characteristics of the target audience to the available financial and human resources.

Reputation is such an essential public instrument that it makes it an omnipresent, spontaneous, and highly efficient mechanism for social control in all manifestations of human civilisation so far. This is one of the reasons why reputation should be the subject of research in the areas of social, management, and technology science. Its impact varies based on whether it is used to describe the relationships between different financial transactions, social organisations, institutions (in their diversity), or individual communities.

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CHAPTER SIX

THE "NEW" ROLE OF TOURISM INFORMATION CENTRES IN THE TOURIST DESTINATION REGARDING THE OFFER OF LOCAL SOUVENIRS

HRISTINA FILIPOVA

Abstract

The aim of the following paper is to present information regarding the innovative role of tourist information centres as promoters of local souvenirs, including artisanal crafts, gastronomy, and other items. In order to achieve this, a field research in the form of direct observation of the souvenir offer in three "offices de tourisme" in one of the world's most famous tourist destinations, France, was conducted. Several examples of good and confusing practices regarding these items are presented and analysed. The results of the research prove that if a tourist destination has clearly established its distinctive features such as symbols, history, and culture it can successfully integrate it in its local souvenirs and create a finished "authentic" and recognisable product. In this way, regional artisanal items will be preserved and remembered by the tourists. Souvenirs fulfil different roles for the travellers and the local community. They provide a permanent reminder of past journeys and experiences. Local souvenirs hold specific meanings and are truly a representation of the unique cultural heritage of the tourist destination. The examples presented and analysed in the paper are innovative ways to display and sell these products. The strategies used are universal and can be used in different tourist information centres.

Keywords: souvenirs, tourist information centres, cultural heritage, artisanal crafts, tourist destination

Introduction

Tourism is a fast-growing sector with multiple private and public actors involved in its development. Tourist information centres (TICs) are one of them. Once used mainly as a source of information regarding specific tourist destinations, historical and cultural monuments, or natural parks, nowadays their role has changed significantly. From passive units, they have become active members and representatives of local communities in specific tourist places. They are helping in the process of the preservation of cultural heritage in different ways. In the near future, this specific role of TICs will continue to be important for the tourist destinations because local artisans and their work are threatened by the globalisation process and the imported mass-produced souvenirs. The following paper will focus on a specific sector of tangible cultural heritage – local souvenirs, and how TICs find new and innovative ways to inform tourists and present these unique artisanal products to them. In order to achieve this, a quick literature review regarding artisanal souvenirs and TICs is presented. The paper also contains a study of the souvenir offer in three TICs in one of the world's most famous tourist destinations, France. Based on the results of the observation, some innovative practices of TICs are shown.

Literature Review

Souvenirs have existed since ancient times and have always been used as a reminder of a place visited. Today, they are associated with tourism as commercially produced tangible items purchased to remind tourists of the intangible experiences of a place (Swanson and Horridge 2006, 675; Marinov et al. 2010, 55). Souvenirs often present distant places in people's homely environment (Haldrup 2017, 53). Therefore, they are an inseparable part of a travel experience. Clawson and Knetsch (1966) explain that tourism experiences can be classified into five stages: (1) Anticipation, (2) Travelling to, (3) Onsite, (4) Travelling back, and (5) Recollection. According to them, these experiences are valuable only when they are stored and remembered through the last phase – the recollection phase. Souvenirs play a major role in this process. They are the material/tangible proof of a journey. Additionally, these items hold a significant commercial value. Based on this, three main functions of souvenirs can be distinguished: (1) memory aids, (2) evidence, and (3) gifts (Wilkins 2011, 241).

Souvenirs can hold an even deeper meaning. They play the role of transmitters of culture and the history of a destination for travellers. They have a special symbolic value attached to them. Therefore, these items have an important role in sustaining tourism development given their commercial, cultural, and historical significance (Tosun et al. 2007, 97).

Studies have shown that souvenirs can also contribute to satisfying the psychological needs of the tourists, even if the purchase is not the main travel motivation (Tosun et al. 2007, 89).

The previously presented role of souvenirs contributes to the formation of the main motives for souvenir purchase. They can be summarized in Table 6.1 below.

Table 6.1. Motives for souvenir purchasing

Motives for souvenir purchasing
To aid recall of place in general
To aid recall of specific event or activity at destination
Appreciation of aesthetic qualities
Representation of culture
Something that cannot be found at home
Something that is better than items found at home
Something thought pertinent to family history
Something thought to appeal as a gift to a significant other

Source: Based on Li and Ryan (2018, 144)

Based on the role of souvenirs and the main motives for their purchase, a wide variety of souvenirs are being created and sold to tourists. Among them, a consistent favourite are items that represent some aspect of the culture and heritage of the place visited. There are many explanations for this phenomenon. A good example is the desire to acquire mementos of a visit that differ from the familiar items at home. The difference is mainly based on something specific to the visited destination. Taking this knowledge as well as other factors into consideration, tourist destinations try to differentiate themselves from others. One way to achieve this is through the use of traditions, handicrafts, and artefacts derived from the past of the region. For Haldrup, souvenirs can even be described as modern artefacts worthy of our attention (Haldrup 2017, 53). As a result, souvenirs become a means of reinforcement of not simply difference but extension of a place's image and brand (Trinh, Ryan, and Cave 2014, 275).

In today's experiential marketplace, people are offered a variety of souvenirs to choose from while at a holiday destination (Sthapit 2018, 127). Authenticity is often considered an important factor while purchasing souvenirs. Holders of these "values" are the locally-made crafts. In the following part of the paper, the focus is on these types of souvenirs.

For a certain time, we have been witnessing the implementation of a new tourist strategy. While seeking values felt to be "more real," tourists try to immerse themselves in the heart of the local culture. They stay at the locals' houses, eat regional food, and buy locally handcrafted souvenirs (Perlès 2007, 209). Having understood this, the local residents have become true ambassadors of their regions. They impose, to the delight of the tourists, their own vision of their heritage, especially through tangible items. The use of local raw materials and the specialisation in a specific area to a certain extent allow the craftspeople to demonstrate a technique that may appear as a local specialty (Perlès 2007, 203). This leads to the creation of a "unique authentic product." An imperfection gives a rustic feel to an object and becomes a positive qualitative criterion. It can also be used as proof of the authenticity of the souvenir and its differentiation from the mechanization process. The artisanal product integrates defaults related to its execution. By positioning the creation of souvenirs in the specificity of a local context, tourists can justify the need to acquire an item "on the spot" (Perlès 2007, 203). The traveller believes that there is no other place that can imitate the specific environment in which a certain artisanal product is made.

Most artisans sell their productions directly to tourists, but at the same time they have to face big companies who provide a range of industrially made trinkets at lower prices. In order to change this situation, different local governments, communities, and organisations try to preserve the authentic qualities of the local souvenirs and their cultural meanings for the region.

TIC is considered a good way to preserve these items and their related practices. They create an opportunity for craftspeople to present and sell their goods directly to tourists. A tourist information centre or visitor centre is "a building that gives information and services to visitors to a place such as a city, historical building, or nature reserve" (macmillan dictionary.com). TICs in a specific tourist destination fulfil multiple missions (Baltova et al. 2014, 2). They provide services for the visitors and the local population and work in collaboration with the local authorities and the tourism professionals. Their tasks include:

Gathering and management of information

- give clear advice to visitors and local residents
- gather, sort, and arrange tourist information; provide detailed knowledge of the destination offer; organisation of databases
- receive visitors physically, by phone, by mail, or virtually, but also local residents
- develop tools to spread information (internet sites, mobile apps) in order to facilitate the trip in all of it stages (before, during, after), and to easily spread the tourist and commercial offer of the destination

Coordinate the professionals and all local actors in the field of tourism:

- play the role of local business provider for tourism
- help the professionals to improve their performances (digital animation of the territory, information days, rankings)
- structure the offer (encouraging hotels and campsites to participate in classifications systems, certification of private tourist accommodations, B&B)
- involve local communities in the destination tourism strategy (Greeters network, ambassador cards, meetings between locals and tourists)

Promote the advantages of the territories and destinations:

- ensure the promotion of the tourist destination online, in fairs, in press
- promote the destination and offer of the territory by publishing guides, brochures, newsletters, and emailing in order to attract customers
- design and launch communication campaigns at different scales and by using different media depending on territories
- develop social media strategies
- observe the e-reputation of the destination and the search engine optimization

Marketing of the destination:

- offer guided tours promoting the heritage and culture of the tourist destination
- develop tourist products with local authorities and businesses (museum passes, day tours for individuals or groups)

- develop a shop to promote local products (local crafts, gastronomy, souvenirs)
- sell and book tickets to visitors and the locals (shows, museums, cruise ships)

Develop event and business tourism:

- organise sport, cultural, or musical events in order to increase tourists' consumption in the destination directly
- organise professional conferences and seminars and attract more business clients

Manage collective equipment and develop a cell of territorial engineering on behalf of the community

- ensure the management of various community facilities (accommodation, parking, museums, swimming pools, cultural or natural sites)
- implement local tourism development plans (diagnosis, creation and implementation of development action plans) (www.offices-de-tourisme-de-france.org/les-offices-de-tourisme/les-missions-des-offices-de-tourisme)

Among their many tasks, TICs include the promotion of local products. They try to achieve this in various innovative ways.

Research and Findings

Many countries and cities understand the need to preserve and promote local crafts in TICs. In this paper, we will present three examples from France. The country has for many years been and continues to be a top tourist destination. France is the third largest tourism earner with US$ 61 billion reported in 2017 (UNWTO 2018) and the world's top destination in terms of arrivals, with 86.9 million tourists reported in 2017 (DGE 2018). France is a country with a deep cultural history. As we have seen, souvenirs are an inseparable part of tourism. Based on this, we can conclude that France can bring us some great examples regarding local artisanal souvenirs and the innovative role off TICs regarding them.

The research conducted in relation to this paper took place between April and May 2018. Three TICs in France were observed: L'office de tourisme du Château de Chambord, L'office de tourisme du Grand Reims, and L'office de tourisme du Château de Chevemy. In Table 6.2 below, some of the main characteristics of the three sites are presented.

Table 6.2. Characteristics of the three French TICs

	Château de Chambord	Château de Cheverny	Reims
Location	Commune of Chambord, Department of Loir-et-Cher, Region- Centre-val de Loire	Commune of Cheverny, Department of Loir-et-Cher, Region: Centre-val de Loire	City of Reims, Department of Marne, Region: Grand Est
Official Site	www.bloischambord.com	www.chateau-cheverny.fr	www.reims-tourisme.com
Ownership	French state	Private	Regional government
Provided services	Information, booking and selling services, others	Information, booking and selling services, others	Information, booking and selling services, others
Souvenir offer	Yes, on site	Yes, on site	Yes, on site
Offer of locally-made souvenirs	Yes	Yes	Yes

Source: author's compilation

The three sites were chosen in order to show how TICs can adapt their offer in order to correlate with the specifics of their local tourist destinations. The chosen places have different owners, locations, and management: a TIC implemented in a state-owned monument, a TIC in a town, managed by local authorities, and a TIC in a privately owned historic monument. The three *offices de toruisme* sell specific souvenirs related to the rich cultural heritage and resources of the destination. The Office de tourisme du Grand Reims sells a variety of souvenirs typical for the town and the department. The Office de tourisme du Château de Chambord offers products typical for the region. The Office de tourisme du Château de Cheverny mainly sells items related to the historical site.

The main focus during the observation was on the display/offer of local artisanal souvenirs. Each observed site proposed some very good examples of innovative ways to present and sell local souvenirs, as well as a few confusing ones. In all of the three "souvenir shops" included in the TICs, a well-made blend of mass-produced souvenirs and artisanal objects was displayed. The results of the observation in the form of examples will be presented for each TIC.

Good Practices:

- Château de Chambord

One of the most famous and visited châteaux in the Loire Valley is the Château de Chambord. Created by François I and used by Louis XIV as a hunting ground, the domain has a rich history. In 1840, the Château of Chambord was registered on the first list of French historical monuments, along with the forest park and the wall in 1997. And since 1981 it has been inscribed on UNESCO's world heritage list. (www.chambord.org). This cultural monument and its surroundings contributed to the creation of numerous local products. Some of these include:

- Various locally-made foods and condiments like vinegar, mustard, candy, bonbons, and biscuits. An interesting product among these items is "rillettes (a preparation of meat similar to pâté) from wild boar" from the domain of Chambord. It is a good example of a product made locally.
- Tisane called "Tisane salanmdre," a clever play on words with the historical background of the castle because the salamander was the symbol of Francis I. The products were displayed alongside a sign containing a brief story connecting them to the history of the destination.
- There is also a line of jams called "Gourmandises de François" ["Francis's treats"], again a homage to the builder of the castle.

The last two products were picked up and developed especially for the domain by a famous French chef-pâtissier Sébastien Gaudard (www.sebastiengaudard.com), who focuses on French *savoir-faire*, quality, and authenticity. This is a very good example of how local products can be marketed by famous people. This makes them more modem and easy relatable for visitors. It is indeed an innovative way for TICs to promote local souvenirs.

- A variety of handmade cushions, drapes, tablecloths, and others with a unique design related to Chambord's history, culture and architecture.

- Château de Chevemy

The Château de Chevemy is a charming private château located in the Loire valley. It is a grand estate which has been in the same family for over six centuries (www.chateau-chevemy.fr). It is recognised for its

beautiful building, blooming gardens, and kennels. The château is also famous for another reason. The Belgian comic-book creator Hergé used it as inspiration for the fictional Marlinspike Hall in the *The Adventures of Tintin*. The souvenir shop presented a wide variety of souvenirs. Some of the examples related to artisanal souvenirs included:

- A big selection of local wines, including wines from the estate of Cheverny.
- Hunting knives with wooden handles.
- The shop offered flowers for sale, including the The Rose "Château of Chevemy," which won the Grand Prix SNHF in 2017. It is a non-traditional and unique souvenir.
- A separated small place was dedicated to products created by craftspeople from the region like vases, birdfeeders, and scarves.
- Even though it is a not a locally-made souvenir, as a good example we can add the big collection of Tintin figures. Some of these were very rare and could only be found in this shop. Therefore, in a way, they could be seen as objects (souvenirs) related to this specific place.

- Office de tourisme du Grand Reims

Reims is a beautiful city located in the heart of the Champagne region. Here, we can see some of the great Champagne houses like Cazanove, Lanson, G. H. Mumm, G. H. Martel, Pommery, Ruinart, Taittinger, and Veuve Clicquot (www.reims-tourism.com). The symbol of the city is undoubtedly its Notre Dame Cathedral, the place where the kings of France were crowned. The TIC is just across the street from this famous UNESCO monument. The examples of local artisanal souvenirs include:

- Once more, a great variety of locally-made foods such as vinegar, mustard, jams, and beverages. Among them is a special section dedicated to the famous local company Fossier, home of the pink biscuit of Reims. It is believed that this treat dates from around the 1690s (www.fossier.fr). The brand is nationally and world recognisable, so it is natural to dedicate a specific space in the TIC for such a famous local product.
- A good example for displaying local products and attracting the attention of tourists is the sign for "Regional Products." This is a simple way to separate these objects from the mass-manufactured and imported ones.

- There are many books dedicated to the history and sites of the region.
- A selection of Champagnes – the name of the beverage can only be used for sparkling wines produced in this specific region.
- A vast arrange of locally-made products included the symbol of the Notre Dame Cathedral of Reims on their packaging. As explained, it is the symbol of the city, and therefore by using this image the souvenir is easily recognisable as a local product.

Following these good practices related to artisanal crafts in TICs, some confusing ones will now be presented. This example is taken from the TIC of Reims. The gift shop sells coffee from Uganda. The packaging includes a stylised picture of the Reims Cathedral. The firm providing this product is situated in the region, but nevertheless this souvenir could create confusion among tourists. The cathedral is the symbol of the city and it is difficult to associated it with coffee.

A summary of the main results obtained during the observation process is presented in Table 6.3 below.

Table 6.3. Innovative practices used in French TICs regarding the offer of local souvenirs

Good practices	Confusing practices
Offer of artisanal foods and beverages made from raw materials exclusive to the destination	Offer of products that are difficult to associate with the destination, even if the packaging contains recognisable symbols for the historical or cultural site or monument
Usage of words that are easily associated with the history and culture of the destination to name the locally-made products	
Promotion of local souvenirs by famous spokespersons	
Usage of different signs in the TIC in order to separate local products from mass-manufactured and imported ones	
Usage of an easily recognisable stylised symbol of the destination on the packaging of locally-made souvenirs	

Dedication to a specific, separated place in the TIC for the display of local artisanal crafts	
Usage of "story telling" in order to associate a specific souvenir with the destination	
Offer of unique non-traditional souvenirs (e.g. flower seeds)	

Source: author's compilation

The examples are indeed innovative ways to display and sell local souvenirs to tourists. These practices can be used in different tourist destinations. The local TIC can add to their offer some locally-made food and beverages as well as atypical souvenirs. National and international tourists can be attracted by the use of an easily recognisable famous spokesperson. It is also good practice to find a specific symbol for the destination. Specialists can create a logo and a story related to it. The artisans can use them in their packaging and description of the products in order to affirm the local origin of their goods. Every decision made in the TIC regarding the offer of local souvenirs should be adapted to the specifics of the tourist destination. In this way, TICs will be able to achieve their "new" role of preservers of local heritage.

Conclusion

Souvenir shopping is a popular activity in a tourist destination (Murphy et al. 2011), and it is justified by various motives. The items sold serve different roles for the travellers as well as the local community, providing a permanent reminder of past journeys and experiences. A special category of souvenirs refers to locally-crafted ones, which hold a specific meaning and are truly a representation of the unique cultural heritage of the tourist destination. Different means are used in order to preserve these "valuable" souvenirs, one of which concerns the tourist information centres which serve as active members of local communities. These units have developed new and innovative ways to promote local souvenirs to tourists. The results of the research of the three French TICs has proved that if a tourist destination has clearly established its distinctive features, such as symbols, history, and culture, it can successfully integrate it in its local souvenirs and create a finished, "authentic," and recognisable product. In this innovative way, regional artisanal items will be preserved and remembered by the tourists. The examples in this paper are universal

and can be used in different TICs, but more detailed research is needed to find more ways for TICs to improve their offer of local souvenirs.

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CHAPTER SEVEN

THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE CHAIN: HOW SOFT BRANDS ARE TRANSFORMING THE HOTEL CHAINS

MAYA IVANOVA

Abstract

In recent decades, a new paradigm has found its place in the lodging industry – the concept of the so-called "soft" or "lifestyle" brands. Emerging as a counterpart to the "traditional" standardised brands, this new trend was pioneered by the hotel chains to introduce a fresh perception of the hospitality product, thus addressing the changing consumer demand.

The current paper explores the soft hotel brand concept and its dramatic impact on the hotel-chain image, portfolio, and market strategies. Specifically, two major directions are examined: soft brands' impact on hotel chains regarding shifting demand and regarding the independent hotels. In both cases, hotel chains and other perspectives are considered.

Keywords: hotel chain, soft brand, lifestyle hotel, boutique hotel, hotel-chain expansion

Introduction

The recent decades have brought about many diverse changes to the hospitality industry, deriving from rapid technology development, globalisation, and multicultural exchange. All of them imposed an entirely different approach to providing hotel services (Molz 2012). Globalisation and the opening of new markets like Eastern Europe, Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East broadened the expansion area of the international

hotel corporations, but also increased the competition from the numerous Chinese and other domestic market hotel chains (Andreu, Claver and Quer 2017). Additionally, independent hotels improved their bargaining power and further drove the hospitality companies to reorganise and reposition on the market in order to stay competitive and successful. On the other hand, a new breed of travellers appeared (Waldhausen and Oehmichen 2013), preferring experience and adventure to the regular comfort and amenities. The regular standard brands now seem outdated and boring to the customers, and their search for authenticity is enhanced by a lack of loyalty and an adventurous spirit.

Those emerging trends inevitably further required certain shifts in the hospitality offerings and their characteristics. As a result, a myriad of new hospitality products invaded the industry with the ultimate goal of offering novel services to match the demand. A great share of those products fall in the categories of "boutique," "lifestyle," or "soft-branded" hotels. They appeared as a counterpart to the "traditional," well-known brands and embody the ubiquitous demand for unconventional, exciting, and even eccentric experience. Expectedly, the mainstream leaders of traditional brands, i.e. the global hotel corporations, are directly affected by the rise of these modern products. They have reconsidered their position and adopted adequate strategies to stay competitive.

In the context of above, the aim of the current research is to discuss the impact of soft brands on the major hotel corporations' development strategies. Specifically, the focus will be in two directions:

(1) the impact on branding strategies related to customers, their changing preferences, and addressing the new demand in travel and hospitality
(2) the impact on expansion strategies related to the hotel corporations' endeavour to enlarge their networks by attracting independent hotels from different scopes and categories.

However, before the closer examination of the impacts, we will start with a deeper explanation/dissection of the widely-used terms of "boutique," "lifestyle," and "soft-brand" hotels in order to establish a precise outline for the main subject of the paper – soft brands.

Clarifying the Definitions: Boutique, Lifestyle and Soft Branding

Since there is no unified definition and clear distinction of lifestyle, boutique, and soft brands, most people and professionals use the designation provided by the Highland Group report in 2015 (Skinner, Bardoul, and Berg 2015). They attempt to delineate a more discernible contour between the three terms, which are often used interchangeably, but the proposed outline still seems to miss certain hotels, or some of the outlined criteria overlap and make them difficult to distinguish. In a similar line, the Boutique and Lifestyle Hotel Association (BLLA) undertook a purposeful study to define the particular features of their member hotels, thus providing a robust basis for eligibility of their candidate-members (Day, Quadri, and Jones 2012). The discussion continues with Pizam (2015) compiling all available studies in order to shape a more distinct profile of boutique, lifestyle and soft-brand hotels. The three types of hotels have many common features but are perceived as being different in both product and customer perspectives. In order to make a clear view and analysis of these subjects, we definitely need a uniform and unambiguous definition which would serve the further marketing and development of the concept.

The common misperception of the three terms lies in examining them as three parallel types of hotels. Actually, the three terms represent certain types of accommodation establishments classified by three different criteria. Hence, they are not comparable, and one and the same property may belong to any of the three simultaneously.

Boutique hotels, the oldest and most well-known type of the three, was defined long ago, according to Webster's dictionary, as "a small company that offers highly specialized services or products." The definition implies exclusivity and rareness of the provided product. In terms of hospitality, boutique hotels derive their definition from the product they offer, in a direct counterpart/contrast to the more popular "mass hotels" ("product" is used as a marketing mix element). In their elaboration of the definition, Day, Quadri, and Jones (2012) explicitly assign cultural, historical, and authentic features to the boutique hotels, as well as a prerequisite for not belonging to a chain. However, in this way they eliminate all the hotels relying on a unique product that does not necessarily derive from a historical and cultural value. Therefore, Balekjian and Sarheim (2011) prefer not to elaborate a certain definition, but rather describe the "boutique hotel experience." Although boutique hotels are often contrasted to the standardised service of hotel chains, there are certain examples from

reality showing that such hotels can operate in a network, and even within a prominent hotel corporation (e.g. Kimpton hotels and restaurants, recently acquired by IHG, claim to be the first boutique hotel chain). As per the size of boutique hotels, both BLLA and the Highland Group assume quite a large scale – from forty to three hundred rooms (Day, Quadri, and Jones 2012; Skinner, Bardoul, and Berg 2015) – which is a relative measure in the different world regions; e.g. for the USA a three hundred-room hotel may be of a regular size, whereas in Europe, where small and family properties prevail, the boutique hotels are usually much smaller, with about thirty to fifty rooms. Interestingly, hotels under thirty rooms are excluded from the two studies, although most of the boutique hotels are associated with the smaller size. The only common feature, on which all researchers and professionals agree, is the unique and exclusive product associated with boutique hotels. In this regard, we may consider boutique hotels only as a certain type of accommodation establishments, with the product selected as a criterion for classification. Thus, we may arrange properties as "boutique" and "non-boutique," or regular, standard, mass, etc. Consequently, there is no need to limit the concept in a framework, since the term itself represents an absence of such (Balekjian and Sarheim 2011).

Although largely discussed in the industry, there are almost no academic studies on "lifestyle" accommodation establishments (Jones, Day, and Quadri-Felitti 2013). One of the reasons for such a gap might be the lack of any certain explanation about the nature and appearance of these properties. Many hotel companies boast of their "lifestyle" product, but none are able to draw specific distinctive features of this kind of product. According to the Boutique and Lifestyle Lodging Association, a lifestyle hotel means "a property that combines living elements and activities into functional design that gives guests the opportunity to explore the experience they desire." As such, the lifestyle is considered to be a subcategory of boutique hotels (Day, Quadri, and Jones 2012). Balekjian and Sarheim (2011), on the other hand, argue that the size of the property is a distinctive feature of lifestyle vs. boutique hotels. In the industry, many hotel companies position their products as "lifestyle" only in order to stand out from the rest (Jones, Day, and Quadri-Felitti 2013). However, in many aspects, the characteristics of lifestyle hotels actually overlap with the boutique hotels, e.g. both claim to provide exceptional experience and distinctive design, which differentiate them from the ordinary, standard, and often mass hotels. Still, "lifestyle" properties are not the same as "boutique" hotels, and we will try to explain this in the following.

