



UNIT-1

An Introduction to Travel & Tourism

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit the learner will be able to:

- ✓ Explore the various types of tourism
- ✓ Identify motivating factors for tourism

Unit 1

An Introduction to Travel & Tourism

Tourism and tourists are common words, heard and used almost every day. Pick up any newspaper and you will find a lot of things related to tourism, for example, products, government policies, the impact on the local economy, the hospitality of the local people, and so on. But how often have you understood the word tourism or wondered who is a tourist?

Well, in this unit, you will get to know the two words, which are 'tourism' and 'tourist.' Then, we will explain to you about the concept and features related to tourism. It also defines the different forms and types of tourism with explaining different phrases like tourist destination and tourist product, etc. Getting to know about these aspects is very important for people taking up tourism as a profession, as well as, for anyone who is interested in taking up Tourism Studies as a subject.

Tourism basically deals with pleasure, holidays, and travelling to somewhere. There may be different reasons that make people leave their daily environment for a short period of time and visit other places. Tourism deals with consuming goods and services. For example, you will need some sort of transport, accommodation to stay in, and so on.

What Is Tourism?

Tourism is basically a free time activity because it is co-related to work. Through this, we can figure out that leisure and work are categorized differently when it comes to social practice. They can be found in specific places and periods of time.

Tourism can be defined as the persons travelling to their places of interest and staying outside their daily environment for a couple of months either for leisure, business, or any other purpose.

Over the years, the definition of tourism has changed along with the historical changes. According to Hunziker and Krapf, tourism is *"the sum of the phenomena and relationships arising from the travel and stay of non-residents, in so far as it does not lead to permanent residence and is not connected to any earning activity"*. This definition includes travelling and staying and excludes any business or day trips.

In 1937, the League of Nations suggested that tourism is basically when people travel for a period of 24 hours or more in a different country than the one they live in. However, this definition was limited as it only emphasises on international tourism and not on domestic travel.

In 1963, the Rome Conference on Tourism adopted the suggestion to replace the word "tourist" with the term "visitor" and defined tourism as a visit to 'a country other than where one lives or works permanently'; for the following reasons:

- i) Tourism – the activity of a short term visitor staying for at least 24 hours for leisure, business, family, mission, or meeting.
- ii) Excursion – a short trip; the activity of a temporary visitor staying less than 24 hours but excluding people along the flow.

This definition also excludes the local tourist, although it considers the day visitor. The Tourism Society of Britain in 1976 clarified the concept of tourism by saying that, "Tourism is the temporary, short-term movement of people to destinations outside the places where they normally live and work and their activities during their stay at these destinations, including day visits and excursions."

In 1981, AIEST refined this concept and stated that "Tourism may be defined in terms of particular activities selected by choice and undertaken outside the home environment. Tourism, which may or may not involve overnight stays away from home". According to these definitions, tourism has had a broader meaning to it. The concept of tourism has broadened to include all forms of leisure activities.

In today's world, Mass Tourism can be defined as the journey of someone who travels to see something different and is not satisfied when he finds that things are not the same as home. This definition reflects the situation of global tourism, which is gathered in Western societies where 60% of international tourist arrives and from where 70% of the tourist originate. The concept of tourism is mainly influenced by these western societies because the control of tourism is ridden from the West rather than the travelling background of non-western cultures and developing societies.

The movement of tourists from the place of origin to the destination is further described as:

- International Tourism, when the travel is from one country to another, and
- Domestic Tourism, when the travel is within the country i.e. trips taken by a tourist within his/her own country or where the origin and destination are in the same country.

In International Tourism you will come across two other terms:

- i) Inbound: This refers to tourists entering a country.
- ii) Outbound: This refers to tourists leaving their country of origin for another.

Why People Travel

People travel for different reasons and the travel and tourism industry is about far more than providing holidays for people.

There are three main reasons for travel.

These are:

- Leisure tourism;
- Visiting friends and relatives; and
- Business tourism

Most tourist trips can be placed into one of these groups.