Lifestyle as a concept generally reflects the accommodation properties' consideration of their target clients' lifestyle into the accommodation product. Lifestyle embodies consumers' daily attitudes, aspirations, patterns of consumptions, and, ultimately, identity (Manthiou et al. 2018). In this regard, there might be quite diverse "lifestyle" hotels, according to the various types of their target clients and the way of living which matches them best. This lifestyle congruence depicts the brand association with consumers' own patterns of living, expressed by their activities and interests (Manthiou et al. 2018). For example, people who are active in their everyday life prefer to be accommodated in an establishment which provides the relevant facilities. On the other hand, customers who are used to their devices and rely entirely on their internet connection would not be interested in the redundancy of other amenities in the room, and prefer a more automated environment and self-service devices. In contrast, people who are used to a more "traditional" lifestyle prefer all the conventional services to be at their disposal. Therefore, a "lifestyle" hotel can be any hotel that strives to fully address their target customers' ways of living and reflect their patterns of life.

Very often, the target clients of boutique and lifestyle properties are the same – young to middle-aged, with mid to upper income averages and similar inclinations to technology, design, functionality, and simplicity (McKenney 2015) (in many cases this segment has been associated with millennials). Still, this is a very limited perspective on the boutique hotels' target groups, and only a few types of lifestyle properties match the lifestyle of this particular segment. As an IHG report outlines, the new types of travellers include: global explorers, new family groups, younger "laptop and latte" workers, and expansive midlifers (IHG 2013). All of them express different preferences than previous segments and therefore require novel approaches. But hotels, responding to their needs, would be different as a product and design, because the target clients are different, although all of the properties might be called "lifestyle" ones. Hence, the term "lifestyle hotels" appears to be more a generic name for the establishments reflecting certain features of their target clients' lifestyles.

The third term, "soft branding," is used by Holverson and Revaz (2006) in their emblematic study about hoteliers' perceptions of different types of chain affiliation. They consider "soft branding" as a form of joining hotel consortia, reservation networks, voluntary chains, referral chains, or any other type of affiliation, permitting looser terms of membership (Holverson and Revaz 2006). As organisations of independent properties, consortia were based on a common element such as product, region, or category (Roper 1995), and operated to jointly enhance the

marketing efforts and performance of each of the member hotels. Among the typical examples of such organisations are: Preferred Hotels, Small Luxury Hotels of the World, Leading Hotels of the World, Relais & Châteaux, and Tyrolean Hotels. Because of the looser requirements of their members, these organisations were famous mostly among individual hotels that insisted on their uniqueness (e.g. boutique hotels) and independence from external control, but that still wanted to benefit from the advantages of being a chain-affiliated hotel.

In its current usage, "soft branding" is again associated with networks of diverse independent, often boutique or lifestyle-designed hotels, sharing a common brand that both differentiates them from other independent hotels, but additionally enhances their position on the market. The changing environment and demand pressed the global corporations to adopt this business model in their portfolios, thus allowing further opportunities for expansion and strategic development. The first launch of soft brands was in 2008 with the Ascend Hotel Collection by Choice Hotels (Isenberg 2016). Afterwards, nearly every major hotel corporation introduced a soft-brand concept. The term used more often by hotel chains to depict this type of affiliation is "collection." The industry jargon denotes the "soft-branding" relations, i.e. easy, lightened terms of contracts, not classic franchise relations, but also a collection of unique, often boutique hotels, which provide exceptional experience, and still wear a brand (Skift 2018). The "hard brands" are associated with the standardised product of hotel chains, which are usually established on the basis of a franchise or management contract (Holverson and Revaz 2006).

Therefore, "soft-branded hotels" as a term represents the type of accommodation establishment, classified according to the way properties are affiliated. The other type of hotels categorised by the same classification would be "hard branded hotels," embodying franchised, managed, owned, and leased properties (Ivanova 2014).

To sum up, the three terms "boutique," "lifestyle," and "soft branded" represent types of accommodation establishment, but each is classified according to different criteria. Boutique hotels are type of properties classified by product, lifestyle hotels reflect the needs and requirements of their target clients, whereas soft-branded hotels reveal affiliation with a chain. Because of the different criteria, one property might be classified as either of the three types of hotels, or simultaneously all three of them. Hence, there might be a boutique hotel participating in a soft-brand hotel chain, or a lifestyle-designed hotel that is boutique, and simultaneously is part of a certain soft-brand chain.

Considering the above clarification of terms, in the current paper we will refer only those hotels using soft brands for hotel-chain affiliation. Boutique and lifestyle hotels lie beyond our study, since they represent a type of establishment based on the product and targeting clients' lifestyles, but not directly related to the hotel-chain forms of affiliation.

How are Soft Brands Transforming the Hotel Chains? Two Directions of Impacts

The aim of this study is to explore hotel chains' reactions and transformations in response to the rise of soft brands. Therefore, we will examine the existing soft brands which are now referred to as "hotel consortia," e.g. Small Luxury Hotels of the World (Roper 1995), and the newly appearing soft brands in the portfolios of the large hospitality corporations, where until recently the so-called "traditional brands" dominated. We consider hotel consortia and soft brands together, since both denote the same relations between individual hotels and the headquarters of the chain. The consortium provides independence and autonomy for hotels while enabling them to take advantage of all the benefits related to affiliation with a chain (Ayazlar 2016; Holverson and Revaz 2006). So do the soft brands deliver the hotel members access to global distribution partnerships, technology systems, loyalty programmes, and other resources, all of which are owned by the hotel corporations? At the same time, hotel members keep their cultural and regional distinctions and preferred ways of operational and marketing independence (Skift 2018). Considering the above reasoning, in the current study we consider hotel consortia as soft-branding entities. Hence, all discussed impacts refer to both the soft brands of hotel corporations and hotel consortia as a form of soft branding.

Hotel chains' clients exist on two levels: tourists and independent hotels, which may potentially join the chain. Consequently, soft branding affects hotel chains' development in two relevant directions: regarding demand or tourists staying at the properties, and regarding independent individual hotels, targeted to become part of the chain.

Soft brands' impact on hotel chains regarding customers/tourism demand

The changing consumer demand inevitably affects the travel and hospitality industry. The intensely discussed appearance of the new generation Y, or millennials, born between 1980 and 2000 (Sima 2016),

provoked forecasts of a dramatic shift of the general tourism demand. The latter has been discussed mainly with regards to the changing preferences in the travel habits of the millennials, who want to have new experiences, visit new places, and acquire new knowledge (Cavagnaro, Staffieri, and Postma 2018). Thus, the newly welcomed values of the new customers include more appreciation of the local, indigenous atmosphere, authenticity, a sense of personal attention, and a human touch and interaction (Waldthausen and Oehmichen 2013). All these characteristics form a demand for a novel hospitality product matching the new reality (Bastawroos 2017; Skift 2018). In addressing this trend, accommodation establishments are striving to "individualize" their properties (Brudney 2017) to insert a boutique touch and distinguish themselves from the mass regular properties.

The same process takes place among the major hospitality players, though with different tools. Hotel chains create entirely new "collections," positioning them as "vibrant, affordable and young-at-heart" (Hilton's Tru brand), "each hotel is different, united by a common spirit" (Marriott, Tribute Collection), "offering a unique and distinctive upper-midscale experience" (Wyndham, Trademark Collection). This is a good chance for the chains to reposition themselves as modern and innovative companies that go along with the contemporary trends.

In this fight to attract the emerging demand, the hotel chains use their dominant position on the market and add to it with the newly created soft brands/collections. In this way, customers receive a unique product, but one backed by the image and assurance of a prominent international company. In addition, the hotel corporations use their global geographic coverage to introduce and drive the tourists' interest towards discovering unknown destinations. Following the great opening of national markets worldwide, hotel chains expanded into countries far behind the traditional tourist areas, e.g. Eastern Europe (including the former Soviet republics), Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East. Through the easier penetration of the soft brands in those regions, hotel chains ensure the "local experience" and "authentic touch" demanded by their customers. The new breed of customers is eager to test and taste indigenous flavours (Waldhausen and Oehmichen 2013).

Table 7.1. Outlines of the main benefits of soft brands with regards to tourists-consumers, considering the perspectives of both the hotel chains and customers.

Table 7.1. Soft-brand impact and benefits regarding demand

Hotel chains' perspective	Customers' perspective
➢ reaction to the new demand ➢ diversification of the portfolio ➢ adding new/other target clients ➢ trendy/thematic ➢ repositioning and change of the image	➢ a more indigenous touch, experiencing the local culture and atmosphere ➢ guaranteed unique experience in every property of the brand ➢ more personalised approach to the clients ➢ guarantee from the image of a well-known corporation, staying behind the soft brand ➢ discovering new destinations

Source: author's compilation

Soft brands' impact on hotel chains regarding individual independent hotels

The other great direction in which soft brands affect the hotel corporations encompasses the market of independent hotels, which might potentially join a chain. Individual hotels appear as the other main target group of hotel corporations, because the revenues coming from royalty fees are their main financial income. Since most, or sometimes all, of the properties are not owned by corporations, the fees paid by the hotels represent the headquarters' only financial assets. Therefore, attracting more and more independent hotels to the chains' network is of ultimate importance for the hotel corporations.

Traditional franchise and management agreements used in the past and nowadays, however, seem to comprise a difficult and expensive model for the smaller properties to adopt. That is why many of them remain outside of those networks. The soft brand, on the other hand, provides a much easier way to utilise hotel chains' advantages and avoid the too-costly investment of "hard" brand affiliation. That is why soft brands seem a much more desirable option for independent hotels, combining most of the advantages of chain affiliation and maintaining relative independence.

An additional factor for the soft-brand popularity among independent hotels is the increased knowledge and managerial skills of hotel owners. In the past, many of them had to rely on third-party expertise and competences for the operation of their properties (management companies and hotel franchise corporations). Nowadays, even small family hotels

might utilise a kind of affiliation (a soft brand) and remain on their own regarding management and operations. From the hotel corporations' perspective, soft branding means not only enlarging the pool of potential hotel members for their networks, but also adding new hotel segments to it, such as small family, lifestyle, and boutique properties, which otherwise stayed behind their target groups.

The most attractive features of soft branding, seen from the perspective of independent hotels, lie mainly in the contract provisions between the individual hotels and the relevant hotel chains/groups. In contrast to the regular franchise or management contract, the soft branding agreements do not apply so strict a standardisation and hence do not require so strict a control and involvement from the chain. This is also an advantage for the hotel chains, because they save on the costs of such control (Ivanova and Ivanov 2015). In addition, soft brands facilitate international hotel-chain expansions to new exotic or unknown markets by allowing uncomplicated procedures to join and easier adaptation to the local market. Moreover, the majority of properties outside the United States are individual and often family-run hotels. According to the Best Western CEO David Kong, "the demand for soft brands is greater outside of the United States because I would estimate about 70 percent of hotels are unbranded outside of America" (Ting 2017).

Hotel chains use soft brands to refresh and diversify their portfolio of brands. Even some corporations try to reposition the existing brand with a more modern and energetic style in order to be "on the edge," e.g. Golden Tulip has been transformed into a soft brand (Louvre Hotels 2016).

Table 7.2. Summarising the soft-brand impacts on hotel chains regarding independent hotels, considering both perspectives.

Discussion and Concluding Remarks

Soft brands have strengthened their position on the hospitality market. Their impact on the major hotel corporations is two-fold. On one hand, the chains mark new territories of hotel segments to attract to their networks by providing an alternative engagement, including a (soft) brand and various gains, typical for the chains. In this way, some previously neglected small hotels have the chance to collaborate with the global players.

Table 7.2. Soft-brand impact and benefits regarding independent hotels

Hotel chains' perspective	Independent hotels' perspective
➢ new brands in the portfolio ➢ easier process of affiliation ➢ new target hotels – boutique, small, and family hotels ➢ easier penetration in new countries, because of less strict standards/requirements towards hotels, and easier adaptation to the local market/culture ➢ diversification and multi-branding strategies ➢ easier operation, management, and control of the affiliated properties because of the looser standards ➢ lower marketing risk of damaging the brand image and spoiling the standards and customers' expectations	➢ easier affiliation to a brand, without the strict standardisation and multiple requirements ➢ looser terms and conditions of the contract, allowing integration of the local traditions and elements ➢ getting most of the benefits of a chain affiliation, and at the same time minimising some of the negative, e.g. financial, burden and strict control on standards, shorter terms of the contracts

Source: author's compilation

However, there are some voices claiming that the soft branding is far from a "win-win" solution for hotel chains and independent hotels. Minett (2017) warns that independent properties just change from OTA dependency to chain-dependency while choosing the latter for their distribution systems and brand security. Moreover, by signing a contract with a chain, the individual hotel commits for a longer period, and most probably bears certain exit barriers.

On the other hand, the greater freedom and independence for the individual hotels means more responsibilities and proactive behaviour on account of their managers (Panayotis 2015). The soft brand ensures that a hotel has a character and personality (Manthiou et al. 2018), but does not provide the loyalty and guarantee of quality the way a hard brand does. The hotel managers should invest much more efforts for their marketing campaigns, which is the price for differentiation and keeping their distinctiveness, even with a brand on top.

The second aspect of the soft-branding impact on hotel chains is related to the challenges of the new demand category of customers. Contemporary clients, with the majority of millennials, and their ever changing preferences continuously press the chains and the whole hospitality industry to further develop and create signature experiences and extraordinary products (Richard 2017). The soft brands (or collections) seem to be at the forefront of this dynamic environment. To a great extent, they fulfil most of the millennials' demands regarding non-standardised and genuine experiences because they imbue diverse establishments with unique atmospheres and a more personalised service.

However, soft brands are not a "panacea" for all. Cavagnaro, Staffieri, and Postma (2018) conclude that millennials should not be considered as a homogeneous group, consisting instead of numerous sub-segments. Hence, the product creation requires deeper studies and additional segmentation, according to the particular values of each segment. Deeper analysis implies the involvement of big data and various software systems (Richard 2017). To go even further, high technologies and forms of artificial intelligence already influence hospitality, and hotel chains are among the first to integrate them. With their enormous resource base and innovative approach, global hotel corporations are ready to not only meet the future challenges of monitoring, measuring, and analysing the elusive customer expectations, but also launch novel product concepts and conquer unknown territories and segments.

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CHAPTER EIGHT

THE ALL-INCLUSIVE FORMAT AND THE HEALTHY DIET (WITH IBEROSTAR SUNNY BEACH RESORT TAKEN AS AN EXAMPLE)

KATYA ILIEVA

Abstract

Nutrition in tourism is not only a core activity but also an enormous challenge connected with the ever-changing main and specific nutritional needs of guests. The indicated trend has been rapidly growing in recent years due to the increasing number of diseases that afflict modern humans and the extensive research into the co-relations of food, nutrition, health, and quality of life. Modern dietetics is based on the latest achievements of clinical medicine, biochemistry, physiology, morphology, the chemistry of foods, and the science of the nutrition of a healthy person. Dietetic nutrition accompanies the lives of more and more people and is a constant component of the menus of many foodservice establishments within the tourism industry. The necessity of dietetic nutrition is a common issue in trips including those which are not made for the purpose of tourism.

It is the aim of this paper to present the potentialities of the "all-inclusive" format on the basis of the good practices in a particular tourist site, the Iberostar Sunny Beach Resort, and the capability of the format to satisfy the specific requirements of the tourists regarding food and nutrition. The paper presents the contemporary trends in healthy nutrition and the capability of the all-inclusive format/plan to meet the tourists' requirements by providing a specialised service to guests with special nutritional needs.

Keywords: tourism, nutrition, dietetics, all-inclusive

Introduction

Health, healthy nutrition, the quality and quantity of daily food consumption including the technology of food preparation, the eating patterns plus the dietetic ones – all these issues are permanently discussed in today's society. From the point of view of the dynamics of the global development of living standards and tourism, the issues mentioned above are directly related to people's leisure time and travelling (and not only with the purpose of tourism).

The marked healthy-nutrition trend is not new. According to Cracknel and Nobis (1985), the human in Western society has learned over the centuries to combine nutrients into acceptable meals, and did so long before the science of nutrition was understood.

Food and tourism are, and have always been, closely integrated. Food and meals on holidays may be experienced in a multitude of ways, influenced by the personal, social, and cultural background of the tourist, their travelling company, and the specific context in terms of people and facilities in which the offer is set (Andersson et al. 2017).

In recent years, nutrition in tourism has been not only an element of the operations and a main service but also an enormous challenge, bound up with the ever-changing main and specific nutritional needs of the guests. This has been a fast-growing trend over the recent years as a result of the extensive research into the co-relations of food, nutrition and health, ecological issues, the advent of bio-products and new "super foods" on the market, the demographic changes in society and other factors, which makes the topic a live issue for the contemporary development of tourism.

According to Ribov (2015), the priorities of tourism development are closely connected with the development of modern research, with the forecasts made in the field of health care being extremely important for the development of various kinds of tourism, such as health tourism (balneo, spa, and wellness), and tourism for the third-age group whose representatives form a separate market segment with a considerable potential for the market. Viewing it as a trend in seeking tourist services, Rakadzhijska (2015) lays special emphasis on the cause of "healthy food" becoming more important to tourists due to changes in gastronomic habits and the demand for foods with balanced calorific values, gluten-free and other characteristics, forming the health status.

Dabeva and Lukanova (2011) suggest that the consumers' orientation towards healthy, low-calorie, dietetic, and harm-free food is a key element in the modern development of the restaurant industry. This fact is determined by the changes in labour patterns, technology development,

and lower physical activity, which result in the reduced energy needs of the organism.

According to a survey made by Forbes[1] about 10% of the world's population is on some kind of "exclusion diet," having to avoid certain foods because of a specific ailment or allergy. Take into account "excluding foods" for preferences, and that number is reported to be well over 50% of the population. NeuroNutrition looks at how our foods affect our brains, and BioHacking breaks all the rules to create a science for more individualised nutrition and products. The food and brain connection is important – from growing foods to cooking to how we eat to the nutrients themselves.

Undoubtedly, these trends necessitate the application of new and reflexive patterns of nutrition in the hotel and restaurant business within the tourism industry in order to meet the variety and complexity of the guests' demands as regards food and eating during vacations.

It is the aim of this paper to present the capability of the "all-inclusive" format to meet the specific requirements of the tourists to food and eating on the basis of the good practices in a particular tourism site, the Iberostar Sunny Beach Resort.

The paper presents major contemporary trends in healthy nutrition and the capability of the "all-inclusive" format to satisfy the tourists' requirements by providing a specialised service to guests with special nutritional needs.

Data and Methods

To conduct the study and achieve the goal set, internal and external sources of secondary data were used (desk research) (Anastasova 1998): publications and data of the World Health Organization (WHO), topic-related searches in worldwide research databases, and internet resources.

On the basis of internal and external sources of secondary data, issues related to contemporary healthy and dietetic nutrition were studied. The operational characteristics of the all-inclusive format and its capability to meet the specific requirements of the tourists to food and nutrition were examined. The capacity and operational capability of the Iberostar Sunny Beach Resort for offering all-inclusive vacations were investigated. Cyclical menus and dishes, offered in the hotel complex within the all-inclusive format, were examined and analysed from the point of view of

[1] https://www.forbes.com/sites/phillempert/2017/12/13/10-food-trends-that-will-shape-2018/#11ec6a2041e4

healthy nutrition, and relevant conclusions and recommendations were made.

Deductive and inductive approaches were applied in the research process, and the specific methods used include critical analysis, comparison and systematisation, summary, and synthesis.

The paper does not include studies into children's nutrition in the complex.

The Healthy Diet and the "All-inclusive" Format

Nutrition is the intake of food, considered in relation to the body's dietary needs. Good nutrition – an adequate, well-balanced diet combined with regular physical activity – is a cornerstone of good health. Poor nutrition can lead to reduced immunity, increased susceptibility to disease, impaired physical and mental development, and reduced productivity.[2]

According to Nestorova (2014), nutrition is rational (healthy, balanced) when it satisfies the physiological needs of the person for macronutrients (proteins, fats, and carbohydrates), micronutrients (vitamins and minerals), and energy, and ensures good health and an active long life. It is achieved by varied and nourishing food according to age, gender, job, the physiological state of the woman, and some other factors which are directly related to the nutritional needs of the person. According to the author, rational nutrition has four basic elements:

- adequate energy provision
- nutrient balance
- diversity and balance of the different kinds of food
- a rational eating pattern.

Dietetics (Nestorova 2014) studies and gives reasons for the principles of nutrition in the case of various ailments. It is based on the latest achievements of clinical medicine, biochemistry, morphology, chemistry of foods, and the science of the nutrition of the healthy person. The dietetic cookery puts into practice the requirements of dietology regarding the specific features of the culinary technological processing in the case of various ailments. Dietetic nutrition is sometimes the only method of treatment for some congenital or acquired diseases (monosaccharide, disaccharide and phenylalaninein tolerance, allergy to the protein of gluten, etc.), and is one of the main methods of treatment for food

[2] http://www.who.int/topics/nutrition/en.

allergies, *diabetes*, obesity, stomach and intestinal disorders, etc. Dietetic nutrition is grounded on the principles of rational nutrition, but it also takes into account the physiological needs of the diseased organism for nutrients and energy.

The key characteristics of the healthy diet are stated in a number of publications of the World Health Organization (WHO)[3]:

- The exact make-up of a diversified, balanced, and healthy diet will vary depending on individual needs (e.g. age, gender, lifestyle, degree of physical activity), cultural context, locally available foods, and dietary customs. However, the basic principles of what constitutes a healthy diet remain the same.
- Healthy dietary practices start early in life – breastfeeding fosters healthy growth and improves cognitive development, and may have longer-term health benefits, like reducing the risk of becoming overweight or obese and developing *noncommunicable diseases* later in life.
- Energy intake (calories) should be balanced with energy expenditure. Evidence indicates that total fat should not exceed 30% of total energy intake to avoid unhealthy weight gain, with a shift in fat consumption away from saturated fats to unsaturated fats, and towards the elimination of industrial trans fats.
- Limiting the intake of free sugars to less than 10% of total energy intake is part of a healthy diet. A further reduction to less than 5% of total energy intake is suggested for additional health benefits.
- Keeping salt intake to less than five grams per day helps prevent hypertension and reduces the risk of heart disease and stroke in the adult population.

Skerrett and Willett (2012) recommend the following rules to ensure a healthy and balanced diet, which are in unison with the recommendations made by the WHO:

- Choose healthy fats over unhealthy fats: avoid trans fats, which are generally found in commercially baked products and deep-fried restaurant food. Limit intake of saturated fats, mostly from red meat, butter, milk, and other dairy. Emphasise polyunsaturated fats from olives and olive oil.

[3] http://www.who.int/en/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/healthy-diet.

- Choose slowly digested carbohydrates over highly refined ones: limit intake of sources of rapidly digested carbohydrates such as white flour, white rice, pastries, sugary drinks, and French fries. In their place, emphasise wholegrains (such as brown rice, barley, bulgur, quinoa, and wheat berries), whole fruits and vegetables, beans, and nuts. Aim for at least six servings of whole grains a day. Choosing wholegrain breakfast cereal and bread is an excellent start.
- Pick the best protein packages by emphasising plant sources of protein rather than animal sources: adopting a "flexitarian" approach to protein has long-term health payoffs. Aim to gain at least half of the protein from plants – beans, nuts, seeds, wholegrains, fruits, and vegetables. Choose fish, eggs, and poultry for most of the rest, with small amounts of red meat and dairy making up the balance. Aim for two servings of fish per week.
- Accentuate fruits and vegetables: consider five servings of fruit and vegetables to be a daily minimum. Eat for variety and colour. Each day, try to get at least one serving of a dark green leafy vegetable, a yellow or orange fruit or vegetable, a red fruit or vegetable, and a citrus fruit. Fresh is usually best, especially if it is local; frozen fruits and vegetables are nearly as good.
- Opt for low-calorie hydration: water is the best choice. Coffee and tea in moderation (with only a small amount of milk or sugar) are generally safe and healthful beverages. If milk is part of the diet, skim or low-fat milk is best. Avoid sugar-laden drinks such as sodas, fruit drinks, and sport drinks. Limit fresh juice to one small glass a day. Alcohol in moderation (no more than one drink a day for women), if at all.
- Meet the daily recommendations for vitamins and minerals.

More and more consumers carefully consider and select the food products (and beverages) in their daily menu as well as the technological methods of their culinary processing, not only because they need dietetic nutrition for health reasons, but also to ensure the intake of foods with proven positive effects on health.

Even people who do not have health problems increasingly prefer foods which are gluten-free, lactose-free, with low sugar and fat contents, high-fibre, without artificial sweeteners, colourings, and other additives, bio-products, and foods with protected designations of origin. These requirements set the restaurant business within the tourism industry the

task to adequately meet the demands of the tourists and to offer a product which should satisfy their needs for a healthy and balanced diet.

One way to serve guests in the tourist complexes created to make the tourists' vacations complete and care-free is the "all-inclusive" format.

According to Özdemir, Çizel, and Çizel (2012), the concept of an all-inclusive package holiday plays a major role in the tourism development of many sun and sea destinations, and this trend is expected to grow.