Leisure Tourism

Holidays

Many leisure trips are taken where the main purpose is to relax, rest, and enjoy. Such trips are also called **holidays**. Most holidays are taken in family groups, couples, or with groups of friends. Sometimes, people may go on a holiday by themselves to be alone or to make new friends. The total duration of such holidays are usually less than two weeks.

In the 1930s, which was when common people began to take holidays more often, nearly every holiday lasted one week and in most cases, the holiday started and ended on a Saturday. One reason for this was that people at that time, could only afford a week of holiday and there were less paid holidays as compared to today, where people get three to four weeks of paid holiday a year. But before WWII, many people had only one week of paid holiday so that they don't go far away from their place of work. However, recently, holidays of two to three weeks have become common and some holidays may even last several months.

Short breaks of not more than one week are becoming popular day by day as second holidays. Many people now have more free time and can afford to take a break more than once a year. This may be over a weekend or during a week. People may find this a way to relax without having to pay for a week's holiday. Alternatively, they may not have the time to go on holiday for a week.

City breaks are also becoming more common. As their name suggests, a city break is a short holiday of two, three or four nights taken to a city which has a number of tourist attractions and facilities. Two popular destinations for city breaks are the cities of Paris and Barcelona. Both have world-famous attractions and plenty of things for tourists to do. Also, they are both very easy to get to. Tourists from the UK can travel to Paris by air, road or rail, using the **Eurostar** service. Also, tourists can choose to combine a visit to central Paris with a day at the Disney resort as well.

Other forms of Leisure Tourism

There are a number of other reasons why people travel for leisure purposes other than for rest and relaxation. These reasons include:

- **Health and fitness tourism** – such as, a cycling tour, rock climbing trip, or a walking holiday
- **Sports tourism** – sports tours can be taken as a spectator, such as a visit to a major sporting event like a Six Nations Rugby International or a motor racing Grand Prix in another country. Or they can be taken as a competitor, perhaps running in a marathon, which may require a stay away from home.
- **Health tourism**– going to a different country to have an operation or medical treatment not available or too expensive in the country where the person usually lives. It is quite common for people to travel in order to recover after a period of illness.
- **Educational tourism**– school and college visits and foreign language exchanges linked directly to study experiences.

Business Tourism

Many people have to travel for business purposes besides making a usual trip to and from where they normally work. This is called business tourism. This may include driving to a meeting or flying to another country for a conference. Business tourism is very important to the travel and tourism industry. It takes place thorough out the year and some businesses like budget hotel chains rely heavily on the income that is generated from business travels.

Business meetings – Every day, many people travel to business meetings. These may or may not involve a stay away from home. Many motorway journeys or rail journeys are made by people attending business meetings and hotels close to motorways and railway stations are regularly used for business meetings.

Trade fairs –Many industry organisations have annual trade fairs which attract thousands of visitors. Companies pay to have a stand or display at the trade fair to show off their products to customers. Businesses also take the opportunity to talk to each other during the event. The Ideal Home Exhibition is an example of trade fair and the largest event for the travel industry is the World Travel Market which takes place in London each autumn.

Conferences and conventions - A wide range of organisations hold an annual conference or convention which may be attended by hundreds of people, many of whom will need to travel and stay away from home, usually for two or three nights. The political parties in the United Kingdom usually hold their conferences in seaside resorts during autumn. Brighton, Bournemouth, and Blackpool are commonly used because of the venues for holding conferences and the resorts have plenty of suitable hotel accommodation available.

Corporate hospitality– It is common for companies to entertain their guests while they are visiting on business. For example, companies could entertain visitors from overseas by providing tickets for a sporting event. Some companies might hire an executive box at a football or rugby match to entertain their guests who are on a business visit.

Business tourism is not all about business! While on a business visit many people will want to take the opportunity to visit the major attractions in a city or area and will build some time for leisure tourism into their visit.

Differences between Business Travel and Leisure Travel

There are some important differences between most business and leisure travel.

- More business travellers travel on their own, whereas, leisure travellers are more likely to travel in groups;
- More business travel is booked at short notice, whereas, most leisure travel is booked some way ahead. The business traveller is more likely to work during the journey, whereas leisure travellers

are more likely to enjoy the scenery or entertainment on the journey, such as films on an aeroplane;

- More business travel occurs during weekdays, whereas weekend travel is more popular with leisure travellers;
- In the past, business travel was booked through specialist business travel agencies. Although these still exist, business travellers are now more likely to use web - based travel companies, such as, Expedia or Travelocity;
- Business travellers are more likely to be experienced travellers and know their way around airports and other facilities; leisure travellers are more likely to be less sure of where they are going; and
- Business travellers do not always travel business class and some leisure travellers do!

Visiting Friends and Relatives (VFR)

In 2005, approximately 66,000,000 tourism trips were taken from UK to other countries and over 10,000,000 were for visiting friends and relatives. And other millions of visits were made for family events, celebrations, or maybe just for a weekend.

Family events might include:

- Weddings;
- Funerals;
- Birthday parties; and
- Anniversaries

In most cases, the tourists return home the same evening, but often, they stay overnight. These tourists do not spend as much because they do not tend to stay in hotels, but they do spend money on a range of products and services which are provided by the travel and tourism industry.

They usually travel to the area where their friends or family live. For example this might involve a flight, car journey or rail travel. They tend to visit attractions while they are on the visit and they may well visit restaurants to eat. They may also use local transport services.

The people who are hosting friends and family members are also likely to take part in travel and tourism activities while they have guests staying with them. They may well join their family members on visits to attractions or visit nearby tourist destinations, making use of transport facilities. The families and friends may also eat out together at restaurants.

Motivating Factors – Wanting to Travel

Generally, people take part in tourist activities because they want to. They may want to go to a sunny beach to relax, enjoy themselves in a different city, visit their family for a special event, or travel to watch their favourite team play in an important match.

Motivating Factors are the things which give people the desire to travel and to make choices about the places they wish to visit. So, all of the things listed above are motivational factors. Other people want to go on an educational visit and some want to travel to take part in an adventure activity; these are also motivational factors.

'Wanderlust' is the name which has been given to people's desire to experience different places and cultures. This may be stronger in some people than others. Many people have a list of destinations they would like to see and experience when they get the opportunity. Some young people make a positive choice not to go into a job before they have travelled to exotic destinations such as Asia and New Zealand to experience different cultures and environments.

It is a strong motivational factor for some people, who desire to travel to places where there is a warmer climate with sunny conditions. This **'sunlust'** is one reason why tourists have left the United Kingdom for Mediterranean resorts each summer, because they are far more likely to have hot, settled, and sunny weather in which to relax on a beach or by a hotel pool.

On the hand, some people may be motivated to experience different and new culture and therefore head towards museums, art galleries and sites of religious interests.

It occurs very often that tourists feel the need to relax and spend time with their families away from the normal routine of life.

Other ways of Putting Tourists into Groups

One interesting way of putting tourists into groups in terms of motivation is to identify:

Adrenaline junkies;
Beach lovers; and
Culture vultures

Adrenaline Junkies— look for adventure and excitement from tourism and want to be climbing mountains, skiing on glaciers, hang-gliding, abseiling, and bungee-jumping, etc.

Culture Vultures – enjoy experiencing the local culture, life style and customs of the destination they are visiting. These people are more likely to attempt to learn some words and phrases of the language of the area they are visiting.

Beach lovers —enjoy relaxing on a beach or around a hotel swimming pool. They relax by taking things easy and soaking up the sunshine.

In reality, most people enjoy doing different things on holiday. The travel and tourism industry has to provide the products and services to meet all these needs.

Enabling Factors – Allowing People to Travel

Enabling factors are those which allow people to travel and to go on holiday. The two most important of these are **money** and **time**. In the past, only rich people travelled anywhere and went on holiday. It is only in the last sixty years or so that most people in the United Kingdom have been able to afford a holiday.

As people in the United Kingdom have become wealthier, increasing numbers of people can now afford to take longer and more expensive holidays. The same thing is happening today in countries such as India and China with more people travelling to different countries.