The all-inclusive vacation has been around since the 1950s when the idea of a comprehensive vacation package including meals, lodging, and entertainment appealed to cost-conscious travellers. It is still a popular concept today, but the business model behind it has evolved dramatically. At the upper end of the market, brands have been developing a new luxury all-inclusive format. The resorts offer gourmet dining, elegant accommodation, premium drinks, beautiful beaches, and a world-class spa. There's also been a huge improvement in the food offerings to appease guests who expect healthy choices and global flavours.[4]

According to the studies of a number of authors – Aleksieva and Stamov (2003), Ribov et al. (2007), Somov and Ivanova (2011), Dubeva and Lukanova (2011), and Karadzhova (2015) – the "all-inclusive" format in all its varieties (AI, UAI, MI, HCAI) provides the guests with opportunities for a complete rest, combined with a great variety of foods and drinks and a diversity of forms of service and additional services according to the category of the tourist complex.

In most cases, the price of the package includes return-flight tickets, transfer to and from the hotel, accommodation in a high-rated hotel, and main and additional meals several times a day in various dining places on the premises of the complex (and sometimes in local foodservice establishments). It also provides opportunities for participating in sporting, cultural, and entertainment events and culinary and national evenings organised as pastimes for the tourists according to their tastes and preferences (Karadzhova 2015).

In summary, the eating pattern in all-inclusive resorts includes[5]:

- At least three meals daily – a buffet for breakfast, lunch, and dinner, or there could be a variety of *à la carte* options included. Some resorts focus on gourmet *à la carte* dining. At some all-inclusive hotels, the majority of meals are buffet style. This is

[4] https://www.jllrealviews.com/industries/all-inclusive-hotels-have-a-new-look-for-a-new-era.

[5] https://blog.allinclusiveoutlet.com/what-does-all-inclusive-mean.

usually reserved for the budget-oriented resort. In addition, almost all all-inclusive hotels provide a beach grill or some type of late-night dining.

- Beverages (alcoholic and non-alcoholic). The higher-rated resorts will provide premium international drinks from well-known brands, while the entry-level all-inclusive resorts may provide only domestic brands native to the destination. The mid-range all-inclusive establishments typically offer a mix of international beverages along with domestic types.

Since this type of holiday is mainly preferred by families with children and third-age tourists, it is recommended that the menu should include products and dishes made with suitable ingredients and technological processing.

To provide the tourists with a healthy diet it is necessary that the restaurateurs offer healthy menus including dishes which should have the following technological characteristics (Nestorova 2014; Somov and Kraevska 2011):

- the dishes should be made with seasonal and local ingredients
- the dishes should be diverse and contain a balanced quantity of macronutrients, mostly proteins
- the dishes should be made with a limited amount of fats, especially animal fats
- salty and sugary products and confections should be limited
- a variety of fruit and vegetables and wholegrain products should be offered
- the dishes should be made by means of technological methods mechanically, chemically and thermally friendly to the stomach and intestinal tract
- the mechanical sparing of the tract should be ensured by decreasing the content of vegetable cellulose, animal connective tissue, and adequate thermal processing, plus chopping, grinding, and mashing of the foodstuffs
- the chemical sparing is achieved by excluding ingredients containing strong chemical irritants (cooking salt, organic acids, caffeine, essential oils, extracts, aldehydes, etc.) and technological processing, allowing the discharge of chemical irritants or preventing the formation of chemical irritants in the process of cooking the dishes (discharge of extracts from animal products and

essential oils, and elimination of the processes of frying and roasting)
- hydrothermal processing of the ingredients should be basically applied in specialised technological equipment – steaming, and gentle roasting of certain ingredients
- hygienic and technological requirements should be observed to ensure high quality and harm-free food.

All-inclusive and the Healthy-eating Concept at the Iberostar Sunny Beach Resort

The Iberostar Sunny Beach Resort is a four-star hotel, situated at the Sunny Beach Resort on the Black Sea coast of Bulgaria. The choice of the hotel as a subject of the present investigation is based on the author's observations on the quality of the product offered at the Iberostar Sunny Beach Resort regarding food and drink, and also on some statistics[6] showing a high interest on the part of both consumers and culinary specialists and the high rating of the hotel.

The Hotel Iberostar Sunny Beach offers excellent leisure facilities and a good mix of activities and entertainment, meeting the standards of "all-inclusive"[7] vacations:

- the hotel is conveniently located just steps away from the sandy beach and in close proximity to the resort centre and all its amenities
- the hotel comprises two identical buildings, mirroring each other, both offering the same high standard of accommodation and first class facilities
- accommodation facilities include: 630 rooms (twin and family rooms), furnished to meet the contemporary standards. A wide range of additional services are available
- catering facilities: main restaurant in each building, two lobby bars, coffee shop, poolside bar
- a variety of entertainment facilities for both children and adults are available to the guests – a **children's** kids club and children's play

[6] http://www.luxuryhotelsguides.com/

[7] https://www.balkanholidays.co.uk/bulgaria/bourgas_area/sunny_beach/iberostar_sunny_beach_resort_!SB411.html; https://www.iberostar.com/en/all-inclusive-holidays-hotels.

area, outdoor and indoor swimming pools and waterslides, fitness, etc.

- **meals**: buffet breakfast, lunch and dinner; hamburgers, pizza and hot dogs at noon; cake and coffee
- **drinks: h**ouse wine, beer, soft drinks during meals; local alcoholic drinks, local beer, and coffee at the lobby bar. **Not included in the all-inclusive package** are international drinks, wines, cocktails, and minibar usage
- the **children's buffet** provides fruit, pizza, nuggets, and other family favourites
- special attention is paid to the needs of younger guests and any particular dietary requirements.

The analysis of the breakfast, lunch, and dinner menus of a seven-day holiday at the Iberostar Sunny Beach Resort proves that the adopted concept of menu composition provides to tourists the option of rational and dietetic eating. Dishes for adherents of veganism, vegetarianism, and raw food are included, and menus in general meet other specific requirements for food.

The cyclical menus have been analysed according to seven selected criteria in view of the investigated topic. The menus have the following key characteristics:

- composition diversity and a large number of ingredients and dishes in the menus for all main meals of the day – breakfast menus include about 110 items, lunch menus about 86 items, and dinner menus about 95 items
- menus are marked by a great variety of ingredients per day – the recipes include representatives of all main food groups, which means that with the right combinations of foods consumers can have all macro and micro-nutrients that satisfy their daily needs
- the comparison of the data obtained from the analysis based on the seven criteria (see Table 8.1 below) proves that there is a precise balance of the ingredients and dishes included in all three main meals of the day. For example, the share of cereals is the biggest in breakfast menus; while meat, fish, and seafood dishes are mainly present at lunch and dinner. All menus include vegetarian dishes and dishes that have not been thermally processed.

Table 1.1. Comparative analysis based on the seven criteria

Criteria/eating	Breakfast, Rel. share (%)	Lunch Rel. share (%)	Dinner Rel. share (%)
(1) Vegan dishes and ingredients	64.5	27	32
(2) Dishes with dairy products	36.3	25.7	10.5
(3) Meat dishes	10.9	15.1	20
(4) Fish and seafood dishes		15.1	16.8
(5) Dishes with cereals, nuts and seeds	43.3	22.7	20
(6) Dishes without thermal processing	47.2	33.3	24.2
(7) Dietetic products (gluten-free, lactose-free, without fats, etc.)	13.6	22.7	15.7

Source: author's compilation

- adequate and gentle methods of thermal processing are applied in cooking a large part of the dishes, e.g. boiling, poaching, stewing
- the dishes are marked by precisely and adequately combined individual components
- there is a balance between thermally and non-thermally processed dishes
- a large number of dietetic products of special composition are on offer: gluten-free bread, cookies, cornflakes, croissants, muffins, etc.; diet marmalades (apricot, figs, mango, plums), fat-free milk, lactose-free milk, oat milk, soya milk, etc.
- the menus include both **international and** traditional **local** dishes

The menu at the Iberostar Sunny Beach Resort is an example of applying good practices in order to satisfy the guests' needs for special food and specialised service.

Conclusion

Healthy eating is one of the factors for the harmonious development of the personality. The balancing of macronutrients (proteins, fats, and carbohydrates) and energy and the eating pattern as elements of healthy

nutrition form the basis for the full satisfaction of the physiological needs of the organism. Health, working capacity, and longevity are a product of a reasonable attitude to food.

Today, the media publish various, sometimes sensational, reports of the harmfulness or curative effect of various food products. It is a scientifically proven fact that a lot of modern-day diseases are due to unhealthy eating. As a result, the number of adherents to a healthy lifestyle is increasing. There is a growing demand for products with a low content of fats, without conservatives, artificial colourings and sugar, with a low content of salt, and for products rich in dietary fibre. This necessitates a careful investigation of the trends in nutrition on the part of restaurateurs in tourism and precision and innovative approaches to menu composition.

All major attributes of menus in the restaurant industry in tourism – structure, composition, content, presentation, innovation, etc. – are key elements in ensuring a competitive advantage and attracting customers through providing a different and reflective restaurant product, oriented to the consumers who are growingly knowledgeable and demanding.

In the modern, highly competitive market, a profound understanding of the tourists' requirements is the key to all concepts for the quality of the tourist service. The understanding of the guest's behaviour is fundamental to tourism and a pre-condition for the development of up-to-date concepts and products of the hospitality industry.

It is the responsibility of those working in the tourism industry to perceive the tourists' needs and to satisfy their desires, requirements, and needs.

The present investigation is marked by certain limitations (it was carried out at a single tourist site but within a major hotel chain, located at a big resort on the Black Sea; a limited number of criteria were investigated regarding the qualitative characteristics of the food). Nevertheless, the results sustain the significance of permanent research into the trends in modern nutrition and the good practices in tourism in providing a dietetic menu to tourists with special dietary needs in the all-inclusive format. The investigation is a basis for further research into the field and an opportunity for the synthesis of information for the sake of improving the quality of the overall tourism product.

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CHAPTER NINE

MODERN TECHNIQUES FOR SELECTING AND RECRUITING STAFF IN TOURISM

LILIYA VALENTINOVA MILEVA-IVANOVA

Abstract

The challenges faced by the tourism sector are high. There is no qualified workforce for certain job positions. The attraction of candidates is becoming more and more difficult, and managers should look for ways to not only seek and recruit candidates but also motivate themselves in the long term to stay in work in tourist organisations. Modern management requires the application of new staffing and selection techniques.

The aim of this paper is to review authors' research in world literature on new ways of staff selection and recruiting to make a comparison between new recruitment techniques in the tourism sector, as well as summarise their advantages and disadvantages and familiarise and promote them between managers, business owners, and HR specialists for better human-resources management in hospitality.

Keywords: recruiting, selection, recruiting techniques in tourism

Introduction

The tourism sector covers areas ranging from accommodation and food services to health and fitness, entertainment, and bars, clubs, and casinos. There are many job vacancies in the sector that candidates could choose from.

However, it is a challenge for managers and HR professionals to find skilled workers and keep them in the right job positions.

Employers can take a variety of actions, some preferring application forms, whether paper or online, because they ensure that they include all

the information they need to evaluate potential candidates' applications. Others want to receive a CV and covering letter because this allows the applicant to be personalised at the initial stage.

Each organisation has its own recruitment and selection process ranging from one interview to a complex series of interviews and assessments, depending on the specifics of the work, and the use of psychometric tests, case studies, and role-playing games for selection.

Tourism employers are starting to look for a complex of so-called "soft skills," including:

- ability to work in a team
- flexibility in the work place
- commitment to the tourism sector
- business-oriented self-awareness
- enthusiasm at work.

A major part of employee recruitment and retention involves consistent and ongoing development, not only for core staff but also for the whole team. Temporary employees are just as valuable as those in an employment contract. They are often not full-time employees but they have to have the same opportunities for training, getting the same level of development and work.

Shift workers who have decided to redeploy their careers, as well as learners and university students, often have no opportunity to look for a job during the standard work or school day, so it is easier for them to do the job by using a laptop, phone, or tablet at the workplace or their own home.

Therefore, the role of social media in the organisational environment has been a hot topic for many years in many areas of the tourism sector.

Sometimes, candidates are less active when looking for a job, whether they are directly linked to companies or provide their resume to a recruitment agency. Candidates expect to attract companies, but due to the wide choice of opportunities, the potential of many people may be missed by those that use inefficient selection techniques. The search for candidates directly from higher-education institutions effectively finds the best potential candidates, but also often misses profiles that could offer much more but did not attend the relevant student exchange.

Another problem with social media is the ban on employees in some companies to share online that their company has a new vacancy while ignoring profiles that are not actively looking for a new position.

In addition, organisations do not want their employees to be contacted and hired by other companies for that, and may ask candidates not to share their business achievements online.

In the tourism industry, it is becoming increasingly difficult to find skilled workers and remain in employment. Employers are forced to "import" a workforce from abroad. This also creates certain difficulties caused by the requirements for extending the stay of foreigners, accompanied by additional administrative obligations. At the same time, young people prefer to study and work abroad for higher salaries.

In order to find the most suitable candidates, some modern selection techniques have been outlined which facilitate the work of the specialists and contribute to a better management of human resources.

Techniques are distributed by attribute identification to a particular stage of the overall search and recruitment process, and staff selection. Some of the techniques can be used in both processes separately or combined.

Recruitment changes over time. These are some of the main trends we have noticed and how they can positively influence the process of recruitment and selecting candidates, and contribute to the organisation's overall activity.

Tourism is a sector in which communication and feedback between employees and consumers occupies a central place. According to one study in the United Kingdom, 41% of tourism employers believe that word of mouth is the most effective way to recruit. We believe that this is also valid for tourism in Bulgaria.

We have selected some of the famous recruitment techniques which have attracted candidates for interview selection. The techniques are separated into two parts according to the feature step of whole recruitment process: (1) attracting a job applicant, and (2) selecting the most suitable candidates.

Techniques for Attracting Job Applicants

(1) Video interviews

An example of this is the video interview, which is used in Bulgaria. With this format, companies provide a series of questions to which the applicant has to answer within a certain amount of time, after which the video is sent to the company.

Not only does video interviewing allow managers to check their "feelings" about the candidate's personality, it also reduces hiring costs and enables more feedback earlier in the hiring process. Today's video technology saves time and money, and so it is valuable to any business.

Personnel recruiters interview a shortlist of candidates on Skype, Google Hangouts, or video advertising software. With these video interviews, inappropriate candidates are usually sifted and, after being removed, a proper interview can be held to select the most suitable candidates.

(2) Online events on a network

Organising career events and participating in labour exchanges provide valuable experience, but their preparation also involves spending valuable time and money. This is why many employers are turning to online events. This gives access to a wide range of candidates without spending valuable hours travelling or talking to people who are not well prepared. These events can take the form of online discussion, casework and/or resolving specific business issues of the company, as well as participation in competitions to select a new logo and/or company motto, with the most suitable candidates being invited to a selection interview.

(3) Social media networks

More and more employers use social media such as Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn to find potential employees by sharing vacancies. Human-resources professionals can encourage their employees to help hire people from their own profiles and networks. Social networks serve to attract candidates by posting job advertisements directly on company webpages and inviting them to apply as soon as possible. In the tourism sector this technique is most popular among young people and students because of their constant use of the network. In some cases in tourism, it is not appropriate to use social networks, and more suitable are traditional ways of recruiting through traditional media communication channels, such as radio, newspaper, or TV, or even the traditional word-of-mouth technique. The selection of the most suitable technique depends on age, education, and the specific vacant position.

(4) A company's website application form

People hired through social media are more likely to be hired and stay longer than candidates who are found by other methods. Filling in an application form is one of the fastest, easiest, and most effective ways to update your recruitment practices. The procedure involves integrating an application form on the company's website looking for employees with an "apply now" button, which attracts candidates in an attractive way. This type of application collection again saves money.

With the help of computer programs, it is possible to find the most suitable candidates for documents that match the profile of a particular company looking for employees. Those who have the best-matching qualities sought by the employer will switch to recruitment. The application platforms built up have high initial investment costs when they are created, but subsequently save time and phone-call costs individually with each selected candidate for the specific position, as the platforms allow notification by email. In addition, each candidate is entered into a database and, in future open positions, can find the most appropriate position corresponding to their profile.

(5) The "tell a friend" system

Attracting candidates through the "refer a friend" system. Any employee who has recommended a friend to work in the organisation gets a pay bonus or another financial or non-financial incentive.

(6) Online job platforms

Online platforms collect the applications of many people in different areas and for different businesses, with candidates having the opportunity to send documents electronically, browse multiple ads, and view information about selected companies. Applicants can also get advice on how to apply and get a suitable job.

(7) Recruiting candidates by organising events

This is a more modern form of recruitment, which is a continuation of traditional labour exchanges. The difference is that here the candidates are attracted and selected through conferences, seminars, workshops, and master classes among high school students, of which the most prominent candidates are also invited to a second stage—a real candidate selection.

Techniques for Selecting the Most Suitable Candidates (Selection)

There are two new trends in this second stage of recruiting.

(1) Video interviews

So-called "remote" interviews by Skype, or another appropriate communication channel, are conducted. The potential danger here the inadequate preparedness of the interviewer (such as not looking the candidate in the eye or staring) or technical problems, such as a bad video or audio connection. The advantages are saving on travel costs for candidates themselves, for example, and the convenience of being in a quieter home environment.

(2) Social media

Social media is used at this second stage of selecting candidates. Once we have found the candidates and attracted them so they can submit their applications, so the managers can use social networks to explore employees' personal profiles. The profiles of candidates and their publications are investigated by HR specialists. Many companies find that certain candidates do not fit the organisational culture of the company with the publications they make. It should be noticed that, at the final selection stage, social networks play an accompanying role, and in most cases do not completely replace traditional recruitment techniques.

Research provides that different social media platforms are used in recruiting and selecting (see Table 9.1 below).

Table 9.1 Which social media platform do you or your company use for recruiting?

N	Social media	Percent (%)
1	LinkedIn	78.3%
2	Facebook	54.6%
3	Twitter	44.8%
4	Blog	18.7
5	YouTube	13.7%
6	Myspace	5.4%

Source: Newtrend.bg

This table shows only the social media platforms which provided information and are used by the managers, but it does not show information about different techniques. Therefore, we believe that more in-depth research has to be done on this topic.

First of all, we start with the summary of all new methods of recruiting and selection, after which it will be possible to create a survey based on these advantages and disadvantages and to help managers to choose the most appropriate technique for recruiting and selection.

We believe that the new recruitment techniques have many advantages along with certain disadvantages. In Table 9.2 below, we have summarised these weaknesses and benefits, and it should be noticed that in most cases it is good practice to select several recruitment techniques for the selection of candidates. In our opinion, there is the possibility that managers can use both traditional and modern recruitment techniques.

Table 9.2. Advantages and disadvantages of modern recruitment techniques

Number	Recruitment technique	Advantages	Disadvantages
1	**Video interviews**	Lower costs on time and money	Risk of insufficiently trained interviewing staff and/or lack of appropriate equipment and technology for the interview
2	**Online network events**	Lower costs of time and money for respondents saved by travel and time spent on real interviewing	Higher costs for the employer, in connection with the design and creation of an online platform for conducting online events
3	**Social media networks**	Lower costs on time and money Access to a wider audience of potentially suitable candidates Facilitated application process (with less effort)	Cost of hiring a specialist to support company profiles on social networks

4	**A company's website application form**	Lower costs on time and money Facilitated application process (with less effort)	Maintenance costs of the webpage where the applications are accepted and processed
5	**Online application job platforms**[1]	Lower costs on time and money. Facilitated application process (with less effort for applicants)	Maintenance costs of the web platform on which applications are received and processed
6	**"Tell a Friend"**	Facilitated application process (with less effort for candidates and interviewers)	Incentive costs for employees who recommend their friends and acquaintances
7	**Recruiting candidates by organising events**	Recruitment of the most suitable candidates	Costs of organising the event and supporting material

Source: author's compilation

Conclusion

The common advantages of these techniques are expressed primarily in lower travel costs for applicants, as well as time for writing CVs and covering letters. Certainly, for some of the positions, the letter is required when the work is related to written and spoken speech, and the communication and administration of documentation. In other techniques, the benefits are directed to the "passively seeking job applicants" standing in front of their computers. Another advantage is that, through these techniques, documents are collected faster than traditional techniques (at a predetermined time), which saves time for processing the candidates' documents by the interviewers.

Applying the trends, the employers could be confident that they are ready for the new "season," knowing what the business is looking for and making sure that the information will reach the employees. HR professionals should be assured that skills for working with different technologies and tools should be highlighted through measurable and concrete examples across all sections of the executive summary.

[1] Examples of such recruiting platforms in Bulgaria are: jobs.bg, zaplata.bg, and jobtiger.bg.

We should emphasise that there are various jobs in the tourism sector of a very diverse nature. Some of the vacant positions use strictly traditional methods of selection and selection and well-known communication channels because social networks do not cover the profiles of all possible available candidates with the sector.

In conclusion, we can summarise that HR managers should use modern staff selection and selection methods in combination with traditional ones, taking into account market characteristics and taking advantage of the most advantageous methods. We believe that this will minimise the weaknesses of some methods and attract the most suitable candidates.

As a next step, we prepared and undertook empirical research of the most-used modern methods of staff selection and recruiting in Bulgaria. We have compiled a sample questionnaire that we will use in a further study to see what the attitudes of staffing and recruitment methods in tourism in Bulgaria are, but this topic in particular will be affected in the next survey, based on the latest and appropriate methods of recruitment and selection in the tourism industry in Bulgaria.

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CHAPTER TEN

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE: A KEY FACTOR TO THE SUCCESSFUL PROFESSIONAL PERFORMANCE OF TOURISM SPECIALISTS

MILENA STOYANOVA

Abstract

Emotional intelligence affects the physical and mental health of an individual as well as their relationships with others, and is inextricably linked both to personal fulfilment and successful professional performance, particularly in the "human-human" field. It is considered an important ability for many professional areas, but research into it is innovative in the field of tourism. The ability to perceive emotions allows a person to better understand them, which subsequently enhances emotion regulation. The ability to control an individual's emotions so that they can demonstrate the appropriate emotions in the workplace allows specialists in tourism to perform better.

The aim of this study is to show that the level of emotional intelligence is an important factor for acmeological personal development, ensuring the achievement of a high level of professionalism, including in tourism.

Keywords: emotional intelligence, measurement of emotional intelligence, quotient of emotional intelligence, emotional competence

Introduction

Emotional intelligence affects the physical and mental health of an individual as well as their relationships with the others, and is inextricably linked to both personal fulfilment and successful professional performance,

particularly in the "human-human" field. It is considered an important ability for many professional areas, but research in it is innovative in the field of tourism.

Emotional intelligence is an intellectual skill to manage your emotional life, a skill that promotes personal and professional success (Sitdikova, n.d.). Prosperous people who have achieved significant professional success have a high level of emotional intelligence. It provides them with "the necessary internal flexibility to cope with stress, low self-esteem, internal defeat, and depression" (Holdan 2012, 279). "Thinking through feelings", i.e. using his/her emotional intelligence, one establishes better relationships and makes better choices both personally and professionally (Noyes 2011, 11).

Emotional intelligence is important for career success in many areas. Recent studies have found that high levels of emotional intelligence are associated with success at work. It improves the ability of a person to work with other team members and provide high-quality customer service; employees with high emotional intelligence are more likely to develop their skills (Stough and De Gara 2003, 145). Emotional intelligence is considered to be an important ability for employees in many types of professional areas, including in the field of tourism, as perceiving emotions allows a person to better understand them, which subsequently enhances emotional regulation. The ability to regulate one's own emotions, so that they can demonstrate the right ones in the workplace, allows them to perform better (Joseph and Newman 2010, 54–78).

The importance of emotional capabilities is obvious for optimising the functioning of organisations. Nowadays, it is confirmed empirically that an increased level of emotional intelligence in employees positively affects the activity in the organisation (Andreeva 2011). Employers are increasingly beginning to explore emotional intelligence in the recruitment process. In addition to traditionally recognised abilities such as communicative and social skills, employees with a higher level of emotional intelligence are assessed as more suitable for recruitment than others with lower levels (Maynard 2003, 791–2). Employers are increasingly aware that emotionally intelligent people are of great benefit – they can more efficiently manage both themselves and others, and also work better in a team (Uilks 2003).

Emotional intelligence is a type of social intelligence that involves the ability to monitor one's own and others' emotions, to discriminate among them, and to use the information to guide one's thinking and actions (Salovey and Mayer 1990). The scope of emotional intelligence includes the verbal and nonverbal appraisal and expression of emotion, the

regulation of self-emotions and those of others, and the utilisation of emotional content in problem solving. The ability to perceive emotions allows a person to understand them better, which subsequently enhances their regulation. The ability to control the emotions of individuals allows for demonstrating the right emotions in the workplace and working better.

The aim of this study is to show that the level of emotional intelligence is an important factor for the acmeological personal development, ensuring the achievement of a high level of professionalism, including in tourism.

The following tasks must be solved:

- to specify emotional intelligence
- apply adequate methods for diagnosing emotional intelligence (Christophe André's test)
- to develop and implement a methodology for creating an emotional profile of those employed in the tourism industry on the basis of their emotional intelligence quotient.

Literature Review

The formation of the notion of "emotional intelligence" is a result of a concept of the nature of cognitive and affective processes and the peculiarities of their interrelations. The most important achievements in this process are: enriching the notions of emotions (as one of the subsystems of consciousness as a factor of motivation), expanding the ideas of intelligence (the idea of multiple intellectual manifestations, the discovery of social intelligence), and the intersection in emotional and intellectual research (the idea of unity and productive interaction between affective and cognitive processes) (Andreeva 2008, 93).