At the same time, people in the United Kingdom have more time to travel. The amount of paid holiday provided to many people has increased over recent years. This means that for many people, two or more tourism trips each year are now common. Another factor is the fact that the average **life expectancy** has increased and people are living longer in retirement. This group of people has plenty of leisure time and many have money from their pensions. Thus, the so-called **grey market** is an important group of people and the travel and tourism industry need to provide products and services for them. Another factor which has helped to increase the amount of tourism is that it is now much easier to travel to destinations. This can be seen in two ways.

1. Increasing Car Ownership

As more people own cars they are able to use their cars for a range of tourism purposes. These include:

- Driving to an airport before flying to a holiday destination;
- Using a car for a day visit to a seaside resort or countryside area;
- A touring holiday using a car, possibly in Europe, crossing the English Channel using a car ferry;
- A camping or caravanning holiday using the car to tow a caravan or trailer tent; and
- Travelling by car to visit friends and family.

2. Better Transport

There have been many developments in transport in recent years. These include:

- Travelling from the United Kingdom to Europe using the **Channel Tunnel** by car or by the **Eurostar**;
- Cheap air travel is available to more destinations than ever before;
- An increasing network of motorways throughout Europe making car and coach travel easier;
- High speed rail links throughout Europe;
- New bridges and tunnels;
- Many cities now have better transport systems, such as, trams and underground railways; and
- Modern transport is far more comfortable than it was in the past.

Leisure Travel

The Development of Leisure Travel

Many people understand the travel and tourism industry to be only connected with travelling to go on a holiday. The value and importance of **business** travel and visits to **friends and relatives** is often overlooked. Most people in the UK see travel and tourism as only going on holiday in another country, rather than travelling for leisure purposes.

However, travelling for leisure purposes outside the country is a very important part of the travel and tourism industry and has played a vital role in the development of leisure travel in which people take part in.

Package Holidays

‘A package holiday is a holiday sold for a single price which includes travel, accommodation and transfer services.’ The package holiday is one of the most important products of the United Kingdom travel and tourism industry. Package holidays began to be offered about 50 years ago and they have become extremely popular.

As the definition above shows, the holidaymaker pays a single price for the main three parts of their holiday. The package covers the flight and if it is an outbound holiday it also includes the transfer from the airport to the hotel, and the cost of accommodation. Food being available depends upon whether or not the holidaymaker is self-catering. The person booking the package would still have to get to the airport and pay for activities such as short trips and visits to attractions while on holiday.

Before the internet was available it was very difficult for ordinary people to make bookings with hotels in other countries and to make other arrangements. The price of the offer of a holiday with everything included was very attractive, especially to a destination with guaranteed hot sunny weather.

Package holidays are still put together by a tour operator and sold to the public by travel agents. Travel agents advertised the holidays provided by tour operators in brochures and people choose the holiday they wanted.

This ‘traditional’ way of selling package holidays still exists but more and more people buy their holidays by using the internet. Tour operators now sell their products directly to the public.

All package holidays are not sold to coastal destinations only. Packages can be bought for winter sports holidays, city breaks and many other types of holiday. The important feature is that the holiday has been put together or ‘packaged’ by a tour operator who has contracted to buy seats on an aircraft or beds in a hotel. The package price is often cheaper than the holidaymaker can buy each item for individually.

Advantages of a Package Holiday

- As shown above, the package price is often cheaper than a holidaymaker would pay for each item of the package;
- Paying for the holiday as one 'product' means that the person buying the package knew what the holiday was going to cost;
- A lot of the organisation and responsibility for bookings is taken on by the travel agent and tour operator;
- People can see details about the resort and hotel they were visiting in the brochures produced or online descriptions and virtual tours today;
- Very often the tour operator provides a 'rep' in the resort to help with problems and give advice;
- Many people are more confident of going to different countries if they know that most people staying in the hotel are from the UK;
- In the early days of package holidays, people could visit destinations for the first time with guaranteed sunshine in the summer months;
- Entertainment and children's activities are provided by many hotels, as part of the package. Package holidays are very much associated with the term mass tourism. Mass tourism, as the term suggests, involves large volumes of tourists all travelling to the same destination. However, it is important to consider the concept of mass tourism a little more closely;
- Mass tourism destinations are generally located on coasts, with most visitors looking for a 'sun, sea, and sand' holiday;
- Most mass tourism destinations developed as centres of package holidays with a large number of visitors arriving on chartered aircraft and staying in pre-booked hotel accommodation;
- Holidays to mass tourism destinations are mainly organised by private-sector travel agents with few visitors travelling independently; and
- Many mass tourism destinations have a high or peak season in the summer months.

The Disadvantages of Package Holidays

50 years ago when the first package holidays were offered, most ordinary people had not travelled to overseas destinations and had spent their holidays in the United Kingdom where the summer weather could not be guaranteed. Package holidays provided a real alternative to the traditional British seaside holiday.

However over the years as conditions have changed, a number of disadvantages of package holidays have been identified and these include:

- Package holiday - mass market destinations became associated with some of the negative impacts of tourism such as crime and poor behaviour;
- There has been an increasing awareness of the dangers of skin cancer and people do not just want to lie in the sun all day long. People began to look for other types of holiday experience;
- Many people do not want to sit on a crowded beach and want to escape from the crowds;
- Tour operators provided only limited choice of flights and departure times in order to fill their aircraft;

- Tour operators began to charge supplements to the prices quoted in brochures and people felt confused about the price;
- In some cases, people became less satisfied with the standard of the accommodation and food provided; and
- More people became confident travellers and did not like being 'organised' to suit the tour operator's schedules.

Self- Packaged Holidays

Despite package holidays being very popular, more people today do not buy a package holiday from a tour operator or travel agent but are making their own arrangements. This is known as **self-packaging**. Self-packaging refers to the process of making a holiday booking by buying the parts of a holiday (flights and accommodation) as individual items and making a package in the same way a tour operator would.

Increasingly these purchases are made online, although it is still possible to buy the components of the holiday individually using a travel agent.

This process is also called **independent travel** which involves tourists making their own bookings directly with airlines, accommodation providers. It does **not** mean that people are travelling more on their own.

There are a number of reasons for the growth in the number of independent holidays. These include:

- More tourists are confident travellers who are used to travelling to other countries which they may have visited previously;
- More tourists do not feel that the products, provided by tour operators, meet their precise needs or have been disappointed with the experience of a package holiday in the past;
- Tourists find it more pleasurable to construct a trip based around what they particularly want to do, see, and visit, rather than buy a holiday which might not quite meet their needs;
- Those people who own properties abroad or who visit friends and relatives only need to make flight bookings since other components of the trip are already arranged;
- Tourists have far more information available to them in order to research destinations before they travel. There is a greater range of guide books than ever before. Web sites which give reports and advice on accommodation and other travel products are becoming more common; and
- Probably, most importantly, the **internet** has made it possible to make travel bookings online, rather than being obliged to use the services of the travel agent. The internet provides independent travellers with the information they require and the means to book and pay for the flights and accommodation online.

Special Interest Holidays and Sports Tourism

There are many names used to describe different types of leisure tourism where the main purpose is not just rest and relaxation according to most people who see it as being the main purpose of a holiday.

Groups of tourists, families or individuals can take part in a number of tourist activities, which are not only about relaxing and visiting attractions.

These can be divided into three broad groups, which are

- Special interest holidays;
- Activity holidays; and
- Sports tourism

A special interest holiday is simply a holiday where a lot of time on the holiday is spent doing a specific activity. The holidaymaker would be involved in the activity along with other people who share the same interest

Special interest holidays could involve some of the following:

- Bird watching;
- Cooking;
- Photography;
- Religious/pilgrimages; and
- Fishing

The above list just carries a range of special interest holidays that are available. Also, the major portion of the time should be taken up by the main activity. Taking photographs on holidays does not make the holiday a special interest holiday.

There is a programme for each day, with a schedule, which planned all of the activities on a **special interest** holiday. For example, on a bird watching holiday, the group might visit a different location or area each day to look for a particular type of bird.