A number of psychologists view emotions as an ordered response, which for adaptation directs cognitive activity and following up. Thus, emotions are initial motivational factors, as emotional processes allow incitement, activity, and maintenance. Indeed, the word "emotion" originates from the Latin verb *emovare*, which means "moving" (Orme 2003).

The term "emotional intelligence" expresses the integrative, overall character of an individual's psyche, and is defined as:

- the ability to act in accordance with the inner environment of feelings and desires (Yakovleva 1997; Buck 1991)
- the ability of the individual to manage their emotional life "intellectually"

- the ability of a person to perceive and use emotional information received or transmitted with the help of emotions; the ability to reduce stress, learn to communicate effectively, overcome obstacles, and resolve conflicts (Lemberg 2013)
- the ability to recognise and manage one's own and foreign emotions (Nelson and Quick 2013)
- the competence of the individual (understood as a unity of knowledge, skills, and attitudes) to live fully and in harmony with themselves and the world; the "art of living."

According to Manoylova (2004), emotional intelligence is an integrative concept that includes intelligence, emotions, and volition. And the volition in emotional intelligence is a means of subjugating the emotional to the intellectual. The author of that model distinguishes in the structure of emotional intelligence two "aspects": inner and interpersonal (social, being the ability to manage oneself and the ability to manage relationships with people). The first "aspect" includes components like: self-awareness, self-esteem, self-confidence, responsibility, tolerance, self-control, activity, flexibility, interest, openness, motivation to achievement, and optimism. The second aspect includes such components as: communicativeness, extroversion, empathy, ability to report and develop the interests of the other person, respect for people, ability to adequately assess and predict interpersonal relationships, and teamwork skills. As the main characteristics of emotional intelligence, Manoylova determines empathy, tolerance, assertiveness, and self-esteem (Velichkova 2018).

One of the types of intelligence is social intelligence, defined as the ability to understand people and manage them. Research has found that social intelligence can be separated from general academic abilities (Andreeva 2006, 6).

The role of emotional intelligence in communicating is extremely important. Qualities such as goodwill, tactility, and quickly assessing the situation and responding appropriately require advanced empathy. Empathy is understood by Goleman (2011) as a basic component of emotional intelligence and one of the survival factors as the innate property of the human (Manoylova 2004, 16).

Daniel Goleman (2011) pays particular attention to organisational skills and the quotient of group intelligence. He considers that emotional intelligence, i.e. skills that help people to work in harmony, are becoming an increasingly important asset in the workplace, because when people come together to cooperate it can be fully justified to speak of a group's IQ – the total amount of the talents and skills of all of its participants. This

factor determines how well they will do with their task. It turns out that the most important element of group intelligence is the quotient of intelligence, not so much in an academic sense as in an emotional one. The key to the high IQ in a group is social harmony. It is precisely this ability to harmonise (*ceteris paribus*) that will give special talent, performance, and success to a group. In groups with high levels of emotional and social stasis, people cannot do everything by themselves. Harmony, however, allows a group to make the most of the abilities of its creative and talented members (2011, 223–7).

Organisational skills, involving the ability to coordinate teamwork, to achieve consensus, to view things through others' eyes, and to persuade and to promote cooperation while avoiding conflict, are particularly important, but all these are social skills. The "stars" in one organisation also have other advantages, in that they are willing to take on responsibilities that go beyond their job description, and can manage their time and commitment well. These are aspects of emotional intelligence.

Goleman (2005) proves that success in life is determined less by the general level of mental development and much more by those peculiarities of the mind that determine the ability to know one's self and emotional self-regulation, the ability to express one's own feelings, and to be understood and sensitive to the conditions of other people. It is the level of emotional development that determines life and the professional success of people.

It is necessary to note the contribution of Bodalev in studying the problem of emotional abilities, who noticed that some people inherently have a social talent. This represents a peculiar combination of intellectual, emotional, and communicative abilities that are the psychological basis for the success of people's communication with others (1999, 24–9).

Contemporary philosophers emphasise the relevance of the problem about developing an emotional competence being the openness of the human to their emotional experiences (Kunytsina and Pogolsha 2001; Slepkova, Liet, and Vries-Geervilet 1997, 130–7), linking its possibilities with the harmonious interaction between the heart and reason, affect and intellect.

Methodology

Emotional intelligence, like rational intelligence (IQ), has a quotient that can be calculated through the French psychiatrist Christophe Andre's test, in which there are no right and wrong answers, such as situational tests exploring emotional intelligence. Emotions are difficult to measure

because they are short lived and complex and individuals have many different emotions within a day.

The test of forty-two questions has been applied to 163 people in relation with their consulting and choice of profession. The sum of all points indicates the emotional intelligence quotient (EQ): high (between 121 and 168 points), average (between 81 and 120 points), and low (between 42 and 80 points).

The test offers three more options: by summing up the points of different questions, everyone can establish their attitude towards themselves (the ability to develop), the attitude towards others (the ability to communicate), and the attitude to life (the ability to create harmony).

The results are processed with Microsoft® Excel® 2010, IBM® SPSS® Version 18.

Research Findings

The analysis was performed with the data taken from empirical study executed in 2017, which used a representative sample of the total number of staff in the tourism sector in Bulgaria (n = 163), 87 male (53.1%) and 76 female (46.9%). Once the data meet the requirements, it can be verified whether the working sample size is adequate. The sample amount required for this study has been calculated.

From the data obtained with a standardised Christophe André test, these results about emotional intelligence quotient (EQ) of the surveyed specialists in tourism can be generalised: 100% of them have an average quotient (between 81 and 120 points). These are mainly people whose ability to listen to others and manage their emotions is good, but they can improve it if they wish.

Like any skill, it gets better with practice. They have to work on the expression of emotions from the moment they are born and look for their causes. Representatives of this group have typical features for those working in tourism:

- to deal with themselves (the body is the instrument of emotional intelligence)
- to develop their creativity and spirituality (emotions feed on non-verbal food)
- to listen to others and to try to understand them (their emotions also give them information about themselves).

Table 10.1. Descriptive statistics of the results for quotient of emotional intelligence (EQ)

Items	Number of Questions	Quotient of Emotional Intelligence (EQ)	M (Mean)	SD (Standard Deviation)
Somewhat yes	42	107	34.4214	3.50759
Somewhat no	42	103	31.3167	3.28165
Absolutely yes	42	111	18.5833	2.80391
Absolutely no	42	99	15.5833	2.74492
Valid N (listwise)	42			

Source: author's own calculations (2018)

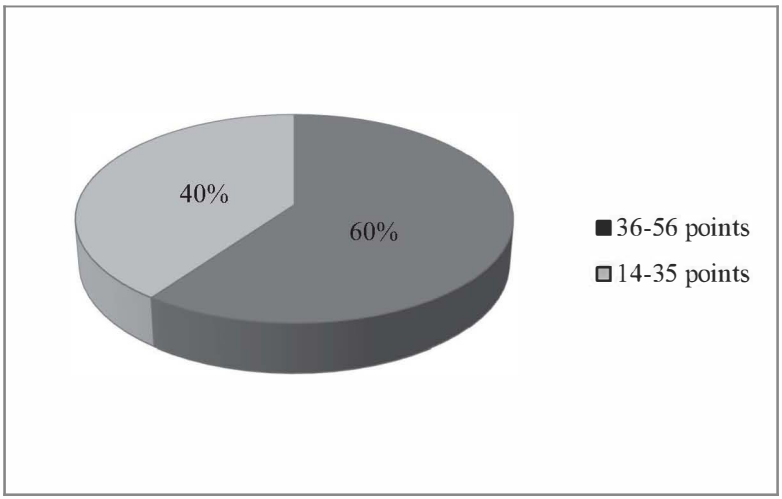
More detailed test results can also be calculated, showing three distinct subtypes of emotional intelligence:

- attitudes towards one's self (intimate emotional intelligence – IE●): what each person feels or the emotions through which they understand themselves
- attitudes towards others (social emotional intelligence – SE●): what each person feels to others or emotions through which they can better understand them
- attitude to life (Existential Emotional Intelligence – EE●): how everyone can make their lives more harmonious.

The sum of the points of questions 1, 4, 5, 8, 10, 11, 12, 18, 20, 25, 31, 34, 39, and 41 shows the result for the attitude towards themselves (the ability to develop themselves) – IE●.

Most (60%) scored between 36 and 56 points. It is characteristic of them that they rarely allow emotions to accumulate and overflow. They are rather an ally in their daily lives. These people are very familiar with themselves – they are able to identify negative emotions (anger, sadness, anxiety, envy, etc.) even in the foetus, i.e. to understand their causes and to react to that understanding accordingly.

Fig. 10.1. Percentage distribution of categories for attitude towards one's self (IEQ)



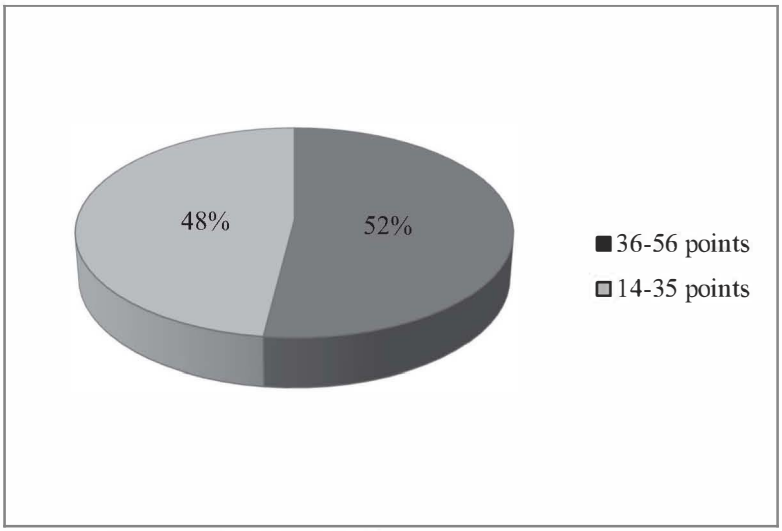
Source: author's own calculations (2018)

The other 40% get between 14 and 35 points. Typical for them is that their emotions cause discomfort more than anything else. Often, consciously or not, they suppress them, and then let them explode. These people misunderstand them, do not listen to them, or do it when it is too late and they have become uncontrollable.

The sum of the points of questions 6, 9, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 19, 21, 22, 23, 28, 35, and 40 shows the result for the attitude towards others (the ability to communicate) – SEQ. In all, 52% of respondents scored a sum of 36 to 56 points. They are able to use their emotions effectively in their relationships with others. Above all, this is due to the ability to listen intuitively (to go beyond words and intentions), and be empathetic (to understand and experience the emotional state of the other). They have good communication skills and the ability to express what they want without exerting pressure on others. The ability to send personalised messages makes them convincing.

The other 48% of tourists scored between 14 and 35 points. They create an impression among others as being confused, dull, tired, and unmotivated people. This is due to the forceful approach they use to communicate with people and the fact that emotions are more likely to prevent them from expressing themselves.

Fig. 10.2. Percentage distribution of categories for attitude towards others (SEQ)



Source: author's own calculations (2018)

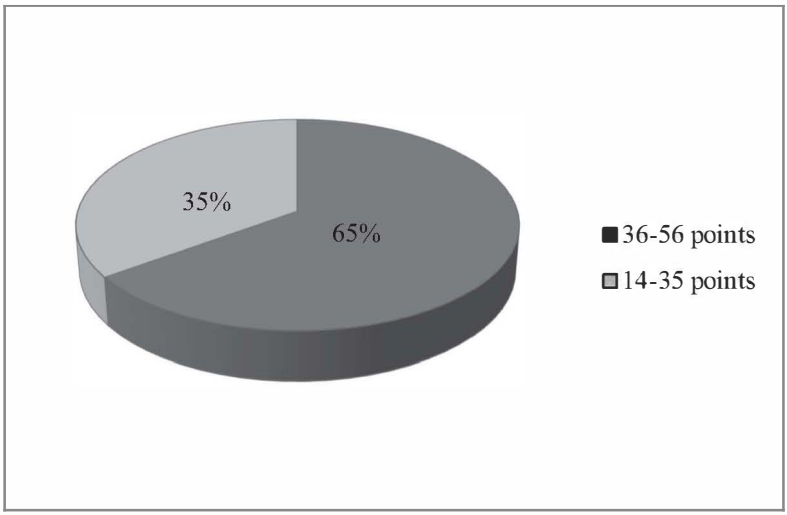
The sum of the points of questions 2, 3, 7, 23, 25, 26, 28, 30, 32, 33, 36, 37, 38, and 42 shows the result for attitude to life (the ability to create harmony) – EEQ.

The place we give to the emotions in our daily lives reflects on our whole being: what we pursue, what priorities we set, how we care for ourselves, and what importance we give to intuition, creativity, and relaxation. In this sense, emotional intelligence influences all our decisions and style and quality of life. Particular attention should be paid to the third subtype of the emotional intelligence quotient.

In all, 65% of the surveyed staff are in the group with points between 36 and 56. They are aware of the importance of wellbeing and personal growth as priorities, as well as overwork, overactivity, and excessive self-esteem.

The remaining 35% are vulnerable to stress, and their lives are full of vicious actions, existential doubts, and exhaustion. Therefore, they need to be encouraged to take a little more time with themselves, to hear their emotions before making a decision, and to not exaggerate stress.

Fig. 10.3. Percentage distribution of categories for attitude to life (EEQ)



Source: author's own calculations (2018)

This research has shown that higher efficiency in work in tourism is in direct proportion to the high level of emotional intelligence, because:

- individuals with high quotients present their ideas, intentions, and goals better, express themselves more clearly, are more persistent, and have stronger sensitivity
- EQ is closely related to the ability for teamwork, which is of great importance in the field of tourism
- EQ is related to the ability to deal effectively with problems, which allows people to respond more effectively to various demands, pressure, and stresses
- executives with high EQ are able to create a better working environment that increases the awareness of employees and thus leads to better results; they are also more receptive, and aware of the strengths and weaknesses of their team, allowing them to make the right decisions
- leaders with a high EQ can better identify what staff they need and how to be more inspirational and supportive towards them; they create a more enthusiastic, pleasant, and optimistic working atmosphere

- managers with a high EQ (unlike those with low EQ) are less likely to be negative, cowardly, and even "destructive" in making important management decisions (Furnham 2008).

Discussion

This research confirms Goleman's assertions that the following components and related habits are important in the development of the emotional intelligence of those working in tourism.

Personal habits:
Self-awareness
- Emotional self-awareness: analysis of our own emotions and awareness of their impact on us, use of intuition in decision-making.
- Exact self-esteem: understanding your own strengths and the limits of your capabilities.
- Confidence in self: a sense of self-dignity and an adequate appreciation of one's own giftedness.

Self-control
- Stimulating emotions: the ability to control destructive emotions and impulses.
- Openness: honesty and frankness, reliability.
- Adaptability: flexible adaptation to changing situations and overcoming obstacles.
- Will for victory: a persistent drive to improve productivity for compliance with internal quality standards.
- Initiative: readiness for active action and ability to not miss opportunities.
- Optimism: the ability to have a positive view of things.

Social habits:
Social sensitivity
- Survival: the ability to listen to other people's feelings, to understand their attitudes, and to have an active attitude towards their problems.
- Business awareness: understanding current events, the responsibility hierarchy, and policy at the organisational level.
- Serviceability: the ability to recognise and meet the needs of subordinates, customers, or consumers.

Relationship management

- Enthusiasm: the ability to lead, drawing a fascinating picture of the future.
- Impact: possession of persuasion tactics.
- Help in self-improvement: encourage the development of other people's abilities with the help of opinions and instructions.
- Assistance for change: the ability to initiate transformations, improve management methods, and lead employees in a new direction.
- Conflict regulation: resolving disagreements.
- Strengthening personal relationships: cultivating and maintaining social ties.
- Teamwork and collaboration: interacting with other employees and creating teams (Goleman 2005, 301).

This research is limited to some extent by the nature of the data, which are specific to tourism workers. Future research may productively extend these findings by testing the relationships in other experiential consumption settings, using other methods and measures.

Emotions are among the most important characteristics of the individual. The interest in them is linked to evidence of mental differences between people – differences in the depth, intensity, stability of emotions, emotional sensitivity, pace, energy operations, and other dynamic and individually resistant characteristics of mental life, behaviour, and actions that traditionally belong to temperament and lifestyle.

Special attention should be paid to "the extremely difficult but especially fruitful profession for expressing feelings" (Zhekova and Pencheva 1993, 20). For work in tourism, sensitivity is not enough to possess a rich emotional sensibility and give it an external expression, since a large part of the activity includes "dealing with feelings" with one's own feelings, along with those of tourists and colleagues. This highlights the recognition of emotions and those of other people as well as the causes they generate, as well as the ability to express different emotions as the main tasks in training and improving the qualification of workers in tourism.

Further theoretical and methodological research would help to reveal new perspectives in the practical application of emotional intelligence. Further exploration needs to be made of the phenomenon of emotional intelligence, its structure, and its paths of development to find a real opportunity for the optimisation of relationships through a deeper

awareness of the emotional processes and states that arise between people in the process of interpersonal interaction.

Conclusion

From the above it can be concluded that people with high emotional intelligence have a strong ability to understand both their own and other people's emotions, to better control their emotions, to be more adaptable, to communicate more easily, and to influence others.

At the same time, the competence of personnel in tourism is directly related to not only knowledge and skills but also the individual characteristics of the personality reflecting its emotionality: the talent for understanding others, tolerance, tactics, and the ability for fast and adequate response in various situations, with assertiveness. This determines the need for self-development for working in tourism, the acquisition of practical skills for reflection, the development of professionally important qualities and knowledge, and self-monitoring skills.

Emotional intelligence is not a constant magnitude and requires effort, resources, and time to master and refine. The innovative introduction of an integrative model for the intelligence and behaviour of working in tourism is important for achieving positive business results because it improves human abilities to make adequate solutions to different situations and problems.

Such an innovative option offers the concept of emotional intelligence. Through its development as an important factor in enhancing psychological culture, the specialists in tourism will improve their emotional competence, increase the level of their professional skills, and enrich their opportunities for full personal and professional expression and realisation. In the future of the entire tourism industry, the basic skills due to emotional intelligence will become more and more important, both in teamwork and cooperation, and people will learn how to work more effectively together. To thrive, tourist organisations have to do their best to encourage collective emotional intelligence.

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PART II

CHAPTER ONE

DEVELOPING THE INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE OF TOURISM STUDENTS

GINKA DIMITROVA

Abstract

In the age of globalisation, tourism is rapidly expanding and strengthening its role as a sociocultural practice and model for holidays and recreation. However, the future of tourism destinations is not measured by building a solid network of attractions, new marketing strategies, and the diversification of customer groups, but is based on the efforts of educational institutions to train specialists with knowledge and skills to work successfully in a multicultural environment. In the context of modern trends of social development, the issue of developing the intercultural competence of future professionals in the tourism service business is particularly relevant. They must have not only a high level of linguistic competence but also communication skills in a multicultural environment, showing tolerance for cultural differences in the behaviour and needs of tourists.

The aim of the present study is to define the main characteristics of the concept of intercultural (communicative) competence, as well as outline the ways it can be built with students majoring in tourism.

Keywords: intercultural communication, intercultural (communicative) competence, tourism education

Introduction

In almost all contemporary studies devoted to modern trends in the development of society, the universal character of globalisation processes is emphasised. This irrevocably leads us to the idea of Kenichi Ohmae

(1990) of a "borderless world." The usual political and state borders become permeable, and the concept of people's lives separated by time and space is now considered outdated.

In the age of globalisation, tourism continues to expand and strengthen its position as a sociocultural practice and model for holidays and recreation as a business sphere, and a system of international relations and communication, a growing global market and a dynamically developing industry, and a transnational and multicultural phenomenon in its very nature as a whole. In the opinion of experts, the twenty-first century will be a century of tourism. However, the future of tourism destinations is not measured by building a solid network of attractions, new marketing strategies, and diversification of customer groups. It is also based on the efforts of educational institutions to train professionals with the knowledge and skills to work successfully in a multicultural environment. In the context of the contemporary trends of social development, the issue of the intercultural competence (ICC) of future specialists in the field of tourism services is particularly relevant. They must have not only a high level of linguistic competence but also communication skills in a multicultural environment, showing tolerance for cultural differences in the behaviour and needs of tourists. Therefore, problems related to building and developing ICC have helped form some of the basic principles of modern tourism education.

The aim of the present study is to define the main characteristics of the concept of intercultural (communicative) competence, as well as outline the ways students majoring in tourism can develop that competence.

The working hypothesis put forward in this research is that developing the ICC of tourism students would be more successful if:

- a clear-cut structure of ICC is developed and the levels and criteria of its development in the field of tourism are defined
- an integrated approach is applied based on the united efforts in the education of tourism students in various courses, e.g.: foreign languages, intercultural communication, business communication, cultural heritage and tourism, country studies, social psychology in tourism, customs, traditions, and culinary art.

Methodology

In solving the abovementioned tasks, the following research methods have been used:

- theoretical: analysis of the theoretical and practical research work summarising the experience of researchers and teachers in developing intercultural (communicative) competence
- empirical: empirical-experimental work, monitoring the learning process, questionnaires, expert assessment.

The empirical-experimental basis of the study is manifested through conducting a survey at the College of Tourism, Varna and at the University of Economics, Varna. It was conducted in the spring of 2018 with sixty-six second and third-year students from the College of Tourism, Varna majoring in tourism management.

Theoretical Background

The term "intercultural competence" is fundamental to the subject area of intercultural communication. It is the research topic of many scientists representing different fields of study (Berardo, 2005, 8; Lipponen, 2005, 30; Rathje, 2007, 254; Spencer-Oatey and Franklin, 2009; Brighton and Rudenko 2013, 210). Born in the field of cultural anthropology, ICC is described in terms of communication theory, social psychology, ethno-psychology, sociolinguistics, linguo-didactics, and management. Depending on the subject, the component content of its models also varies. For example, Byram looks at ICC in terms of foreign-language teaching: "teaching for linguistic competence cannot be separated from teaching for intercultural competence" (Byram 1997, 22). The author points out that a competent participant in intercultural communication should have sociolinguistic or sociocultural knowledge besides language competence. The American researcher J. Kim adopts a systems-theory view to the study of ICC. The approach is in the context of adaptation theory (Kim 1991, 259). This theory examines the dynamics of a person's adaptation to a foreign culture regardless of whether they reside abroad for a short or long period of time. The basis of this theory is that adaptation is a complex multi-component process, during which a person gradually adapts to the new type of communication.

The Identity Negotiation theory by Stella Ting-Toomey has also become widespread. Ting-Toomey states that a competent identity negotiator is "able to use multiple cultural frames of reference to interpret a problematic, cultural collusion situation" (2005, 230). Examining the structure of ICC through the prism of different areas of knowledge does not lead to its clarification but to the lack of commonly accepted terminology, and the research results are sometimes difficult to compare.

In other words, the use of various approaches, conceptualisations, and methods to study ICC has led to the dispersion of the research tradition (Koester et al. 1993, 3).

Particular attention should be paid to the differentiation made by some scientists of the terms "intercultural competence" and "intercultural communicative competence." Some authors (Berardo 2005, 4) use these terms interchangeably, or admit that they use the term ICC as an abbreviation of "intercultural communicative competence" (Fantini 2007, 8)

The British methodology theorist Michael Byram distinguishes these concepts by using the criterion of the language of communication that ICC implies the ability to interact with representatives of other cultures in your native language, whereas intercultural communicative competence implies the ability to interact with people of other cultures in a foreign language (1997, 70). The development of ICC takes place only in the native language, whereas the development of intercultural communicative competence requires the study of a foreign language. In this way, people with intercultural communicative competence become mediators between cultures and languages. The use of the adjective "communicative" in the name of competence is also justified by the fact that ICC is seen as a structural element of the communicative competence of the linguistic personality (Deardorff 2004, 33; Fantini 2007, 11).

The American methodology theorist Alvino Fantini gives the following formula representing the interrelation between the two competences (Fantini 2007, 11): CC1 + CC2 + ... + CCn = ICC, where CC is communicative competence, ICC intercultural (communicative) competence, and n- the number of communicative competences learned. The equation is deciphered in the following way: the individual has communicative competence in their native culture (CC1); in the course of intercultural interaction they encounter the communicative competence of a representative of another culture CC2. If an individual chooses to acquire communicative competence in the culture of the other person, intercultural (communicative) competence is formed. Fantini points out that "ICC, then, is more than a collection of abilities that allow one to function in one and another system (CC1 and CC2); ICC also results in producing unique perspectives that arise from the interaction of two (or more) systems" (Fantini 2007, 11).

The complex nature of ICC is an obstacle to the formulation of a uniform definition of this concept. Further clarification and additions are yet to be done (Deardorff 2004, 200). This is evidenced by the existence of many synonymous terms, such as ICC, cross-cultural competence, cultural competence, multicultural competence, global competence, intercultural

communicative competence, cross-country competence, ethno-cultural competence, intercultural efficiency, intercultural sensitivity, intercultural awareness, cultural literacy, and cultural intellect (Fantini 2007, 6; Arevalo-Guerro 2009, 52; Simkhovych 2009, 3; Varis 2005, 22). The distinction between these terms remains conditional and they can be interchangeable, and in each case it is necessary to clarify the definition. Using these terms without a specific definition makes their analysis difficult (Deardorff 2009, 478). Despite the large number of terms representing ICC, the ability for intercultural communication is always the focus (Brighton and Rudenko 2013, 209). Although these concepts have their differences in meaning, they overlap for the most part (Simkhovych 2009, 384).