Although for most of the time the group will be involved in a specific activity related to their interest, they will usually want to do other things such as relax or visit attractions. One of the problems of special interest holidays is the matter of pleasing everybody and making sure that there is a balance between the main interest of the group and doing other things as well. Also, the partners and family members of people on the holiday need to be looked after, as well.

Sports Tourism involves taking a holiday or short break where the main purpose is either to play or watch a particular sport. This could take place in a number of ways. Sports Tourism includes travelling away from home for a day to watch a sporting event. This may be a major cup final or international match.

It could also be a much smaller event. Sports Tourism also includes staying away from home for at least one night in order to watch or take part in a sporting event.

A few of the major sports with which Sports Tourism is related include:

- Rugby tours;
- Cricket tours;
- Football;
- Hockey;
- Athletics;
- Cycling holidays;
- Fishing holidays;
- Golf holidays;
- Motor racing; and
- Tennis

The list above is just a small selection of sports which could be played during a sports tour holiday. However, it is important to understand that watching or participating in the sport is the main reason for taking part in the holiday. Playing one round of golf during a week's stay at a beach hotel is not seen as Sports Tourism.

Short Break and City Break Holidays

Short breaks are essentially a holiday which lasts less than one week. In fact, a holiday of one night away from home can technically be called a short break. Usually, a short break involves a holiday of between two and four nights.

As holidays became more popular, after the Second World War, most people took a holiday of one or two weeks. At most seaside resorts in the United Kingdom, as well as, the new destinations in the Mediterranean it was common for holidaymakers to stay for seven or fourteen nights with Saturday being the most popular 'changeover' day when one group left and the next group arrived.

It is simply not possible to list every type of short break holiday. Many sporting holidays and activity holidays are short breaks, because they last usually less than one week. Similarly, visits to National Parks for weekend breaks over Bank Holiday weekends to take part in activities, such as walking or cycling, are short breaks.

Changes in Travel and Tourism

It is important to understand that the travel and tourism industry is constantly changing. These changes are of two types:

- Long term changes in lifestyle or 'trends' which take place over a number of years.
- Short term changes which occur when people react to a particular event or set of circumstances. For example, a terrorist attack or an extreme weather event.

Changes in Lifestyle

Increased Affluence:

It is true that generally people have more money than they did in the past to spend on holidays and other forms of travel. A hundred years ago, few people could afford a proper holiday. Over time, holidays to British seaside resorts, then European destinations became affordable for more and more people. Today, holidays are taken to many long haul destinations. Of course, not everybody can afford the most luxurious holidays, but it is true that most people today can afford some form of holiday each year.

Environmental Awareness:

The impact that travelling (by all forms) has on the environment has become an issue for everyone. Most forms of transport produce air pollution and other harmful effects and likewise, we are also aware that air travel has a huge impact on the environment as it leaves 'carbon footprint.'

As a result, people have now avoiding air travel and are encouraged to switch to other environmentally ways to travel. This has an impact on not only how people travel but also how they reach the destination. In modern cities, they now have schemes such as park and ride, which basically discourages the use of cars. Likewise, other cities have either traffic-free areas or have imposed high car park charges. Tourist trains are often used to take people from one part of a destination to another, saving the use of motor cars.

Changing Family Structures:

Social changes over the last fifty years or so have resulted in a greater range of family structures. Today, there is no such thing as the 'typical family' of two parents and their children. The travel and tourism industry is now providing more holiday choices for single parents travelling with their children as well as for gay couples.

Changes in Transport:

Transport is being continually developed to make it easier and quicker to travel form one place to another. Faster trains, larger aircraft and more comfortable coaches all make transport easier, more efficient and more convenient.

Changes in Technology:

Developments in technology have caused two major changes in travel and tourism. Firstly, through the **internet**, people now book their travel and holidays directly from their home using the website of a tourist company, hotel, or airline. They do not have to go to a high street travel agent.

Also, new technology has created a different sort of experience for tourists. For example, built attractions such as theme parks, as well as modern museums rely heavily on technology to excite, inform, or entertain the visitor.