The term ICC, in our opinion, corresponds in the greatest extent to the traditions of intercultural communication for describing the ability to effectively interact with representatives of various cultures (Deardorff 2004, 42) and implies minimum limitations to its application compared to other close term definitions. The character of this study requires clarification of the chosen term "professional intercultural competence," where emphasis is put on the ability to solve professional tasks and carry out professional activity related to intercultural communication in the tourism business.

Despite the existing differences in research on ICC, certain well-defined trends can be identified. Traditionally, there are three approaches to exploring the concept of ICC: (1) a cognitive approach, in which ICC is seen as acquired knowledge exhibited in skills; (2) a behavioural approach that perceives ICC as the ability to adapt to the conditions of intercultural communication, and (3) a pragmatic approach interpreting ICC as an action that corresponds and is used effectively to define intercultural identity (Shkutina and Jankina 2012, 10).

It is necessary to specify that the conceptualisation of ICC is also culturally determined. Since most of the existing models and theories of ICC have been developed by American and European scientists, it should be noted that the dominant paradigm of ICC research is not far from the linguistic, cultural, and academic bias of Eurocentrism (Miike 2003, 2012). The attempts to define ICC are dominated by the Western scientific tradition, which assesses efficiency as a key indicator of competent behaviour in intercultural communication (Deardorff 2004, 51). According to researchers, ICC is interpreted differently by representatives of Eastern cultures (Chen 2006, 2). Researchers from Asian countries regard the pursuit of harmony rather than efficiency as the main goal of successful intercultural communication. Similarly, in African cultures, the relationship

between the participants in communication lies in the basis of the ICC concept (Deardorff 2009, 10). An example of an understanding of the ICC different from the Western one may be the study of its structural components in Chinese culture. These include the ability to control emotions, the ability to express feelings indirectly, the ability to the partner in communication to "keep face," and the ability to understand the differences in the relationship between members of one's "own group" in comparison to the relationships between members of the "others' group" (Chen and Starosta 1996, 372).

It is important to note, for that matter, that the same ICC model can be differently perceived by representatives of different cultures. The study by A. Matveev and R. Milter (2004, 109), in which twenty-one Russian and nineteenAmerican respondents were surveyed, shows different results in perceiving the importance of ICC components: 38% of Americans give preference to skills, 34% to culture awareness, and 29% to the personality of the individual, while 37% of Russians give their preference for skills, 26% for culture awareness, and 37% for the individual's personality. Although the importance of ICC is recognised by both groups, representatives of American culture attach more importance to culture awareness, whereas for Russian respondents the individual's personality is of greater importance. When interviewing respondents, it was clear that Americans see a lack of skills as the major cause of intercultural conflicts, while the Russians associate these problems with the individual qualities of the person (Matveev and Milter 2004, 110).

It should be pointed out that the characteristics of ICC also depend on the professional field to which it refers. There are well-known ICC models of, for example, manager, physician, nurse, social worker, lecturer, tourism professional, and lawyer (Campinha-Bacote et al. 1996, 160; Purnell and Paulanka 2003, 10; Polutiahova 2013; Jirwe, Gerrish, and Emami 2006, 11).

By summarising the existing ICC models created by representatives of different schools of science and research areas, several key features can be distinguished (see Byram 1999, 193):

(1) There is no coherence and continuity in the research on the structure of ICC (Chen and Starosta 1996, 370; Rathje 2007, 254).
(2) In the structure of the ICC, three main components can be distinguished (Byram 1999, 97; Apalkov and Suisoev 2008, 93):
   - **cognitive**, in which knowledge on one's own and the foreign culture is usually included; about customs, values, rules, and norms; the perceptions of the similarities and differences of

native and foreign culture and the awareness of the significance of cultural differences; knowledge that helps encode and decode non-verbal messages
- **affective** (attitude and emotional-motivational complex), associated with goodwill and empathy towards representatives of other cultures; manifestation of tolerance, emotional stability in intercultural relationships
- **behavioural** (behaviour), the ability to adapt to different cultures; the ability to control emotional reactions associated with differences.

Although the level of variations in the component structure of ICC in the various areas of knowledge is high, the repetition pattern of the following elements is obvious: intercultural awareness, empathy and reflection.

(3) The constituent composition of ICC depends on the knowledge area.
(4) ICC is a culturally specific concept and, in order to avoid cultural prejudices, it is important to take culturally specific views into account. Based on culturally specific theories, general theories could also be possible (see Collier 1989).
(5) ICC is always contextual. An important trend in ICC modelling is the transfer of attention from the person with ICC to the contextual factors influencing it (Lipponen 2005, 39; Rathje 2007, 257).
(6) ICC is inextricably linked to the intercultural approach to foreign language education. Developing ICC is its main purpose.
(7) The development of ICC takes place throughout one's whole life.

The Development of the Intercultural Competence of Students Majoring in Tourism

The development of the ICC of students majoring in tourism is strongly dependent not only on the main principles of intercultural communication but also on the specifics of professional communication in the field of tourism: direct contact with representatives of foreign cultures, awareness/respect of cultural differences and preferences while providing tourism services, overcoming ethnic/nationality stereotypes, and knowing the culture-specific verbal and non-verbal forms of intercultural interaction. Also important is the fact that the tourism business also

concerns taking into account the culture, interests, and values of its consumers.

The training of students for the needs of the tourism industry requires the combined efforts of teachers in various fields of study. A recurrent pattern since the beginning of this century has been the active integration of compulsory courses on the problems of intercultural communication introduced into the curricula of a wide range of specialties at universities all over the world (Verluyten 1997, 135; Otten 2003, 18). Intercultural communication is perceived as a learning objective in the context of the humanisation of education (Sercu 2010, 17; Shtraub 2010, 264; Polutiahova 2013, 175).

The development of IC competence at the College of Tourism, Varna is carried out in the specialisation courses and foreign-language classes.

The Development of Students' Intercultural Competence in Specialisation Courses

Taking into account the specifics of the tourism industry, the College of Tourism, Varna curricula have introduced courses covering issues related to the development of ICC. Traditionally, the basics of this competence are laid in the lecture courses in country studies (during the first semester of study) and intercultural communication (during the second semester of study) for students majoring in tourism and leisure management.

The country studies lecture course brings together five main theme modules. The first module is introductory and presents the course as an interdisciplinary academic field, systematising the basic information needed in the study of foreign language and culture. This module introduces basic terms such as ethnicity, national character, and culture, which make up the conceptual framework of the course.

The following four modules present different countries: the United Kingdom, the United States, Canada, Germany, Austria, Switzerland, France, and Russia on the world map – geographic, economic, political, and linguistic, and the main historical stages in the development of the countries, their sociopolitical structure, the specifics of their education systems, and the cultural heritage of their peoples are outlined. The lecture course is an essential addition to the four foreign languages studied at the College of Tourism, Varna: English, German, French, and Russian.

The aim of the course is for future tourism professionals to develop sociocultural communicative competences on the basis of the studied country's facts and realities, acquiring the necessary volume of background

knowledge (information about the national character, the way of life of the nationalities and ethnoses in these countries, whose languages are studied, the historical facts, the natural-geographic resources of the economy) so that they effectively carry out professional activity in the context of intercultural communication. The country studies course facilitates the complex realisation of the main goals of foreign-language learning.

The intercultural communication course builds on the knowledge and skills acquired in the country studies course during the first semester. It covers the selection and presentation of information about the national-cultural specifics of oral communication in the target language in order to help students develop intercultural communication competences.

The theoretical part of the course is aimed at systematically presenting the main problems of intercultural communication, introducing the basic concepts and terminology, as well as developing cultural sensitivity, and the ability to correctly interpret specific manifestations of communicative behaviour in different situations of intercultural contacts in the context of providing tourism services.

The practical section is oriented towards studying the processes of intercultural communication and communicative styles in different cultures, forming students' thinking habits in a multicultural context and creating a positive attitude towards foreign cultures, recognising the values of cultural diversity in the modem world.

Within the optional courses during the third and fourth semester of studies, students have the opportunity to expand their knowledge of the native culture (cultural heritage and tourism, customs, traditions and culinary art) to improve their skills in face-to-face communication with foreign tourists, and learn about the sociocultural factors influencing the choice of tourism destination (social psychology in tourism). The business communication course is about the technology and means of implementing the outer and intra-company communications. External communications are looked at in an intercultural context and are structured according to the stages of business negotiations (preparation, contracting, and implementation), focusing on the needs of training specialists in the field of tourism. Preparation and negotiation techniques are also considered. Emphasis is placed on the structure and means of communication in international organisations, and the methods of the analysis of communication are outlined.

The Development of Students' Intercultural Competence in Foreign-language Teaching

Foreign-language training at the College of Tourism, Varna takes place during the six semesters of training, including four major foreign languages: English, German, French, and Russian, studied as a first and second foreign language with the respective 255 and 450 study/contact hours. College language training aims at improving the language skills and knowledge necessary for the immediate contact of the professional in the tourism business, as a hotel or restaurant manager, tour guide, tour agent, tour operator, interpreter, or personal assistant of foreign guests. Students acquire oral communication skills, reading and writing knowledge, and skills related to daily communication, processing current correspondence, use of specialised foreign literature, as well as oral and written translation on tourism topics. The first and second foreign-language course programs cover a wide range of topics related not only to the hotel, restaurant, and travel agency services, but also talks/information about main tourist sites and destinations in Bulgaria offered to foreign tourists.

During language classes and their self-preparation, students make use of original course books and information from the internet, as well as translations of specialised literature from Bulgarian into the foreign language. The main methods of building intercultural competence in foreign-language classes are role play (dialogues in which the participants take up different roles of representatives of the respective national culture, trying to preserve the specifics of language and cultural codes); preparation of individual talks related to the presentation of information about various cultural landmarks in Bulgaria, taking into account specific preferences and interests; individual or group presentation on selected topics studied during the course, and research projects.

Empirical Findings and Analysis

The survey, conducted in 2018 with sixty-six second and third-year students of the College of Tourism, Varna majoring in tourism management, aims at assessing the factors contributing to the successful development of ICC. It includes questions related to the students' professional experience, and their opinion on the need for additional training related to intercultural communication.

The survey results show that all students have experience in the field of tourism services: 72.72% of the third-year students have worked for one to

three years in the tourism industry, compared to 22.73% for the second-year students in the College of Tourism.

An important factor for successful work in tourism is the good command of foreign languages. All students speak a minimum of two foreign languages – 100% of them speaking English, and some of the other most frequently-spoken foreign languages are Russian and German. Students also use a limited vocabulary and certain phrases in French, Ukrainian, Turkish, Greek, Romanian, Spanish, Portuguese, Czech, Polish, Arabic, and Hebrew. Most often, students had to provide services to tourists from Russia, Germany, the United Kingdom, Poland, and Romania.

Difficulties were mainly caused when communicating with tourists from Russia, Romania, Germany, Poland, and Israel.

Among the most common causes of conflict situations are: guests speak in their native language, which staff do not know (these are mainly tourists from Romania, France, Poland, Israel, Germany, Italy, and Russia); experiencing a disparaging attitude to the staff; too strong requirements; and the fact that a guest can speak English but prefers to speak only in their native language (usually tourists from France and Germany). There are also issues related to staff lacking awareness of tourists' specific cultural and religious needs, or when a guest speaks loudly and rudely and creates scandals (this is the variable that tourists from Russia are usually connected with).

It should be noted that over 50% of the two groups of students respond that when servicing foreign tourists it is important to take into account their culturally specific national characteristics. Furthermore, 72.73% of second-year students and 52% of third-year students claim to have a strong interest in culture, religious traditions, national cuisine, and other characteristics of foreign guests.

The survey findings show that students draw the most information about culture, religious traditions, national cuisine, and other national features of foreign guests from internet sources. For second-year students, stories of relatives and acquaintances come second, and for all students the lecture course on intercultural communication is of great importance. Around 45%–50% of the information is obtained in interaction and communication with foreign guests, and for the third-year students the share of personal experience in tourist services (around 45%) is significant. Language lessons have contributed to successful intercultural communication mainly for second-year students (45.45%). Next in importance are students' work and travel programmes in the United States,

as well as a longer stay abroad. Specialised literature is a good source of information mainly for third-year students.

The preferred type of intercultural training by all students is internal group training, and they also highly appreciate the training received and skills developed on the intercultural communication course at the college.

Conclusion

Assessing the research findings, the following conclusions can be drawn:

(1) Students are aware of the necessity of knowing the culturally specific national features when servicing foreign tourists, and most often they relate the emerging conflict situations in the service with lack of knowledge on the cultural and religious characteristics of tourists.
(2) The importance of intercultural training, which can be carried out both in the process of their professional activity and during the intercultural communication course, is taken into account.

The results obtained can justify the need to develop a system of measures aimed at developing tolerance among young people. It is obvious that foreign-language lessons and the lecture courses of country studies and intercultural communication at the College of Tourism, Varna are not enough. It is necessary to build an integrated approach to a system of knowledge that can be acquired in a variety of fundamental and specialisation courses set in the college curriculum. The lectures and seminars on various courses – business communications, social psychology in tourism, cultural heritage and tourism, customs, traditions, and culinary art, and customer care – offer wide opportunities for this. Naturally important are the classes in first and second foreign languages.

Intercultural training in tourism enterprises is also an important element in building ICC. It would successfully complement the knowledge gained during the students' studies and lead to more successful intercultural communication in a multicultural environment.

The implementation of an integrated approach to developing ICC, combining a high level of ethnic, social, and personal tolerance, will boost the future career of tourism professionals, improve the service of foreign tourists and, in general, enhance the development of the tourism business in the region and the country.

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CHAPTER TWO

THE CHALLENGES OF TEACHING COMMUNICATION SKILLS IN ENGLISH FOR TOURISM

ANNA ZELENKOVÁ

Abstract

This paper is a theoretical study exploring the current approaches to the teaching of English for tourism purposes (ETP) in tourism study programmes at tertiary level. ETP creates a challenge for course designers in terms of the most appropriate content focus: language, vocabulary, professional communication, and academic skills. Three different approaches to the development of specific language are identified, with a focus on either professional communication skills, the particular tourism content, or the study of tourism in English with the omitted development of professional communication skills. The paper discusses and exemplifies the advantages and drawbacks of all approaches.

Keywords: English for tourism purposes, English for specific purposes, course design, teaching foreign languages, higher education

Introduction

At present, English for tourism is taught at universities, non-philological faculties, and colleges as part of a curriculum designed for the studies of tourism. These may include tourism and hospitality management, international tourism, hotel management, tourism services, and the related subject studies or study programmes. To prepare professionals for communication in a wide range of positions in the tourism sector poses a challenge in terms of the syllabus design, the

content, and the methodologies of the course delivery. The aim of this paper is to examine the ways English for tourism purposes (ETP) is taught at universities at present and look at current changes in the role English takes in the curriculum. Today, under the influence of the internationalisation of higher education, faculties may offer either specific English for tourism courses or complete tourism study programmes in English (without any specific courses for improving English-language proficiency). Between these two approaches there is a big difference in learning objectives and outcomes. We can observe discrepancies between the academic language that is taught and the communication skills that are needed for future professions in tourism. Our paper looks at these developments from two perspectives: (a) from the point of view of the teacher as a course designer, and (b) from the point of view of pedagogic methodology in order to make a clear distinction between the content of the courses and the language that is developed in all types of them.

Literature Review: Theoretical Background to English for Tourism Purposes

ETP is one of the many kinds of English for specific purposes (ESP).The concepts of ESP, which may apply to ETP, have been elaborated since the 1980s by many theoreticians and practitioners, who coined some characteristic features of it. According to Srevens (1988), there are some characteristics that make the specific language in any field different from the general language, such as:

- specific needs of students (present and future users of the language)
- fields of study, future job ,and assumed work activities
- specifics of the language – sentence structures, vocabularies and their use in oral or written expression.

On the contrary, Hutchinson and Waters (1991), in their revolutionary publication *English for Specific Purposes*, did not consider English for specialists as a specific language that should be taught and learnt. What is distinctive is the approach to the teaching of this specific language, which should be based on learners' needs (a learner-centred approach): "ESP should properly be seen not as any particular language product but as an approach to language teaching and learning which is directed by specific and apparent reasons for learning" (Hutchinson and Waters 1991, 19). From these authors we can learn that the needs of students and future users stand in the foreground, and any ESP course design should start with the

linguistic needs analysis of present or future users of the foreign language (Aldohon 2014; Rodgers 2003).

Other authors tried to define the teaching/learning aims for ESP in terms of competences (linguistic, communicative and cultural competences) (Hammerly 1985), and were concerned with the pedagogic approach and principles to achieve these aims. In the ESP methodology, Dudley-Evans and St John (1998) suggest the application of teaching methods that are used in the subject-related studies, e.g. case studies, projects, and problem solving, just to mention those related to tourism studies. Jordan (1997) distinguishes two strands within ESP: (a) English for academic purposes (EAP), emphasising the English that students need for their current study field, e.g. tourism studies; (b) English for occupational purposes (EOP), or job-related needs, focusing on students' future needs at the labour market.

Some authors (Míšková 2009; Felices Lago 2016), on the other hand, still argue that the key issue in the teaching of English for tourism is the acquisition of specific tourism vocabulary and specialised terminology (lexical units, terms, and stereotyped expressions), and suggest innovative methodologies. For example, Kacetl and Klímová (2015) present a corpus-based approach for an easier acquisition of the most frequented vocabulary. Similarly, Šimonová (2018) states that the teaching and learning of most common specific tourism vocabulary can be done through new approaches, such as blended learning. Bury (2014) supports the learning and retention of lexical items through the choice of modified authentic content-specific texts, which allow for a balanced development between a focus on form and a focus on meaning.

The present orientation on competence-based teaching and learning can be also considered a good guideline for stating the learning objectives and outcomes (Colomar 2015) and the content of the course. Reisinger (2009) presents a broad view on the competence-based teaching in tourism studies, including the development of multicultural competence. She points out that the linguistic competence is an inseparable part of this competence, and hence the teaching of foreign languages should also be competence-based. Wang, Ayers, and Huyton (2010) and Bender and Schapper (2013, 21–2) stress the necessity to improve practice-oriented education to prepare students for the later job demands in the tourism industry. The teaching of competences should focus on problem-solving in job-related situations in the tourism sector, for example handling customer relations and customer wishes. These requirements are in compliance with the linguistic competences in foreign-language teaching and learning in terms of "what can I do with the acquired language," as stated by the Common European Framework of Reference (Council of Europe 2001).

To achieve the stated learning outcomes in competences, Bender and Schapper (2013) suggest the application of activating teaching methodology based on Anderson and Krathwohl's taxonomies of cognitive dimensions (Anderson and Krathwohl 2001). These competences cover the linguistic skills of, for example, interpreting, summarising, comparing, contrasting, organising, judging, predicting, producing, contrasting, etc.

Today, English has become a lingua franca of higher education, and more and more students need English for their study purposes, such as researching literature and online resources. This situation puts pressure on the teaching of academic and learning skills in any ESP course. Kubišová (2014, 57–8) suggests that the ESP curriculum develops transferable or generic skills, i.e. such skills that are learnt in one context (academic) and used in another (performing real-life tasks), for example communication, problem solving, initiative, and efficiency skills. When graduates enter the labour market they will actually be part of a multicultural working society, which means that we should also develop intercultural awareness through the study of English. The importance of the intercultural orientation of ETP is inevitable due to these two main factors: (a) through the internationalisation of higher education in Europe the universities are becoming a multicultural and plurilingual environment, and (b) the tourism sector in its substance is a multicultural space where the communication requires intercultural knowledge and skills (Reisinger 2009, 377–87; Dimitrova and Nedeva 2015; Olejárová and Chrančoková 2012).

These different views on the English language as a foreign language that should be taught and learnt at university present a recurring problem for ESP teachers and a never-ending discussion and argumentation of theoreticians and practitioners when designing courses of English for tourism. What to teach, which skills – those the students may need now for their specific fields of study and for the mobility programmes (EAP); or the language, skills and competences they will need in their future professional life (EOP). Should it be the generic, academic, learning, or professional and intercultural communication skills?

Aims, Data, and Method

The aim of this theoretical study is to explore the current trends in the teaching of ETP to demonstrate distinctions between various approaches to the course design in terms of learning aims, objectives and outcomes, and the language acquired based on these particular approaches. We base our findings/investigation on the theories of current pedagogy of teaching

and learning ESP and the related disciplines (communication and intercultural studies) which make an impact on the teaching of English for the sector of tourism. We relate our findings to the situation at Slovak universities. In Slovak higher education, eight faculties offer the study of tourism in different study programmes: tourism economics, tourism and hospitality, tourism management, business in the tourism industry, management of the development of country tourism, tourism, hotel, and spa management, management of culture, and geotourism. We have researched the study programmes and analysed the position of foreign languages in the curriculum. All faculties offer English as a main/first foreign language. All faculties except one offer ETP (or other foreign language) from the first semester of tourism studies in the average duration of three to four semesters. One faculty offers the course from the second semester on in the duration of four semesters. In some faculties, it is not clear what the content of the course is, as the first/main foreign language course is entitled English for Business or English 1 – 3/4. We exemplify some of our findings and support them with our personal years of experience of teaching English in this discipline at our university and universities in the Czech Republic and Poland.

Results: Key Issues in ETP

We would like to focus on some problems connected with the teaching of ETP in tourism-study programmes, and more specifically on the factors that influence the course design. The first problematic issue is the fact that language courses are usually set in the first semesters of university studies, i.e. before students gain the basic subject content knowledge in their native language. Students have to acquire not only new specific language and vocabulary but also learn subject concepts in English before they acquire them in their native language. In our particular case, English courses in tourism study programmes are set in the first four semesters of bachelor studies. For many students with a lower level of English, the specific English may be demotivating as they struggle with a new learning environment at the same time, do not know how to use the resources for self-improvement, and may not see the connections between the content they are required to master and the future application of the required knowledge in practical life. Moreover, the aims of foreign language competence should be projected for the future professional needs of graduates, who may not yet be aware of the necessity and importance of these concepts in a foreign language, and may therefore lack the motivation. The challenge is to design a course

that would be motivating enough and combine the future professional needs of students with the required standard of knowledge acquisition. At the same time, language-items choice and the teaching should take into account all the variables that make its acquisition easier to the university learner (Hanesová 2015).

As mentioned above, another issue is the process of the internationalisation of higher education, which requires good command of English for various reasons. Students need English to be able to study basic subject-related concepts in English, research literature and online resources, follow the lectures of visiting foreign teachers, or be able to participate in mobility programmes, internships, or studies abroad. To put it simply, more and more students need English for their present study purposes, and this need should be included in the course-learning outcomes. The internationalisation of higher education has made universities offer complete study programmes or at least some courses in English to enable the international students to study at Slovak universities (Erasmus+ mobility), and hence they concentrate on the offer of courses in English that are parallel to courses in Slovak in the curriculum. University managements believe that students who come on the Erasmus mobility already have a good command of English, and therefore the ESP courses are not offered to them.

The future needs of students of tourism should be also taken into account when thinking of practical communication in their future professional life – the language they will use in their work, i.e. job-related communication skills. The question is what to focus on in the course: the communication competences of professionals, or studying competences in a foreign language.

Designing a course of English for tourism involves making decisions about the learning aims and objectives (Colomar 2015) and the content (linguistic items, language skills, and competences). Another decision is to be made about the ways to deliver the content (teaching/learning methodology). To set the aims and objectives of the course, the teachers must be able to state the learner's profile and then decide about the whole approach to teaching, the choice of language items, teaching materials, textbook choice or own production, duration of the course, etc. To conclude, we can say that the design of the ETP course may be either language-centred, skills-centred, or content-centred. We shall look closely at the difference between these orientations.

Developing Language and Skills for Communication in Tourism: Functional-notional Syllabus

A functional-notional syllabus recognises the communicative functions of the language and is based on the purposes for which this language is used (Nunan 1988). The organisation of this type of a course is function-based, according to the functions the language can take. Learning the language in appropriate situations allows for the effective use of the language and develops competences and skills to communicate effectively and professionally in international tourism settings. By functions we mean the communicative purposes for which language is used, while notions are conceptual meanings expressed through language. In an ETP course, the aim is to develop linguistic competence for communicative situations in the tourism sector – both speaking and writing skills. The target language should be situation-based, and as such studied for the appropriate communication in professional settings and in connection with certain professional situations. Such situations may include talking to clients in various situations (travel agents, hotel reception), guiding tourists, describing itineraries, telephoning, providing information, or writing for business purposes (asking for information, confirming payments, filling in forms, writing and answering complaints, taking notes while telephoning, etc.). An inevitable part of the linguistic competence is the specific vocabulary. We take the point of Míšková (2009, 189–93), who argues that it is the use of specific terminology that distinguishes a professional worker (in the field of tourism) from a user of general English. She assumes the difficulties of learning specific vocabulary occur in cases where the general English equivalents exist. Our experience confirms that students whose English proficiency is at B1 or B2 level (according to the Common European Framework of Reference) often take up the new terminology with difficulties, as they are able to use other expressions (from general English) instead, and thus master the communicative situation anyhow. This fact poses challenges for the teachers in choosing an appropriate methodology and implementing exercises, tasks, and methods for allowing students the effective acquisition and use of the specific vocabulary. To illustrate the problem, the table shows examples of some of the specific terminology and their supplement (replacement) by general English terms (or their descriptions) in the oral or written performance of students. These examples are also result of interference from the Slovak language.

Table 2.1. Specific tourism terminology versus general English terms

Specific tourism vocabulary	General English vocabulary (used by students)
business class	*first class*
coach transfer	*transfer by bus*
conference venue	*place of the conference*
economy class	*second or tourist class*
flight manifest, passenger manifest	*list/names of passengers*
guided tour	*guide service*
hotel suite	*apartment*
leisure tourism	*free-time tourism (or travel)*
long-haul flight	*a long flight*
niche in the market	*hole in the market*
shortlisted candidates	*narrow choice of candidates*
terms of contract, terms of agreement	*conditions of contract*
to check-in	*to register*
twin room, double room	*double-bed room (for both)*
vacancies	*free work places*

Source: Zelenková (2017)

It is necessary to mention that the lexical units constantly change and develop as quickly as the industry itself. New words are introduced into the usage (as are the new realities connected with resorts amenities, for example), usually taken over from English or other languages. Language teachers have to consult the manuals or specialised dictionaries produced by professionals (Gúčik 2006) or expert and standard-setting bodies.

Developing Academic Language and Skills in Tourism Studies: Content-based Syllabus

This type of course is developed around the main tourism-related content topics. Unlike in the functional syllabus, the aim here is the acquisition of the subject-specific knowledge (tourism management) in or through the English language. English is used to teach the academic content. This approach is called content-based instruction (CBI) or content and language integrated learning (CLIL).

In an appropriate content-based course, the focus is on both language development and the acquisition of basic concepts of the study field. Such a course may be led by language teachers who have basic knowledge of

the specific study content. The foreign language is studied in connection with the academic content. CBI is based on the assumption that "every bit of content helps; that is, every use of meaningful, relevant input contributes to language development ..." (Rodgers 2003, 13). Needless to say, many textbooks of both foreign and domestic provenience are based on this approach, combining the study of the subject discipline and the language of communication in the particular field.

There is a pedagogic rationale for a CBI course which is supported by pedagogic and cognitive psychology. Stephen (2003) and Grabe and Stoller (1997) provide a detailed analysis of research to support CBI. They claim that "academic context provides for meaningful communication and the language is learnt more naturally; language learning becomes more concrete rather than abstract ... the integration of language and content in instruction respects the specificity of functional language use; and, more complex language is best taught within a framework that focuses on complex and authentic content" (Grabe and Stoller 1997, 5–21). Finally, CBI lends itself to the development of thinking and research skills, learning strategies such as information gathering skills – researching, questioning; organising skills – note taking, categorising, comparing; analytical skills – identifying main ideas, problems and relationships, patterns; and generating skills – inferring, predicting, guessing, and estimating. Other academic skills such as reading and writing may be developed.

The topics, around which the course content is organised, may include the following:

- types of tourism, types of tourists
- types of accommodation facilities
- facilities and amenities of tourist resorts
- travel agents and tour operators' roles, national agencies for tourism
- SWOT analysis of a resort or a region
- promotion, marketing in tourism
- sustainable tourism development
- cultural tourism
- UNESCO list of national heritage, and others.

In many cases, the target is more on the specific content than the language development, and the focus on linguistic proficiency may be very low or completely missing.

English-medium Study Programmes: Language Across the Curriculum

Methodologically, language across the curriculum is also a content-centred teaching when (if) language teaching is incorporated into the curriculum. According to Dvorak and Kolářová (2011), the implementation may happen in four different ways: language and content may be incorporated slightly in a "sheltered subject matter teaching" (language of the text and tasks are adapted and methods of language teaching are used to make instruction more comprehensible for students whose level of English may vary); a "theme-based model" (language developed around a particular topic of tourism); an "adjunct model" or co-teaching (joins a content course covering traditional academic concepts with a specific language-learning course where language skills such as reading, writing, or vocabulary development can be worked on; this type of teaching requires the good coordination and cooperation of two teachers, the content specialist and the language specialist). The final model according is the "content-based language instruction" that was described above. It is necessary to note that most of the language teaching in tourism study programmes does not fit the description of any of these models, but combines elements of some of these models.

Due to the increasing internationalisation of higher education, many universities offer English-medium courses or complete study programmes in English to attract foreign students and allow for the mobility of their own students. In these courses, the primary focus is not on the language development, even if it is supposed that the learning of English is implicitly enhanced through the study of the subject content. In most cases, such courses are parallel to the Slovak programmes and are taught by non-language teachers, whose English-language proficiency should be at the required level. This is not always the case (Zelenková, 2017). Examples of such courses include those which international students can sign up for. These courses should have an international dimension and should be recognised by students' home universities within the framework of tourism studies, e.g. marketing in tourism, intercultural communication in tourism, destination management, developments in tourism, etc. Usually, language courses are not required.

In our opinion, at present, the borders between CBI and English-medium courses are disappearing, mainly at faculties/universities where English-medium programmes are offered. There is a kind of "blended" teaching concept. This may not be a drawback if both approaches provide for the improvement of English. Needless to say, however, that because

English-medium courses are not primarily focused on learning language through content but rather content through language, some students may even feel that they are not improving their language skills and are confused with learning new concepts instead of developing real-life communication skills. The learning aims, objectives, and outputs are different from the learning aims, objectives, and outputs in language teaching. In these cases, the acquisition of communication skills, as stated by the foreign-language teaching methodology and proclaimed by various competence-oriented documents for vocational training and practice-oriented teaching, is questionable. In that case, we should also ask if the foreign language as part of the knowledge gained at tertiary level aligns with the needs and expectations of the tourism industry (Wang, Ayers, and Huyton 2010).

Conclusion

Due to the internationalisation of higher education, the teaching of English for international tourism has undergone important changes. In an attempt to achieve the competences in both academic and practical language use, the focus of language teaching and learning has shifted from teaching professional language and communication (which is still present in ETP courses) to the study of subject matter in a foreign language. Tourism studies in English may present a challenge for language teachers (ESP teachers) and non-language teachers who teach the tourism concepts in a foreign language. The abovementioned types of courses in which English for tourism can be developed at tertiary level call for cooperation between language and subject specialists in order to teach the right language for the right purpose. It would be advisable for curriculum designers, the guarantors of study programmes, to think about including practical communication skills in tourism (ETP courses) in the curriculum even if the complete study programme is offered in the English language. We believe that further research in the methodology is needed to prove how these developments contribute to the language learning. On the other hand, these developments call for the further training of teachers as none of the abovementioned has received appropriate pre-service or in-service training – neither ESP teachers for teaching tourism concepts nor the non-language teachers for teaching their subject matter in English.

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CHAPTER THREE

HYBRIDISATION OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND INTERCULTURAL TEACHING

VALENTINA GEORGIEVA

Abstract

The aim of this paper is to present suggestions for improving the quality of education provided by higher-educational institutions through the suggested new form of hybrid English-language teaching and intercultural teaching. Two aspects of the hybrid model of teaching are highlighted: development of students' English-language competences that help them communicate successfully when operating professionally in an international environment, and the geo-educational aspect which encompasses foreign language and culture education.

Keywords: English-language competences, intercultural communicative competences, geo-education, hybrid teaching

Introduction

The main priority of teaching English at tertiary level is the development of students' English-language competences that help them communicate successfully in everyday and professional contexts. The development of language competences is no longer restricted to learning grammar rules, mastering good pronunciation, and writing practice for perfect spelling; foreign language learning in general, and learning English as a foreign language (EFL) in particular, is inseparable from the development of students' intercultural communicative competences (ICC). The good EFL teacher nowadays aims their teaching at achieving the wider goal of preparing students to genuinely communicate with and understand the real world outside the classroom. As pointed out in the

Common European Framework "the language learner is in the process of becoming a language user" (Council of Europe 2002). However, in the process of developing our students' language skills that would help them become language users, i.e. skills that would help them communicate successfully with people from different cultures in the global village, developing intercultural communicative competence is crucial. ICC is actually a result of the long process of becoming more aware of and better understanding one's own culture and other cultures.

Thus, language is not only a means for communication, but also "a vehicle for cultural transmission, a formative force whose structures place their stamp upon the minds and actions of speakers" (Damen 1987). Underestimation of the significance of this fact can result in what Bennet (1997) calls "a fluent fool":

> someone who speaks a foreign language well but doesn't understand the social or philosophical content of that language. Such people are likely to get into all sorts of trouble because both themselves and others overestimate their ability … To avoid becoming a fluent fool, we need to understand more completely the "cultural dimension" of language. Indeed, language serves as a means for communication, but in addition it is a system of representation … In this sense a society's language is an aspect of its culture.

That is why Bennett underlines that "language teaching is also reality teaching."

The further development of this line of thought of the interconnections between language and reality is the adoption of the concept of *geo-education. The term was* introduced by National Geographic (2014):

> to describe education about our world. A well-rounded geo-education provides young people with a fundamental understanding of how the human and natural worlds work at local, regional, and global scales … Geo-education prepares people to make choices in their *personal lives* about how to live and interact with others in our complex, modern world. It prepares people to make important decisions in their *professional lives* about resources and systems, and to work effectively across cultural and geographic boundaries.

Thus, National Geographic introduces the concept of geo-education to describe the learning experiences of students who learn about the real world.

The aim of this research is to present suggestions for improving the quality of education provided by higher educational institutions through

the suggested new form of hybrid English-language teaching and intercultural teaching.

Definition of Hybrid Learning

As a first step, it is necessary to define the term "hybrid learning/teaching," which has been commonly used particularly in higher education and corporate settings.

The term itself is quite difficult to define since it is used in diverse ways by different researchers. For some of the methodologists, the term hybrid learning is synonymous with the term blended learning. Driscoll (2002) summarises the concepts of the term "blended learning" as follows:

(1) combination or mixed modes of web-based technology (e.g. live virtual classroom, self-paced instruction, collaborative learning, streaming video, audio, and text) to accomplish an educational goal
(2) combination of various pedagogical approaches (e.g. constructivism, behaviourism, cognitivism) to produce an optimal learning outcome with or without instructional technology
(3) combination of any form of instructional technology (e.g. videotape, CD-ROM, web-based training, film) with face-to-face instructor-led training
(4) combination of instructional technology with actual job tasks in order to create a harmonious effect of learning and working.

From the above definitions, only the first stresses the inclusion of web-based instruction as an inseparable component of blended/hybrid learning, although it is the most common understanding of blended learning. The rest of the definitions can be condensed into the definition given by Oliver and Trigwell of blended/hybrid learning as a "combination of a number of pedagogic approaches, irrespective of the learning technology used" (Oliver and Trigwell 2005). A course that combines language learning with intercultural learning and the development of students' linguistic and intercultural communicative competences would also fit into the category of hybrid learning since it combines pedagogical approaches, activities, and educational goals aimed at developing students' understanding, knowledge, attitudes, and abilities of communicating, not only in a foreign language but also their intercultural skills, knowledge, and understanding of "the relation (similarities and distinctive features) between the 'world of origin' and the 'world of the target community'" (Council of Europe 2002).

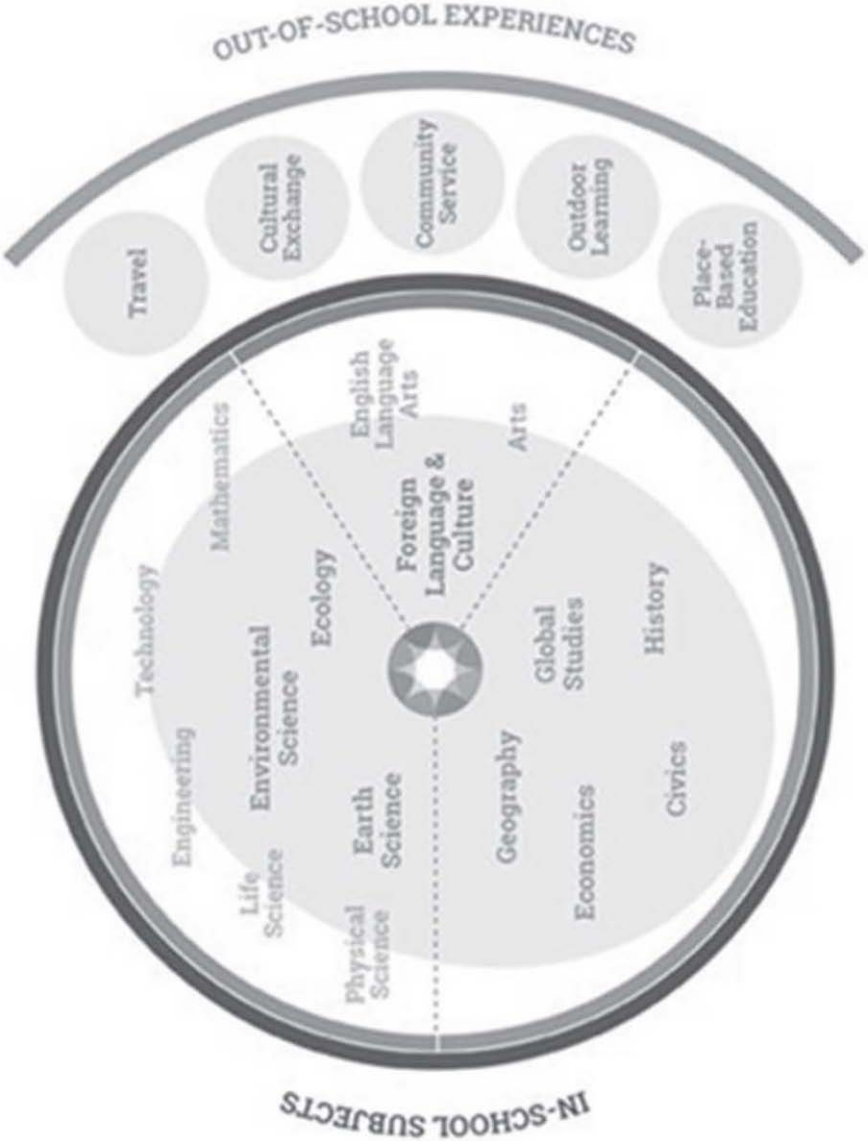
Components of a Hybrid Language-culture Course

Universities offering hybrid courses across the globe has been trending upwards in the last decade because research has proven that the learning outcomes and academic achievement are stronger with hybrid teaching. In the case with hybridisation between language and intercultural teaching, we suggest the following two components of a hybrid course:

- The geo-educational component is included in the course, considering the specifics of this special type of education which encompasses foreign language and culture education as constituents of geo-education. Geo-education objectives by definition provide learners with a combination of the following understanding, attitudes, and abilities they will need throughout their lives:
  (a) **knowledge** of world's diverse cultures and economic, technological, and political systems
  (b) understanding of different cultural, religious, and social perspectives
  (c) **abilities to communicate and collaborate** effectively across cultural and geographic boundaries.

Fig. 3.1 below shows the components of geo-education and the proportion of Foreign Language and Culture learning within the school curriculum. According to the National Geographic Society, about twenty percent of school time should be devoted to Foreign Language and Culture learning. Also, Foreign Language and Culture learning constitute one inseparable subject. We can apply this understanding to the tertiary level as well, based on the National Geographic interpretation of the **importance of geo-education** for learners and society: "From the perspective of the individual learner, a geo-education is critical preparation for careers in modern workplaces, which are increasingly multilingual and multinational, where supply chains, production facilities, and marketplaces are global."

Fig. 3.1. Components of geo-education



Source National Geographic Society (www.nationalgeographic.org)

➢ **Communicative component**

Effective communication cannot be separated from the context of a particular communicative situation which will always take place within particular cultural surroundings: "Intercultural communication occurs whenever a message produced in one culture must be processed in another culture" (Porter and Samovar 1994). When a student learns a foreign language, they not only practice pronunciation, study the grammar rules, and memorise new words, but also acquire information about the system of cultural values, which is characteristic for the native speakers. What is more, the language learner rationalises linguistic phenomena from the point of view of their own culture, as there is always a connection between the content of the learning material and cultural meanings, which reflect human relations, and people's social and political life. Some scholars add the intercultural dimension and intercultural communicative competences in language learning as a fifth skill, which is to follow or be added to the development of the four language skills. But, as Claire Kramsch (1993) underlines, "Culture in language teaching is not an expendable fifth skill, tacked on, so to speak, to the teaching of speaking, listening, reading and writing." A language learner cannot be competent in the foreign language if they do not understand the culture that has shaped the language.

A hybrid language-culture teaching should aim:

> to develop learners as intercultural speakers or mediators who are able to engage with complexity and multiple identities and to avoid stereotyping … Language teaching with an intercultural dimension continues to help learners to acquire the linguistic competence … but it also develops their intercultural competence, i.e. their ability to ensure a shared understanding by people of different social identities. (Byram, Gribkova, and Starkey 2002)

The Concept of Cultural Hybridity

The theoretical analysis so far results in the conclusion that both components of a hybrid course are based on the language-culture symbiosis. A brief and comprehensive definition of culture is found in Ramsey's (1996) understanding that:

> Culture is a frame of reference consisting of learned patterns of behaviour, values, assumptions, and meaning, which are shared to varying degrees of interest, importance, and awareness with members of a group; culture is the *story of reality* that individuals and groups value and accept as a guide for organising their lives.

On the other hand, alongside with the process of globalisation, some scholars stress the opposing trend nowadays which leads to the understanding that: "Cultures are more open, dynamic and interwoven. If we think this interpretation to its logical conclusion, we arrive at the term transculturality. This term is based on the assumption that cultures are hybrids that cannot in fact be delimited from one another" (Bolten 2016).

The concept of cultural hybridity "has become a most useful metaphor for conceptualising and analysing cultural contact, transfer and exchange, especially in the field of postcolonial studies" (Zapf 1999). As Zapf points out, *hybridity* has been employed to describe and analyse "diverse linguistic, discursive and cultural intermixtures."

The Language Classroom as a Subculture

When analysing the complex processes of language and culture teaching and learning from the perspective of hybridity, we should bear in mind the teaching reality in which the language classroom creates a unique subculture where "students can take on different identities from the ones they play within regular society." As a study on the Korean language classroom concludes, "the Korean language classroom [is] a cultural hybrid of Korean and perceived American culture … This [students'] cultural identity is not necessarily Korean culture, nor is it any type of English or American culture. It is heavily based around what Korean culture perceives American culture to be, but it functions as a hybrid culture in which students can take on a new cultural identity" (Moen 2009).

In the context of the Bulgarian English-language classroom, it is difficult to measure the degree of cultural hybridity and the extent to which students relate to or are willing to merge their Bulgarian cultural identity with that of the target language native speakers. It would be challenging to claim that the Bulgarian English-language classroom is a place in which Bulgarian students develop different cultural identities, because the degree of "cultural contact, transfer and exchange" that defines cultural hybridity would depend on numerous factors. Our teaching practice has proven that among the most influential factors are:

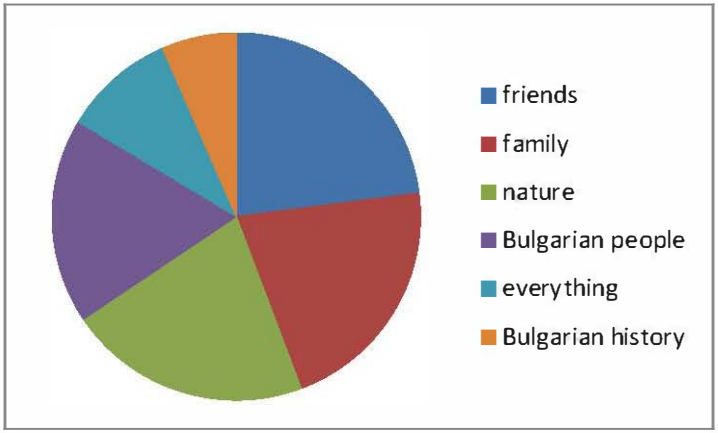
- student's age: the younger the student, the easier it would be to influence and transform their beliefs, values, and behaviour
- student's economic status: the higher the economic status of the student, the more prone to adapting and acquiring multiple cultural

identities an adult student would be as a result of multiple formal and informal intercultural interactions and exchanges
- student's family background: the more traditional family relations and patterns of behaviour the student experiences, the more difficult it would be for them to develop a new cultural identity
- student's social background: the higher the student is in the social hierarchy, the stronger the willingness and desire to resemble the members of the society who occupy the highest social positions and usually share similar values across cultures and boundaries (i.e. wealth, political power, professional achievements, etc.)

Thus, although the measurements of cultural hybridity are elusive and depend on the competence of sociologists, anthropologists, and culturologists (not language teachers), the undeniable fact is that students not only master English language and become fluent in it in the language classroom, but also develop a much deeper and comprehensive awareness on the target language culture which is unique for each classroom subculture. At the same time, while students acquire knowledge of the target culture, they ultimately deepen the knowledge of their own culture on the basis of the skill of comparing and relating their values, beliefs, behaviour, social practices, and way of life to those of the target culture.

A short survey was conducted with a class of seventeen first-year Bulgarian university students during a lesson of General English. A discussion arose, triggered by the content of the *New Headway* pre-intermediate textbook (Soars and Soars 2000). In the student's book, Unit 2 is titled "the way we live," and contains a reading text followed by comprehension questions, which relay three immigrants' experiences in the United States. There is also a rubric, "What do you think?" and the questions suggested for stating personal opinions or class discussion are: "What do you like best about living in your country? What would you miss if you lived abroad?" (18). The answers to these questions are actually interrelated, as the students stated what they would miss most and what they liked best about their lives. Students could provide more than one answer to the questions. The results of the discussion, followed by a written task for stating and supporting students' opinions, are summarised in Fig. 3.2 below.

Fig. 2 Students' answers to the survey question: "What do you like best about living in Bulgaria?"



Most of the fourteen students could not live without their friends; family is also among the most important factors that determine their reluctance to think about leaving their country and living abroad (thirteen students); feelings of appreciation and admiration of Bulgarian nature position it among the most valuable possessions that would be missed; six students acknowledge their respect for the Bulgarian people; four students speak about Bulgarian history as a phenomenon they can be proud of. Although the students are not very specific, they mention Bulgarian traditions and culture in general, which are also felt to be essential and key for inclusion alongside more personal reasons to value Bulgaria as a home country.

These opinions, which express very deep personal feelings, confirm the definition of culture as a shared set of values, beliefs, and practices which cannot actually be seen or touched, or which are part of a shared place: "family," "friends," "nature," and "Bulgarian people." The students actually retell their "story of reality" that they have heard at home, school, or on the street, which has now become their story and guides and organises their lives. This set is common not only for this small group of representatives of the Bulgarian culture, but also for many other members: their friends, parents, relatives, and so on. This set of values is opposed to that of the people from abroad who are not specified, but felt to be different when seen from the prism of their own culture.

From a methodological and intercultural point of view, class discussions prove to be of great significance as, in the process of acquiring new

linguistic knowledge, the English-language learner is actually involved in a much more complicated psychological process. This is a process of discovering new cultural patterns of behaviour and decoding cultural contexts on the basis of comparing, followed by expressing rational judgement, and later by justifying rational choices as a result of a greater awareness of one's own culture. All these processes occur in the unique classroom settings where a special hybrid subculture of one's own versus a foreign culture is established. The most positive outcomes of such discussions are on one hand a more profound understanding of one's own culture, and on the other the gradual building of cross-cultural understanding and tolerance, which are part of the overall intercultural competence.

The Role of the Foreign Language Teacher

Many foreign language teachers might say: "I'm not supposed to teach my students to judge the others or their own values. My job is to teach them the language. Why should I pay special attention to problems which are not part of the syllabus?" The answer to such statements is given by Professor Byram, who says: "It is not the purpose of teaching to try to change learners' values, but to make them explicit and conscious in any evaluative response to others" (Byram, Gribkova, and Starkey 2002). By staying far away from critical evaluations and general conclusions about the foreign or one's own culture, the teacher can lead their students to class situations in which the students' critical thinking is provoked and their intercultural communicative skills gradually develop on the basis of the unavoidable comparison of one's own and the target cultures. As a result, some of the objectives of geo-education will also be achieved because young people will be better prepared to successfully function personally and professionally, dealing with the global, social, and environmental challenges of the modern world.

Some of the activity types which can be applied when working purposefully on developing learners' intercultural communicative competences are:

- Describe your home place/town/country to a foreign visitor (on a poster, website, in an article, etc.). Include information not only about the most famous sights, but also about what a foreigner might find strange or unusual about your culture. This activity helps learners to look at their own culture through the eyes of a foreigner and to become more conscious about the peculiarities of their own culture.

- Give a written or oral presentation of your experience in a foreign culture. Give advice to other students of possible problems of misunderstanding in a foreign culture. This activity is aimed at broadening students' knowledge of the target and foreign cultures and developing their attitudes for tolerance and acceptance of the difference as well as preventing them from experiencing culture shock because of unawareness that culture differences do exist.
- Find sources (websites, articles, blogs, magazines, guidebooks, books, films) with information about your town/country/culture by foreigners. Such information will be very useful for raising students' awareness of how their culture is seen from the outside.
- Find information about the target culture on a given topic (e.g. food, national holidays, customs, going out, shopping, etc.) This activity is the most traditional one, as the textbooks are usually abundant in information on such topics. What is important with this type of activity is that such information should not be restricted to facts, dates, and curiosities, and that students should be aware of the way they see the target culture: neither too much appreciation and exaltation with the foreign culture, and reinforcement of stereotypes, underestimation, and prejudices should not be tolerated in class. The focus should be on the fact that, as a result of their studies, the language learners should be able to communicate with the people from a foreign culture as complex human beings with multiple identities and unique individuality.