Types of Tourist Destinations

Tourist destinations can be divided into three broad categories. These are:

- Coastal areas – where tourists enjoy relaxing on the beaches and other activities connected with the sea'
- Countryside areas- where tourists can undertake a range of outdoor activities, including winter sports in mountain areas; and
- Tourist towns and cities – which may have significant historic or cultural attractions or be important for business travellers.

Coastal Areas

Why do tourists visit coastal areas?

- In the UK, early tourists believed that the sea air and bathing in seawater was good for a person's health and coastal towns, such as, Brighton became popular;
- Coastal areas are often cooler than places inland. So, on hot days, people go to the beach to cool off and swim in the sea;
- Many people enjoy relaxing on a beach. In the past, sunbathing was very popular, although today tourists are more aware of the dangers of too much sun;
- There is a wide range of activities which can be undertaken on a beach or in the sea; and
- Coastal areas are appealing to many tourists, because of the landscape of cliffs and beaches.

Countryside Areas

Throughout the United Kingdom and Europe, there are a number of countryside areas which attract a large number of tourists, mainly, because of the quality of scenery and the range of natural attractions such as lakes, mountains and hills found within these areas. Very often, countryside areas also contain attractive towns and villages. In popular areas these settlements provide accommodation such as camp sites, small hotels and bed and breakfast. The farming landscape of fields, crops and animals can also form part of the attraction of certain areas.

The Factors Affecting the Appeal of Leisure and Tourism Destinations

There are a number of factors which affect the appeal of tourist destinations. These work in combination to make certain destinations more or less appealing for different types of tourists.

The main factors are:

- Location and accessibility;
- Natural attractions;
- Built attractions;
- Facilities;
- Climate;
- Culture and heritage; and
- Events and entertainment

Also, when studying destinations, it is important to consider:

- The impacts of tourism at the destination;
 - The measures taken to encourage sustainable tourism;
 - How the destination is marketed; and
 - The differences between the attitude and culture of local people and tourists visiting the destination
- Successful destinations attract large numbers of tourists for different reasons.

Location and Accessibility

Every tourist wants to reach their destination with as less inconvenience as possible. If you reach without any hiccups along the way, it increases the appeal of the destination. And since it's a totally new place, they also want to reach their destination as quickly as possible by their own choice of transport, because it adds to the greater appeal of the place. This is true in the case of a business traveller who travels at short notices.

For these tourists, a short and trouble-free travel time is extremely important. There are a number of factors which affect the ease of reaching a destination and consequently, its appeal.

These include:

- The time taken to reach the destination;
- The number of changes in the mode of transport required;
- The cost of transport to the destination;
- The reliability of the transport available; and
- The availability of different forms of transport at the destination.

Time

The time taken is an important consideration in the choice of destination, especially if the tourist is only staying for a short period. In some cases, the destination may be appealing because it only takes a short amount of time to travel there. Certain countryside destinations are excellent for weekend breaks because they are accessible from a neighbouring large city.

The Cost of Transport

Certain destinations can increase their appeal because the cost of reaching them is much less than expected. At the same time, some destinations will lose their appeal if the cost of travel to them increases a lot. Recently there have been increases in the cost of aircraft fuel and destinations such as the USA and Europe have become more expensive because of the exchange rate.

The Availability of Different Forms of Transport

A destination's appeal is usually increased if tourists have a number of choices in how to get to the destination. The tourist will then be able to make a choice regarding what method of transport suits them according to their circumstances.

Tourists from the United Kingdom travelling to Paris have a range of choices:

- they can fly to one of two airports which serve the city;
- they can take the Eurostar train from London;
- they can drive using the shuttle service through the Channel Tunnel; and
- they can take a ferry from a choice of channel ports

What Transport is Available at the Destination

There is a wide range of transport available for tourists when they reach their destination. These include:

- Public transport systems, such as, underground and metro systems in cities;
- Local bus services in countryside areas;
- Special tourist buses providing sightseeing tours;
- Taxis;
- Tourist trains taking people from one part of a destination to another;
- River cruise and water taxis; and
- Cable cars and chairlifts

Using different forms of transport may add to the appeal of visiting a destination.