Through such activities, the English-language classroom can become a special place of discovery and creativity where a shared meaning not only about foreign but also the learner's own culture could be performed under the guidance of a teacher, "who can help learners see relationships between their own and other cultures, can help them acquire interest in and curiosity about 'otherness,' and an awareness of themselves and their own cultures" (Byram, Gribkova, and Starkey 2002).

Conclusion

The suggested hybridisation of English-language teaching with intercultural teaching would help language learners to master both their English-language fluency and their intercultural communicative competences while being prepared for the real multi and mixed-cultural world in which comprehensive and unprejudiced knowledge and understanding of the

diverse cultural and social systems result in successful and effective interaction with people across the globe.

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CHAPTER FOUR

APPLYING THE COMPETENCE-BASED APPROACH IN VOCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS IN BULGARIA

SVETLA NEDEVA AND CHAVDAR SOTIROV

Abstract

This chapter presents a brief overview of the development of vocational education and training in Europe, and Bulgaria in particular. Changes in government policy over the years towards vocational education and the national context within which vocational qualifications on the competence-based approach were introduced are discussed. Opportunities for validating vocational qualifications in Bulgaria in accordance with the applied systems in EU countries through the introduction of common policies for credit transfer are examined. Consideration is given to their relevance as efficient tools opening up access to further study and qualification, improving the mobility of workers and providing a better match of supply and demand on the labour market.

Keywords: vocational education and training, vocational qualifications, competence-based approach

Introduction

The choice of the subject area is provoked by the different programs and policies currently in place to implement the Europe 2020 strategy of education and social cohesion for economic growth. They all strive to respond to socioeconomic changes and key challenges for successful labour-market integration and greater mobility that Europe will face by the end of the decade. Overcoming problems with rising levels of unemployment,

especially among young people, has become one of the most important tasks for European governments. Moreover, many adults lacking contemporary qualifications face the same risk.

These new systems for acquiring qualifications through various formal and informal forms of education and training are seen as facilitators for providing people with the skills needed on the labour market today, while enabling them to play an active role in their own career development and personal fulfilment.

Vocational education and training in Europe was at a turning point in 1990. There have been many government initiatives since then aimed at developing new systems to improve the level of skills of the workforce and ensure their competitiveness on the European labour market. The inability of former socialist countries to rely on cheap labour as it did before the collapse of planned socialist economies has forced governments to realise the need to improve the quality of the competence of their workforces.

A recurrent theme in these initiatives is the emphasis placed on employers' participation in the education and training process, which leads to increased accountability in this activity. The problem is that business representatives do not always think of the education and training of their staff as an investment. The governments of the countries in the European Union recognised these problems and set up new organisations and introduced new policies and programs to overcome the weaknesses of vocational education and training.Several European projects address the various possibilities to ensure formal and informal learning transparency with the aim of achieving broad consensus on the acquisition of value-added dimensions and credit allocation for individual competences and knowledge. All this is in line with the European Union Strategic Guidelines "Promoting a Europe of Knowledge through the development of the European Area of Cooperation in Vocational Education and Training and supporting Member States' policies on lifelong learning and development knowledge, skills and competencies aimed at promoting active citizenship and employability" (EU National Agencies2013).

Qualifications focusing on "learning outcomes" such as the European Qualifications Framework (EQF), the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS), and the European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET) are considered to design flexible paths for lifelong learning. Their main strengths are presented as effective tools for employers to assess the skills and competences of job applicants from EU countries, ensuring a better match between supply and demand on the labour market and improving mobility.The ability to work and earn an

income for a decent life depends to a large extent on one's knowledge, skills, and competences. Moreover, economic and technological changes now provoke people to acquire new professional knowledge and skills through either non-formal or informal learning that can be officially validated and thus open up access to further qualification and self-realisation.

The Development of Vocational Education and Training in Europe

Changes in vocational education and training in Eastern European countries have coincided with the European trend towards uniform standards in vocational training. Vocational education systems within the EU Member States are the product of various historical and cultural traditions, with specific characteristics and differences. Since 1960, several committees in the EU have been developing systems for comparing occupations across sectors and vocational education with the aim to harmonise European vocational qualifications and facilitate the transfer of labour resources (Funnel and Muller 1991)

With the fall of the socialist system, special attention was paid to vocational education in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe. At a session of the European Council in Strasbourg in 1989, a major priority for consideration was training staff in these countries and the development of vocational training policies and systems. In May 1990, a European Training Foundation (ETF) was founded in Turin, Italy. As an agency of the European Union that has been operating since 1994, it helps candidate countries to use the potential of their human capital through the reform of education and training systems to develop the labour market in the context of EU policy.

Nowadays, jobseekers looking for employment across sectors have difficulty in following officially-recognised qualification paths. Very often they develop their skills on the job and acquire qualifications in the workplace, but people working in a given field can hardly document the competences gained during their professional experience. Thus, the need arises for knowledge acquired non-formally and skills developed through experience in the respective field to be recognised as such (Schiaffella et al. 2010)

Even now, EU countries have different methodologies and approaches to teaching and recognising skills and competences for employability. Very often, this leads to a discrepancy between academically taught disciplines and the real labour-market requirements. The existence of these

barriers and discrepancies requires stronger cooperation with employers to identify common solutions and educational models that provide a common set of skills that meet labour-market requirements.

A number of European projects deal with analysing different educational contexts and skills, creating a harmonised methodology for recognising professional skills at the European level. Good practices are highlighted at the national level, and successful models are shared in many countries. In Spain and Italy, for example, university colleges carry out additional training aimed at the personal prospects and career development of their students (Schiaffella et al. 2010)

Expert committees analyse and explore options for adapting these transfer models to countries where there is no effective methodology. The main findings and results of these studies have led to the development of systems for the recognition of formally and informally-acquired skills and competences, as well as the creation of an accompanying common set of quality indexes to be systematised for transnational implementation, and to serve as a tool for further development of the European education system.

The Leonardo da Vinci program, which was started in 1995, is constantly being developed and has been part of the European Union's Strategy for Lifelong Learning (2007–2013), which aims to promote transparency and the recognition of competences and qualifications among students and workers, facilitating mobility within the single market. It addresses the need for education and training for an effective and practical system of validation, transfer, and recognition of skills and competences achieved in formal and informal contexts so that it can be expressed in transferable units with the national and European qualifications frameworks (European Commission 2013).

The EQF acts as a tool for translating national qualifications in order to make them understandable across Europe, its principal aims being to facilitate the mobility of workers and learners between countries and sectors and their lifelong learning. It was developed in the years 2004–7 and formally adopted as a recommendation by the European Parliament and Council in 2008.

The eight EQF reference levels are described in terms of "learning outcomes." The EQF recognises that Europe's education and training systems are so diverse that a shift to learning outcomes is necessary to make comparison and cooperation between countries and institutions possible. In the EQF, a "learning outcome" is defined as a statement of what a learner knows, understands, and is able to do on completion of a learning process. The EQF therefore emphasises the results of learning rather than focusing on inputs such as length of study. Learning outcomes

are specified in three categories: knowledge, skills, and competence. This signals that qualifications in different combinations capture a broad scope of learning outcomes, including theoretical knowledge, practical and technical skills, and social competences where the ability to work with others will be crucial (EQF Adaptation Support Portal 2015)

Thus national qualifications systems in different countries are united in a common European Reference Framework. Employers will be able to use the EQF to understand and compare qualifications levels and the different education and training systems of European countries. Since 2012, all new qualifications issued in Europe have referred to the relevant EQF level (Kapiki 2012).

In its 2002 Work Program in Lisbon, the European Council of Ministers of Education agreed on systematic and structured cooperation in the field of education in the European Union. In the Copenhagen Declaration (2002), the development of the credit system for vocational training and qualification was defined as a common task. In this context, a European Credit Transfer System for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET) was developed, which used the ECTS as a model to support the intra-European student mobility (since 1989), but which is also in line with the specifics of vocational education and training.

The development of the ECVET model has a long history. It was initiated in 2000, and in 2005 was presented to the directors general for vocational education and training in Brussels. The ECVET system was adopted by the European Parliament and Council in 2009, and by the end of 2012 had been tested in different contexts: European, national, and sectoral. A review and assessment of the first stage of ECVET implementation was carried out in 2014, revising the text of the system, so it has yet to prove its effectiveness in real terms (Cedefop 2014).

The system facilitates the recognition and accumulation of work-related skills and knowledge acquired while working in another country; it also aims at better compatibility between the different vocational education and training systems in Europe; and the aim is to give people greater control over their vocational education and training, and make their mobility in different countries and learning environments more attractive.

The main similarities between ECVET and ECTS are the objectives of the two systems, namely the transfer and acquisition of credits, and greater mobility of secondary and university students and workers. The differences between the two tools mainly affect their scope. The ECTS system is geared towards higher education, and ECVET to vocational education and training, including continuing education and non-formal learning. The co-implementation of the two credit systems leads to greater

unification between vocational education and training (VET) and higher education (HE), and thus contributes to the greater horizontal and vertical mobility of the workforce in Europe. The recognition and transfer of competence tools give confidence to workers in different sectors of the economy that they can improve their qualification and build a consistent career in the field, contributing to the sector's development. The main organisations in charge of providing information and analysis of education and training systems, policies, research, and practice in the EU are the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (CEDEFOP) and the ETF.

Background to the Development of Vocational Qualifications

The reform of vocational qualifications in Europe was essential to achieving the policy goals of raising standards. It began in the mid-1980s, and the results achieved in the United Kingdom were seen as a model that other European countries could follow in upgrading their systems. The first part of the UK Government Reform Program was the establishment of a National Framework for Vocational Qualifications; the second part essentially changed the nature of vocational qualifications. The key features which were intended to open access to training and qualifications were:

- unification of vocational qualifications with opportunities for accumulation and the transfer of credits
- the specifications of outcomes of assessment (skills and competences) separated from the learning process
- defining national standards of competence by leading industrial organisations (Sutton 1994).

Burke (1989) used a term characterising the change in attitudes to vocational education and training, calling it a "quiet revolution." It is "quiet" because the depth and breadth of change had hardly been noticed beyond compulsory secondary education. The author mentions many factors which influenced change in further education at that time, some of which were the introduction of the Single European Market and the need for the recognition of transitional qualifications in the various countries of the union. The change in legislation towards the reform of education that had profound implications was the introduction of a coherent system of

National Vocational Qualifications (NVQ) based on the assessment of competence.

The quiet revolution went far beyond further education and embraced industrial training, and was set to transform it. The government's white paper, "Employment for the 1990s" (DES 1990) pointed to the need of a radical reform of the training system, the aim being to establish a new framework in partnership with employers.

In the following years the situation changed a lot. The key objective of the EU reforms in vocational education was to empower all members of an increasingly diverse population to lead fuller lives in a rapidly changing world. This implied a considerable expansion of opportunities for education and training, and a sharper focus on the purpose and quality of those opportunities. Collin and Holden (1997) examine the vocational education and training in the leading industrial nations and the implications for the United Kingdom which arise after the comparison. They give evidence to support the argument that an educated and skilled workforce is essential for the effective functioning of the economy, competitiveness, and welfare of the nation.

"The future will see a world of work based more on skills rather than organisations" (Tyson and Fell 1995). They argue that to ensure a nation achieves the level of skills it needs, its government should put in place the VET policies and systems that will facilitate their development. The authors speak of the solution of investing more capital in education and training for an ever more skilled and knowledgeable workforce, partly because the industrialised countries can never compete with developing world economies in terms of cheap labour.

The Competence-based Approach Literature Review

The competence-based movement has been around for more than thirty years in Europe. Its origins, however, can be traced further back to the 1920s in the United States, and to ideas of educational reform linked to industrial/business models centred on the specification of outcomes in the form of behavioural objectives. From the mid-1960s onwards, the demand for greater accountability in education, increased emphasis on the economy, and towards more community involvement in decision making gave great impetus to the concept of competence-based education and training (Burke 1989). However, a really thoroughgoing scheme for relating qualifications to practical outcomes had to await the 1980s and the development of the systems of NVQs in Britain, which laid the foundation for the current training revolution.

Some authors examine technical issues bound up in the concept of competence. Mansfield (1993, in Burke 1995), a member of the TA Technical Advisory Group, which developed guidance on the design of competence-based standards and qualifications, points to the efforts of Industry Lead Bodies (ILBs) directed towards the formulation of "clear and precise statements." These are the occupational standards which describe what effective performance means. They are in contrast to earlier approaches which had concentrated on the design of curricula to meet assumed needs. He concludes that what is required is a broad concept of competence to drive standards and associated assessment and learning systems.

Wolf (1993, in Burke 1995) addresses the question of identifying and assessing knowledge in a competence-based system. She argues that there is no necessary separation between competence and education. Competence-based learning is perfectly compatible with the acquisition of general knowledge and understanding, and the development of broad-based courses.

Mitchel (1993, in Burke 1995) examines the way in which occupational standards are defined and assessed. Discussing the role of knowledge in standards, she maintains they must still describe the outcomes of competent performance, but competent performance itself is based on knowledge, understanding, skills, values, and attitudes.

The emerging model of vocational education and training was adopted by the government and promoted through a variety of programmes. The foundation of this model was clearly laid out in the New Training Initiative published in 1981 (DOE1981). A key feature of the publication was the introduction of the new concept of "standards."The new types of standards were put into effect through the introduction of NVQs, the positive outcomes of which were later applied in the Common European Framework for Vocational Qualifications.

The British NVQ framework, that is the arrangement of qualifications within a national system, were introduced to:

- overcome the confusion created by numerous awarding bodies competing in the same or overlapping occupational areas, with qualifications of different size and structure, often without recognising each other's qualifications (Jessup 1989)
- overcome the lack of coherence which had often created problems in the career progression and mobility of individuals and inefficiencies in the VET provision
- ensure access to higher education and the professions via vocational routes.

The framework was created by allocating NVQs as they become accredited by National Councils of Vocational Qualifications (NCVQ) to an area of competence and a level within a unified national system. The key feature of NVQs is that they are based on an "explicit statement of competence." The statement of competence spells out what candidates are required to be able to do for the award of an NVQ, and includes the criteria by which performance can be assessed. In this way, clear goals for education and training programmes are set. The specification of competence plus performance criteria provides the operational realisation of the "new kind of standards."

Mitchel (1993) gives a clear idea of the notion of Standards and Outcomes. Occupational Standards are descriptions of performance establishing benchmarks against which an individual's performance can be judged. The purpose of occupational standards is to make a clear link between the requirements of the economy and the competence of the workforce. They do this by focusing on the expectations of people at work – the functions which need to be performed and the outcomes which indicate successful performance. Standards are made up of three aspects:

- elements of competence which state the functions needed in particular occupational areas
- performance criteria, which are attached to each element, describe the quality of the outcomes of successful performance
- range indicators, which describe the potential parameters of the function, and what is included in the coverage of the element and what is not.

The Specific Nature of UK NVQ Model

Outcomes

(Statements of Competence)

(Statement of Achievements)

Learning	**Assessment**
(alternative modes, contexts, timescales)	(alternative forms of evidence are acceptable)

The requirement for the award is defined in a "statement of competence," which is independent of any course or training programme. The significant features of this model are that learning objectives are specified as outcomes independent of learning and assessment processes. This allows different modes, contexts, and timescales of learning to be used to best suit the abilities, preferences, and opportunities of the

individual learners. Assessment, conceived as the accumulation of the evidence presented, and judged against refined standards, can also take different forms, provided they are relevant and valid. The primary benefits of the outcomes model can thus be summarised as access, flexibility, and relevance (Jessup 1995).

NVQs are made up of a number of units, based on occupational functions, which can be separately assessed and certified. This provides a considerable degree of flexibility in the way in which NVQs can be built up through credit accumulation over time and in different locations. Since its establishment, the system of competence-based education and training in the United Kingdom has extended its influence throughout Europe. The transition towards a competence-based model can be traced through the number of intra-government initiatives mentioned above.

The Progress of Vocational Education and Training in Bulgaria with Reflections on Tourism Education

By the year 1999, before the introduction of the VET Act, the Bulgarian VET, characterised by a high degree of centralisation, was still at the initial stage of reform. The legal framework did not take account of the conditions of a market economy, but concentrated on the reform of vocational schools. The main challenges included the development of a coherent legal framework and improvement of institutional capacities. It was the Ministry of Education and Science which had the overall responsibility for the entire school system and was the main policymaking body with budgetary responsibility and control of initial training. At that time, Vocational Education and Training was financed from the state budget, and the ministry allocated the money to schools, which had little autonomy. In 1995, of all public funds for education, very little was spent on the vocational education of young people.

International Support Activities helped enhance and upgrade the system, and pilot schools were financed through bilateral and other international agreements, thus very significant contributions were made to the vocational education and training system. A PHARE pilot scheme launched in 1993 targeted post-secondary vocational education and training. It helped to review and develop principles for the reform of the whole system involving curriculum development for five occupational profiles and review of the post-secondary education system, tourism education being one of them. Progress was expanded into much larger PHARE programmes in 1995–8 on education and training, which included

the development of standards and assessment procedures, teacher training, and preparatory work for setting up the legal framework.

Discussing the development of tourism education, Rakadjiiska (1988) set the historical background to the evolution of courses in tourism and the nature of their curricula. At the start of the development of mass tourism in Bulgaria in the 1960s and 70s,a number of short-term language and basic job training courses catered for the quick provision of staff. As tourism demand grew and tourism developed as a major branch of the economy, professional training turned to more theoretical aspects. The beginning was set by establishing the first special vocational school in the Golden Sands Resort, whose task was to train staff for tourism enterprises. This later transformed into an Institute of International Tourism, filling the gap for vocational qualifications at a level between secondary school and university. Concerning the involvement of industry-led bodies, vocational training centres were set up by tourism enterprises to train staff for new positions and allow on-the-job retrainingof staff. New entrants were typically secondary school graduates who got certificates for their qualifications.

As the occupational structure in tourism became redefined, at the end of the 1980s there was a sharp decrease in the importance of short-term programmes. In the transition years of the 1990s, thirteen higher education institutions in Bulgaria offered degree courses for senior managerial staff. Courses related to tourism, hospitality, and catering were also provided at secondary education level at general education schools –state as well as private and vocational; however, all of them were obliged to have general education subjects in their curricula. Further qualification of tourism staff was carried out in special short-term programmes offered at centres for further education and training within the universities in Varna and Burgas. These institutions no longer exist and now privately-run centres for vocational education and training working closely with the employment agencies run short courses for the industry. These centres are currently implementing the new government policies for broadening the access to further qualification and employability.

Back in 1996, in the absence of a coherent policy at government level, the Ministry of Education and Science adopted the following guidelines for the development of the vocational education and training sector:

- develop a system for teacher training
- establish an independent agency for vocational qualifications
- prepare a new occupations list in the secondary and post-secondary vocational education and training

- design new curricula
- introduce a modular approach in vocational training (Factsheet 1997).

The future regulatory law for vocational education and training was to be introduced. Specialists and regional experts gave their opinion on the regulatory framework, type of qualifications proposed, and new centres delivering vocational qualifications. The law regulating new types and levels of vocational qualifications came into effect in 1999. The introduction of the modular type of courses and the credit system of accumulation of qualifications was set within the future framework.

The Vocational Education and Training Act (1999) regulated the organisation, management, and financing of VET. However, the 2014 amendments of the act were influential, achieving the following targets:

- broaden the access to VET through the validation of non-formal and informal learning carried out by VET providers
- better matching of the competences acquired in VET with the labour-market demand
- strengthen the quality assurance of the training providers
- allow learners to accumulate credits towards the acquisition of a vocational qualification; credits can be transferred between qualifications in the same "vocational area"
- restructure the state educational standards for VET qualifications, including units of "learning outcomes" and assessment criteria
- introduce dual training, combining school and work-based learning since 2015; dual training is based on a partnership between VET providers and employers
- oblige the VET providers to establish internal quality assurance systems in order to ensure a correspondence of the services provided with the expectations and needs of the society (NAVET 2016).

VET in Bulgaria has traditionally been mainly school-based. Since 2015, as in many other EU countries, work has focused on reinforcing dual VET to give learners the opportunity to acquire real work experience and understand which skills employers expect and those that can help them succeed. While creating a sustainable national model is still in progress, the country is also working on accompanying policies necessary to make these developments successful.

The Bulgarian National Qualifications Framework (NQF) for lifelong learning (BQF) was officially adopted by the Council of Ministers at the beginning of 2012. BQF is one of the main documents used in the development of new and the update of old State Educational Requirements (SER). The term was changed with the Preschool and School Education Act (2015) into State Educational Standards (SES).

At that stage of development, the BQF was restricted to qualifications from the formal education and training system. Now, one of the aims of BQF is to facilitate the validation and recognition of qualifications through prior learning, including non-formal and informal learning and on-the-job training. The BQF is structured according to learning outcomes, described as knowledge, skills, and competences for each qualification level. It is based on the detailed descriptions of the content and expected learning outcomes defined in the SERs, which can facilitate validation procedures, particularly at the stage of assessment.

Bulgaria has implemented the ECTS since 2004 and is on track to implement the ECVET as part of the implementation of the National Lifelong Learning Strategy. The credit transfer and accumulation were introduced in the VET system with amendments of the VET Act in 2014. The National Agency for VET (NAVET) is the national coordination point on ECVET. Its activity is supported by the National Expert Group, whose work is aimed at exploring the best practices related to the testing and deployment of the European system of credit transfer in VET, as well as establishing contact with international project teams related to the testing of ECVET.

The formulation of "units of learning outcomes" in the SERs by professions is a prerequisite for implementing the procedure of validation and awarding of credits, both in training (or validation) leading to the acquisition of a vocational qualification and a professional qualification for part of a profession. A persistent problem since 2014, however, continues to be the low level of public awareness concerning the possibilities provided by validation procedures. Therefore, there is a need for an enhanced campaign in this area, as well as promotion of the benefits of validation (Cedefop 2018).

Conclusion

The European Commission recently called upon the council to endorse an updated framework for future European cooperation in education and training, with four strategic objectives for the years leading up to 2020:

- make lifelong learning and learner mobility a reality
- improve the quality and efficiency of provision and outcomes
- promote equity, social cohesion, and active citizenship
- enhance innovation and creativity, including entrepreneurship, at all levels of education and training.

As we are nearing the end of that strategic period, the conclusions are that each EU country is responsible for its own education and training systems. EU policy is designed to support national action and help address common challenges, such as ageing societies, skills deficits in the workforce, technological developments, and global competition (EC 2018).

Educational and training systems must generate new skills, respond to the nature of new jobs which are expected to be created, as well as improve the adaptability and employability of adults already in the labour force (Nikolov, Shoikova, and Kovatcheva 2014).

It is with this idea in mind that PhD dissertation research into the processes and social issues of implementing validation of vocational qualifications in Bulgaria is currently being carried out by the authors. It will seek to determine the expected benefits of validating qualifications gained through non-formal and informal learning experiences, and how this extends the "visualisation" of knowledge, skills, and competences acquired as a more flexible way to obtain a qualification certificate. The social significance of the process is expected to be an additional opportunity to broaden access to formal education and training, giving increased opportunities for work, job preservation, and better career development.

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CHAPTER FIVE

FOUR MYTHS FOR VISITORS TO BULGARIA'S BLACK SEA COAST

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Abstract

The fight against misinformation in various fields, e.g. medicine and history, inspires a similar attempt in the field of tourism. The key concept is that the number of widely believed myths is small (though they are disproportionately influential). This makes it imaginable that the myths can be tracked down to their (sometimes obscure) sources, and new technologies are beginning to make this quite practical. Four specific myths are discussed that seem especially interesting to tourists coming to Bulgaria and its Black Sea region: the "Byzantine" Empire, the "Balkan powder keg," the "Black" Sea, and "Knyaz" Boris. A connection is made to ongoing progress in the work of scholars from various countries in various fields (including Bulgarian history and linguistics).

Keywords: Myths, Byzantium, Balkans, Powderkeg, Boris I, Black Sea, Knyaz, Khan

Introduction

Everyone complains about bad information, like bad weather, yet does as little about it.

Can anything be done? – most people live by St. Ignatius's rule (Loyola 1847, 180) that if we see something as white with our eyes, we should accept that it is black if this is what we are taught (in his case, by the church). This is perhaps especially relevant to those visiting the shores of a sea called "Black" and wondering *why* it is called that.

Fig. 5.1. Source: xkcd.com (https://imgs.xkcd.com/comics/duty_calls.png)

What has this to do with tourism? Misinformation, like a virus, to do its work, must reach people. Tourist guides, often said to be ambassadors of their countries, are key information providers. When tourism – or prototourism (Dann 2000, 367) – started, young English aristocrats travelled for three reasons: better sex and food in France and Italy than at home, plus information about "art, culture and the roots of Western civilization" (Gross 2008). Only later did sun, sand, and saltwater enter the equation. Today, when they are off the beach, the tourist (no matter what else they have been consuming) still soaks up information about many things, not only the name of the Black Sea – information, right or wrong.

In recent times in various countries, including Bulgaria, a few people have painstakingly fought the accumulated myths in various fields. This might seem a hopeless quest. But no, the good news, perhaps first made explicit in the medical field (Manaster Ramer and Brus Ramer 2017), is that while myths seem to overwhelm us, they are actually relatively few in number. In fact, they are rather like terrorists. A small minority in a sea of law-abiding true facts – though, just like terrorists, myths do harm way beyond their numbers. Myths are the beliefs that corrupt our worldview, our attitude towards everything – yes, even sex, food, art, culture, and the roots of Western civilisation. But they are relatively few, and usually belong to one of a few predictable types, nourished by predictable kinds of illogic (Fischer 1970), and nourishing, in turn, rather predictable sorts of ideologies. So the good news is that the enemy is numerically weak, easily detected, and therefore *potentially* easily defeated.

To see how important this new view of myths is, consider what people used to think. Of the various people who over millennia tried to separate fact from myth (from Thales and Herodotus through William of Ockham

and on down), few were ever so brash as Petrus Ramus, who in Paris in 1536 supposedly defended the thesis:

> *Quaecumque ab Aristotele dicta essent, commentitia esse*
> [Whatever Aristotle may have said, is false].

These famous words are sometimes considered the beginning of the Modern Age, but ironically there is no contemporary source, so the whole event may be mythical (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Petrus_Ramus#).[1] We said that myths come in a few easily identified kinds. The easiest to identify is the kind that sounds convincing but comes with no source. An astonishing percentage of the myths nearly everyone believes are parroted, endlessly, without any source whatever. Back to Ramus. The second irony is he only produced the most trivial of ideas and discovered nothing substantial, leaving it to others to stage the Scientific Revolution (Ong 1956, 234). Maybe challenging everything was too much. How would you check everything? Plus, if you did, you would find that much of what Aristotle said is true, e.g.:

> Ἀθηναῖοι τὸ μὲν ἐξ ἀρχῆς ἐχρῶντο βασιλείᾳ.
> [The Athenians originally had a royal government]
> (http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text.jsp?doc=Perseus:text:1999.01.0045).

And that is good because suppose everything might be false. How could you check, rebut, and replace everything? Fortunately, everything cannot be a myth because nobody could invent it all and then remember what they had invented. So, while myths are numerous, they still are enormously fewer than true facts. As we said, myths are like terrorists, and like them, have to be surrounded by innocent true facts to hide among.

Another famous quote to help make this point. In the early 1900s, the "father of modern medicine" Sir William Osler supposedly told students:

> Gentlemen, I have a confession to make. Half of what we have taught you is in error, and furthermore we cannot tell you which half it is.
> (http://www.azquotes.com/author/11160-William_Osler)

This striking and constantly repeated quotation is also likely mythical.[2] But Osler really could not tell, and so until the end of his life he continued

[1] German quotations have been translated.

[2] Missing from the collection of Osler's quotations (Silverman et al. 2008), it does not appear on Google before 1965 (unsourced, in the Proceedings of a Workshop

to uphold bloodletting, "an obsession with medical practitioners for thousands of years, causing countless suffering" (Parapia 2008). Medicine having moved slower than mathematics or physics, a great physician could believe without checking, without adequate sources, by force of tradition. We today see "[t]he history of bloodletting" as "one of the greatest stories of medical progress." Now, the key point is that this horrible mistake finally ended "not because of new discoveries but mainly by persistent unbiased audit" (Parapia 2008), i.e., by relentless checking of whether it helps or harms, something that no one had thought of doing for centuries. This was then more difficult than now, and both halves of everything were far too great to check.

Fast forward to Spellberg's (2016) "five myths of antibiotic resistance." Not everything, not half. Just five myths refuted, with sources! This is the pattern for modern myth-busting. It may seem like slow progress, but it is the only progress possible. And progress is a fine thing. So we are lucky to have it at all, and we should not complain that it takes time. It is not the destination but the journey we are still only at the beginning of the beginning of.

Enough of medicine. We find the same trend in the recent work of several Bulgarian scholars (e.g. Nikolov 2016; Yanakieva 2016; Iliev and Petkov 2018) who refute[3] many widespread myths of Bulgarian history and linguistics – fields that lag behind even medicine, but where "persistent unbiased audit" does happen. There is a book titled *101 Myths of Bulgarian History* (Ignatov 2018), but at least one is actually true, so maybe only one hundred? There are of course still other myths, so surely more than one hundred, but not hopelessly many.

We, accordingly, pick four widespread myths. How do we know they are myths? – "by persistent unbiased audit," of course. We looked for sources. If these are given at all, we checked them, then examined the sources in the sources, etc., then asked whether the stories we are told about are logically supported by the primary sources, or myths. Some myths take just minutes to see through. Others we can debunk but would like to know more about the sources. Like tourism itself, it is not a destination, but a journey.

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on Enhancing the Image of Dentistry), though Osler died in 1919. In the same way, Marie Antoinette arrived in France in 1770, so likely was not the source of the quote "let them eat cake" recorded in 1767.

[3] Or call attention to earlier (but previously ignored) refutations.

Myth 1: the Byzantine Empire

Someone actually asked us when the Roman Empire changed into the Byzantine. The answer: 1557. But the empire fell in 1453, you say? You heard right. Invented by a German scholar, the Byzantine Empire was and remains a clumsy myth designed to promote the bigger myth that the sole heir of Ancient Greco-Roman civilisation was northwestern (Latin) Europe with its German-Austrian, so-called Holy Roman Empire (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hieronymus_Wolf). Byzantium was only a city, and so to call the empire "Byzantine" is like calling today's Bulgaria the "Sofianese Republic" or the "Republic of Ulpia Serdica." All myths are, necessarily, clumsy inventions. This is why the embarrassing date of 1557 is usually unmentioned. As we will see, sometimes dates are invented, or cited for events that did not happen. A date does not guarantee the thing happened or happened then or in that way. But no date is a red flag, so this was an easy one to check.

Myth 2: the Balkan Powder Keg

It may seem gauche to observe that the Balkans are a mountain range, not a region with a culture and a population different from (the rest of) Europe. Even the traditional Turkic name Balkan means "mountain range." This has, like many words, the most fantastic pseudo-etymologies, e.g. from balk "mud" (Eren 1999)[4] or even from bal "honey" plus kan "blood," reflecting a very familiar idea about this region, now obsessively promoted by musicians (Jordi Savall & Traditional, http://www.hdtracks.com/balkan-honey-and-blood), movie makers (Angelina Jolie, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/In_the_Land_of_Blood_and_Honey), and a vast array of political scientists, historians, and journalists, that it is a region where you can get honey, but it will cost blood.

Yet, for centuries, the Balkans were simply mountains. In 1808 another German, August Zeune, invented the Balkan peninsula, still a mere geographical term. Obviously, only later could the myth emerge that this is a region, an area inherently different from "Europe" proper—marginal, "Byzantine," so ethnically and religiously "Balkanised" as to be perpetually at (or on the brink of) war, hence the "powder keg" of Europe. More importantly, though this often goes tactfully unmentioned, it is a

[4] The likely etymology, harder to find, is from the root balk- (or ?balïk-), "to shine, sparkle" (Nişanyan 2007 2011[8] s.v.), referencing snow-covered peaks, a familiar source for the names of tall mountains (the Himalayas, Caucasus, Alps, etc.).

place inhabited by peoples conceived of as "Oriental," supposedly racially different from, darker than, and alien to Europeans (Todorova 2009, 123–4). Not as civilised or peaceful or "white" as the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation, where the real heirs to Rome and Athens resolutely defended civilisation and peace, especially 1914–18 and 1933–45.

"Byzantine" and "Balkan": two words for one ingrained myth about the whole history of Europe. To break the hold of such brainwashing, try to imagine if we called France and Austria the Alps or Poland the Northern Carpathians, or if we renamed these countries the Parisian, Viennese, or Varsovian Republics! It is an ideological complex including other myths too, notably the Great Schism of 1054, which has a date on which … it never happened.[5]

Some bits are harder to trace. In the entire literature, we find no source for the "Powder Keg of Europe" ["Балканско буре барут"] (these are actual articles in Wikipedia, with analogues in Arabic, Finnish, French, and Polish), hiding the mystery of the origin of this concept under verbiage like:

> Балканското буре барут, понекогаш познато и како европско буре барут, е термин кој започнал да се користи во почетокот на XX век.
> [The Balkan Powder Keg, sometimes also known as the Powder Keg of Europe, is a term that began to be used in the early twnetieth century.]

"Започнал да се користи" by whom? Where? In what year?[6] Some say Bismarck, (https://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/Otto_von_Bismarck), who died in 1898. So is the century even right? The English Wikipedia teases:

> As is insinuated by the name "the Powder Keg of Europe," the Balkans were not the major issue at stake in the war, but were merely the catalyst that led to the conflagration. The Chancellor of Germany in the late 19th century, Otto von Bismarck, correctly predicted it would be the source of major conflict in Europe.[7]

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[5] The story of the gradually developing conflicts of the Western with some (not all!) Eastern churches is only now emerging, and the assorted myths will collapse (Kolbaba 2005).

[6] The only source for this Macedonian article is Fischer (1967, 55), where the term does not occur. The English article cites no sources. Red flags!

[7] This references the claim, made long after the fact, that Bismarck had predicted a "great European War would come out of some damned foolish thing in the Balkans" (Churchill 1923, 207). Again not an inner-Balkan conflict, since Ballin continues: "These words … might come true. It all depended on the [Russian] Tsar." And when Churchill (1923, 155) writes: "The Continent was a powder

So was it or was it not Bismarck? At least they admit the term "powder keg" originally did not reference anything the Balkan peoples could be blamed for, though actually it was not even the catalyst, merely the excuse some northwestern Europeans needed to stage the First World War.

But the idea of the Balkan Powder Keg (or powder magazine)[8] is much older, so old that neither the Balkan Wars nor the First World War had happened when we first find "the open powder keg on the far side of the Balkan [mountain range]" in the German-language daily *Bohemia* (July 15, 1875) (likewise "the open powder keg in the Slavic provinces of the Turkish Empire" 48:217 (August 7, 1875). Instead, the reference is to the Balkan people's liberation struggle from the Ottomans. So maybe not such a bad thing? As for Bismarck, he used the phrase powder keg, though not for the Balkans but for a northwestern European nation ready to explode in righteous anger if attacked, or in revolutionary fervour. Not the Balkans, but Germany (Blümner 1891, 97). Many authors also used this term for such European issues as the 1870 dispute over the Spanish throne or the struggle for Italian and German unity (which Bismarck himself achieved). So it meant some cause or pretext for war or revolution, usually staged by outsiders, usually not in the "Balkans," and often for a good cause. So another point about myths – we need the original sources and contexts.

But in 1875 the term "open powder keg," referring to the struggle against the Turks, is described as "for years often repeated and become a commonplace," so we still cannot find its origin. All we know is it meant something different in 1875 than later, when it was clumsily ripped out of context to imply that the Balkan Wars of the early twentieth century, the First World War, and the post-Yugoslav horrors were due to the very nature of the Balkan peoples, supposedly quite different from the genetically peaceful northwestern Europeans. "Byzantine," "Balkan," and "powder keg" were all parts of a mythology Todorova calls "Balkanism" (2009, 189), adding:

> If Europe has produced not only racism but also antiracism, not only misogyny but also feminism, not only anti-Semitism, but also its repudiation, then … Balkanism has not yet been coupled with its complementing and ennobling antiparticle.

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magazine from end to end. One single hellish spark and the vast explosion might ensue," he means the need to prepare against Germany "finding a pretext to create a situation in which war was inevitable," so not a Balkan issue at all.

[8] Of course, one also searches for German Pulverfaß, French poudrière, etc.

Indeed, only a few (usually native Balkan) scholars criticise Balkanism, while most parrot the myths with unswerving devotion, e.g. Doubt's (2006, 92) response to Todorova:

> There may be negative attitudes associated with Balkanism, but that negativity does not fall into the same category as racism, misogyny, and anti-Semitism ... Indeed, there may be something positive about Balkanism.

Do we laugh or cry? Todorova's "antiparticle" is badly needed.

Myth 3: "*Knyaz*" Boris I

Every visitor to Varna walks a boulevard commemorating a myth with a different ideological background but no less mythical. Why "Knyaz," in contrast to "Khan" Asparukh, Tervel, Kubrat, Kardam, Krum, or Omurtag? Again, this is a clumsy invention. First, no one has seen Boris's official title in either Proto-Bulgarian or Slavic, while in the Greek and Latin sources he is, like his predecessors, ἄρχων ["ruler"], ἐκ Θεοῦ ἄρχων ["ruler from God"],[9] dominus ["lord"], princeps ["prince"], and rex ["king"] (Wasilewski 1985).[10] Only by deduction can we surmise more. First, Proto-Bulgarian titles survived into Christian Slavic times, as on this tombstone:

> Сьдє лєжитъ Мостичь чрьгоубыліа бывьши прі Сумєонѣ цр҃и и прі Петрѣ цр҃и ос(м)ньѣ же дєсѧть лѣтъ сы оставивъ чрьгоубьльство і вьсє імѣиниє бысть чрьноризьць і въ тѣмь съврьши жизнь своѣ.

Second, Proto-Bulgarian names continued too: Peter's son, Boris I's grandson, was again Boris. Third, in 907 Tudor Doksov still knew the Proto-Bulgarian year name etkh bekhti, whose meaning is still rather uncertain (despite deeply entrenched myths to the contrary!). So, there is no evidence for, only against, an abrupt change from Proto-Bulgarian to Slavic.[11] We can only guess that Boris/Michael was called both καν and

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[9] Sometimes, Bulgarian rulers were called κύριος ["lord"].

[10] Wasilewski argues that around 870 Boris was recognised in "Byzantium" as ἐκ Θεοῦ ἄρχων rather than ἄρχων, and in the West as rex rather than princeps, and so what he calls (in Polish) król. Even if correct, then Michael would be крал or цар, not княз, but this is all conjecture (or even myth).

[11] There is another myth. The 893 Council of Preslav is claimed (e.g. English and Bulgarian Wikipedia) to have decided: "The Byzantine clergy was to be banished

кънязь, depending on who was speaking/writing in which language – exactly like Kuvrat, Asparukh, etc. So, either Khan Boris or Knyaz Asparukh, etc.

And it is clumsy, like all myths. Pagan Boris was christened Michael so if he did change his title, why not *knyaz Michael? Because Michael is Hebrew, whereas Boris (actually Proto-Bulgarian) sounds Slavic, and was adopted by the Saxe-Coburg-Gothas to help forge a pseudo-Slavic-Orthodox identity, complete with titles like *knyaz* and *tsar* (not Slavic words originally).[12] Knyaz Boris is a blatantly ideological anachronism (like Zlatarsky's other inventions [see Nikolov 2016]). And again there are several related myths, e.g. about why Boris adopted Christianity.[13] By the way, much of this is hard to Google, but you can find it. Which brings us to:

Myth 4: The "Black" Sea

Why "Black"? Not every myth has an ideological background. As far as we know, it was pure scholarly hubris that led to this half-insight and half-myth. Vasmer (1921) brilliantly proposed that the Greek name Axeinos, seemingly "inhospitable," is really the Iranian word *akhshaina*. But does that mean 'Black'? "The meaning of the word," Vasmer says, referring to all Iranian languages, old and new, "varies between 'dark-coloured,' 'blue-black,' and 'blue'." It is the old meaning that matters, and

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from the country and replaced with Bulgarian clerics ... The Old Bulgarian language was to replace the Greek in liturgy. Thus it became the official language of Bulgaria." This is an obvious non sequitur: the language of worship is not ipso facto the state language. Moreover, both these articles and their source, Zlatarski (1971), admit that the medieval sources mention none of this. As Nikolov observes, Zlatarski made all this (and more) up "от нищото," specifically from a hitherto obscure medieval mention of "преложение книгъ" ("translation of books"), which surely anyone can see does not imply a change of language or expulsion of the Greek clergy (though Zlatarski insists it does). As we said, a matter of simple (il)logic. Anyway, by this time Boris/Michael was no longer the ruler.

[12] The word княз is a Russianism, replacing the indigenous Bulgarian кнез, but at the time it was кънязь, pronounced roughly, in modern letters, "кънъендзи," with a very short final vowel.

[13] Michael voluntarily retired to a monastery, re-emerged to defend Christianity against his own son/successor, then went back in. If this does not prove sincere faith, rather than the geopolitical opportunism historians attribute to him, we do not know what "prove" means. See Mako (2011) on similar myths concerning the reasons for the conversion of Volga Bulgars to Islam.

Vasmer takes this as "dark," (etymologically supposedly "non-light"), as it is said to mean in the Zoroastrian holy book (the Avesta), adding:

> The modern traveller will also find the description "blue-black" suitable for the Black Sea. Besides my own experience I can call here on Baedeker, who, without knowing the Iranian etymology, asserts: "The Black Sea at times deserves its name because of the blue-black colouring of the water."

Pure illogic. Baedeker says "at times" because it is only dark at the same times, like any sea. This is a third basic point about myths – the insistence on comparing apples and oranges (double standards). If we Google around, we will find that Vasmer's myths have been recognised by specialists in historical linguistics,[14] though no satisfactory theory has replaced his (Schmitt 1989; de Blois 2007).[15] First is the myth that this sea is dark, and second that the Iranian word *akhshaina* meant "dark." In medieval and modern Iranian languages, *akhshaina* denotes a wide range of colours from darkish white and light-blue to dark-grey to mixed colorations often translated as Russian *сизый* ("dark grey with touches of whitish blue"), and only in early modern Persian is it sometimes black (Rastorgueva and Èdel'man 2000).[16]

How to make sense of such complexity? First, do not panic. The world changes, and words change. The Vikings called Africa *Bláland*, which now seems like "Blue Land," but not then. The Bulgarian *син* is "blue," but the related Czech *siný* is "light blue," the Russian *синий* is "dark blue," and the Polish *siny* "livid." In Bulgarian, *zelen kon* ["green horse"] was once "multi-coloured, dappled," not "green." Some wit said "Зелен кон и умен даскал ияма" ["There are no green horses – or wise teachers"], presupposing the modern meaning for *zelen*.

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[14] Vasmer quotes ancient poets describing this sea as dark, but other seas are also so described.

[15] For *Axeinos*, de Blois makes this Greek, while Knobloch (1979) and Schmitt take 'Black' = 'North' as the original Iranian name, forgetting that in Iranian 'black' was *syāva(ka)*, not *akhshaina*. Nevertheless the theory that 'Black' meant North (as in many languages) remains attractive, because this explains the Red Sea in the South, the Yellow Sea in the East, and the Arabic/Turkish 'White Sea' (Aegean Mediterranean) in the West.

[16] Quite a few Iranists take the source word to have meant 'blue vitriol'. This seems to be obviously backwards, moreover based on an overenthusiastic (mis)reading of a much more cautious (and anyway incomplete) comparison, by Morgenstierne (1926: 72), with Old Indic (neuter) *akṣa-*, reported by Sanskrit lexicographers to denote BLUE vitriol, yes, but likewise … BLACK salt.

Axeinos being an ancient name, we need the meaning in ancient Iranian. When you check Bartholomae (1904), you find that in the Avesta *akhshaēna* only occurs to poetically describe cows and a bear, and nobody seems to say what this is about. However, "dark cows" and "dark bear" are hardly poetic images, whereas "the *сизый* eagle" is famous in Russian. So maybe it meant *сизый*? The gloss "dark" haunts Iranian linguistics, unchecked by generations of teachers – a *green horse* that never existed, an arbitrary guess by Darmesteter (1883) based on Jāmāspasa's (1877–82) guess, evidently based on early modern Persian – a full circle. It might seem a great good fortune then to find elsewhere in the scholarly literature that the Old Persian version of Darius the Great's Susa inscription (published in 1929) uses *akhshaina* to describe turquoise, which does look rather like the Black Sea as we see it with our eyes: [17]

Sailko, self-produced work, CC BY 3.0, https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/8/80/Turchese%2C_dal_messico.JPG

However, actually all we know is that it was SOME stone, brought from Chorasmia and called, in the various Akkadian versions (Vallat 1983), either UGU.AŠ.GÌ.GÌ or AŠ.GÌ.GÌ (two actually unidentified stones, one seemingly green). Nevertheless, both Assyriologists and Iranists constantly repeat that it WAS turquoise. Now, the Assyriologists (first Vallat, later others e.g. Schuster-Brandis 2008: 450) cite Iranists (specifically Brandenstein & Mayrhofer 1964: 101) as supposedly saying that *akhshaina* denotes turquoise in Iranian generally. But actually Brandenstein & Mayrhofer list words referring … not to turquoise but to … doves! No Iranist has ever said (nor would it be true) that even ONE other Iranian language uses the

[17] In Iranian, Urmia Lake (an inland sea also located west of Iran) was called **Kapautaka** "pigeon(-coloured)". Moreover, lapis lazuli (a darker stone) was also **kapautaka**. This shows that a word denoting (the, or rather a, colour of) doves may, when applied to stones, refer to something quite different from turquoise.

akhshaina word for turquoise. To be sure, most Iranists keep repeating that *akhshaina* meant "turquoise" in Darius' Old Persian, but they cite neither sources nor evidence. The growth of this myth was complex, but the key point is that, while the Assyriologists base themselves on a misreading of the IRANIST literature, the Iranists' idea derives from König's (1930: 64) misreading of the (then basically illegible) AKKADIAN text as supposedly referring to a *"light blue (stone)". So another circularity, which, obviously nobody today accepts (or even remembers!)—any more than König's insistence that the Iranian word in general meant "(light) blue" and etymologically *"eye-like"![18] Thus, the identification of it as turquoise became received knowledge even though nobody knew what stone Darius intended in either language, much less what the (purported) original name of the Black Sea meant. It might seem just possible (though a sheer coincidence) that it WAS turquoise. But no, that still would not explain those Avestan *akhshaēna* animals. And indeed scholars who insist on the turquoise in Old Persian (e.g., Rastorgueva & Èdel'man) still interpret the *akhshaēna* oxen and bear as dark rather than (as logic would demand) turquoise-blue. One can hardly blame them, for when did anyone recently run into turquoise oxen and light-blue bears? But then how can, and why should, the word denote turquoise at all? (Elsewhere we will propose a completely new analysis of all these data—but our purpose HERE is merely to expose—and to show how comparatively easy it is to expose—the myths, so we will say no more NOW.)

Only in 1265 was the Black Sea first called "black" in a Greek translation from some unidentified language, possibly early Modern Persian, where the word, now *khashēn*, could mean "black," AMONG OTHER THINGS. So it is possible, though not certain, that originally it was the Sea of SOME OTHER COLOUR, using a word that only later came to mean "black." If so, the name was simply misunderstood, the way today *zelen kon* seems to mean "green horse," or the way Belorussia seems to mean "white,"[19] or "Great Britain" references Britannic grandeur, though originally it was the large(r) of two Britains (Britain and Ireland, or Britain and Brittany). Words change.

Зелен кон и умен даскал няма – this is why for over a century we have been assured that, in Avestan, *akhshaina* meant "dark." This is our

[18] Notice the irony. These are mirror images of the (equally) incorrect claim (recall Vasmer) that this word meant 'dark' throughout Iranian, and of Bartholomae's corresponding (and no better) etymology of it as *"non-light" (itself long since rejected by more than one leading Iranist yet still constantly repeated).

[19] It was never white, but it remains controversial whether white = West again. Red Russia was further south, and Black Russia further north.

last point. Most myths are not old wives' tales. They are the work of professionals past and present – old professors' tales.

Byzantium, Balkans, and *Knyaz* Boris were easy. The Balkan Powder Keg is incomplete but clearly a myth. The blackness of the Black Sea is a myth, but the final answer (some colour not black, Northern, or maybe something else entirely) remains murky. Checking will reveal wrong answers and find the best one available, but what if none exists yet? Two things are sure: we should believe our eyes, and we should refuse any church, even that of Iranian linguistics, a monopoly on the answers.[20]

So are we condemned to a lifetime of Internet sleuthing? It seems so. Finding conflicting answers to choose among? Yep. Or no answers, only data from which to think up new answers? For sure. Is that bad? Our inspiration came from medicine. Eavesdrop on two doctors, what do you hear them complaining about? About patients Googling symptoms, diagnoses, and prescriptions, and proposing their own solutions. Let them complain. This revolution cannot be stopped, in any field.

Conclusion

Far less than half of what we read is myth, the more important part, easy to spot as the contrived support for some doctrine, being constantly repeated without sources, and easily disproved "by persistent unbiased audit." The bad news – it may take some digging. The good news – the "audit" is not hopelessly open-ended. The Roman Empire will not, on further checking, turn out to be Byzantine. We will not find a Great Schism in 1054. The Black Sea will not become black by more Googling. To paraphrase Emil Dimitrov: "Ти закъсняваш доста бе, Истино/ Но все-пак идваш след проверка при нас" ["You are pretty slow, Truth, old chum/ Though you do, after some checking, manage to come to us"].

Tourism began as a pursuit of what one cannot get at home: good sex, good food, and good information. We hope, coming here from home today, you have gotten some.

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[20] A new theory of the Scythian language is emerging (Schwartz and Manaster Ramer 2018). Several Scythian royal names were discovered in northeast Bulgaria, and some place names hereabouts, notably *Odēssos*, are one possible test of this theory (versus earlier ones). The Scythian world cup may soon be played on the northwestern Black Sea coast.

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