Natural Attractions

Natural attractions are specific named features which appeal to tourists because of the nature of the landform or the beauty of the landscape in which the attraction is set.

Natural attractions include:

- Lakes;
- Rivers and landforms, such as, waterfalls and gorges;
- Caves;
- Volcanic features;
- Mountains; and
- Coastal features

Climate

Climate is one of the most important factors which affects the appeal of a destination. The main climatic factors are **temperature, sunshine, rainfall (precipitation), and humidity.**

Another factor which increased the popularity of Mediterranean resorts was the temperature of the sea. Generally, a hot climate leads to a warmer sea and more people enjoy swimming in the sea when the water is warmer.

Temperature

As indicated above, the average temperature of a destination often has a significant impact on its appeal. Leisure tourists enjoy doing a range of activities while on holiday. People enjoy a range of sporting activities, walking around cities, visiting theme parks, and adventure activities, as well as, sunbathing on a beach. Certain temperatures are desirable for different types of activity. Whereas, a temperature of 25 to 30 degrees Centigrade will be hot and feel comfortable for sunbathing, it would be too warm to play many sports and walking around a city would be

Culture and Heritage

Culture

The culture of a tourism destination is often difficult to explain because it is the combination of so many things.

The culture of an area is a combination of:

- Religion and beliefs;
- Food and drink;
- Arts, theatre, and music; and
- Language

One of many definitions of the word culture is 'the way of life of a society'. Certainly, one of the things which appeal to many tourists is to experience the '**local culture**' or way of life of the destination, which is being visited.

Some tourists will make a greater attempt to experience the culture of a destination than others. A tourist to whom the culture of a destination has a strong appeal will try to do some or all of the things below:

- Find out about the history of the destination before the visit;
- Attempt to learn a few words of the local language;
- Eat in locally run restaurants and eating food from the local area;
- Shop in markets and other places where the inhabitants of the destination shop;
- Visit important religious and historical sites in the locality; ad
- Visit museums and art galleries in the locality

Some tourists find strong appeal in interacting with the locals and appreciating their culture. While others may choose to eat or shop for local manufactured goods and not pay attention to the local culture. The thing that may appeal to the visitors could be that they actually want to learn and observe the locals' way of practicing the things that are done differently in their own area.

Heritage

Heritage refers to the history of the destination. Some destinations have a very interesting history and buildings or important sites have become important attractions. Also, famous people who are associated with the destination become part of the heritage, such as, at Stratford- Upon-Avon with its association with William Shakespeare.

Heritage plays an important role for those tourists who do not want to be entertained at theme parks but are eager to investigate about the different culture of that area. Likewise, it gives the tourist a chance to get to know about the local area. Many buildings and sites are conserved so that they remain in their original form and not be damaged by the tourists. This is one way of maintaining the heritage of the place.

Events and Entertainment

The main features that attract the appeal of a tourist are the events and festivals of the particular place. All around the world, thousands of events take place and it only adds to the appeal of the place if the tourist chooses that destination because of that event. For example, a rugby international match held in Cardiff increases the appeal of Cardiff as a tourism destination for those who want to travel to the game. Some visitors will stay the night, others will travel from outside the area, and so they are called tourists as well. However, for those tourists, who are not in Cardiff for the rugby event, will lose interest while the matches take place.

Every event lasts for a specific period of time. Whether it's a sporting event, which lasts for a few hours or an arts festival lasting for over a month. All the events have a schedule for all the days and timings, may well have an entry fee and so on.

Events can be classified as:

- Sporting events;
- Arts, musical events, and festivals; and
- Religious and cultural festivals and events

Further Reading:

- ✓ *Clare Inkson, Lynn Minnaert, (2012), Tourism Management: An Introduction*
- ✓ *Fiona Laing, Ian Roberts, (2005), Btec Introduction Hospitality, Travel and Tourism*
- ✓ *R. Heyns, M. Boekstein, J. Spencer, (2000), Introduction to Travel and Tourism*
- ✓ *Leonard J Lickorish, Carson L Jenkins, (1997), Introduction to Tourism*