



**Manchester
Metropolitan
University**

Graeupl, Alice (2018) Book Review: Tourism and leisure behaviour in an ageing world. [UNSPECIFIED]

Downloaded from: <http://e-space.mmu.ac.uk/624978/>

Version: Accepted Version

Publisher: Taylor & Francis (Routledge)

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/11745398.2018.1556310>

Please cite the published version

<https://e-space.mmu.ac.uk>

Tourism and Leisure Behaviour in an Ageing World, I. Patterson, Wallingford, CABI, 2018, 229pp., US\$126 (hardback), ISBN: 978-1-78639-094-3

Tourism and Leisure Behaviour in an Ageing World by Ian Patterson, is a relevant and up-to-date version of the author's previous book titled *Growing Older: Tourism and Leisure Behaviour of Older Adults* (CABI, 2006). This new edition provides an overview of the most recent research regarding tourist behaviour and the leisure needs of older adults. It is a welcome addition to the tourist behaviour literature, most of which concentrates on the conduct of younger tourists, even though we live in a time with an increasing ageing population. Patterson's book covers market trends relating to the older market, offers a deeper understanding of the older tourism and leisure market, examines growing areas such as independent travel and health and wellness tourism as well as presents case studies of tourism and leisure organisations already catering to the needs of the older market. Case studies in the book discuss different travel markets, ranging from adventure and education tourism to cruise and cultural tourism. This interesting range of examples reflects the global nature and importance of this particular topic.

The first set of chapters provides the context in terms of socio-demographics and makes a strong argument for the different needs of the older market segments. What particularly resonates here is the topic of subjective age, which is something that is often overlooked yet an important aspect when providing information or designing experiences for older travellers. The chapters highlight the importance of different stages of motivations in the older market segments as well as the barriers to travel that remain, e.g. social factors (lack of a travel companion) and health related issues. One particular issue emphasised is the role of technological trends. The general perception is that older travellers are not well versed in technology use and refuse to use it; however, this is an incorrect assumption. Many senior travellers are using technology e.g. the Internet to collect information and make decisions (which is coincidentally highlighted in my own PhD work), nevertheless the market is slow in acknowledging this progress and keeps focusing their technological developments on the younger market segments. While older travellers might not feel as comfortable as younger generations in making bookings online, they are certainly using technology in order to find information.

The latter part of the book focuses on different travel markets and showcases examples of how they cater to the older markets. What particularly stood out to me here was the chapter on *Adventure Tourism and the Older Traveller*, as this is not a type of tourism that is usually associated with this specific age group. In this chapter, Patterson first introduces the reader to adventure tourism and its characteristics and then creates a connection to baby boomers, and recent retirees and their desire for self-fulfilling activities instead of being a passive spectator on mass tourist trips. The argument spans from the travel experience itself being a learning adventure to craving more and more new experiences that consist of more substantial adventure components, most of them involving a nature-based activity that can be classified as soft, rather than hard adventure. The destinations chosen also play a big role in these situations as a once in a lifetime trip becomes more significant at a more advanced age. The chapter concludes with examples from travel and tourism companies who have embraced the older market segments and are providing specialised trips or experiences for senior travellers. The other travel market that I would like to highlight here is perhaps a more obvious one, *Health and Wellness tourism*. This type of tourism can be viewed from both a medical and social perspective. On the one hand we have the search for unconventional forms of treatments to sustain physical, mental and spiritual well-being, on the other hand levels of social engagement can help to increase self-esteem and confidence. Emotional and psychological well-being were found to be vital for ageing well, increased social interaction and companionship have a positive impact on overall health.

The book concludes with a look towards the (more immediate) future where baby boomer travellers are increasingly accounting for a larger share of travel related spending due to them being healthier and wealthier than previous cohorts. They are also predicted to remain the main consumers of luxury travel, coach tours and ocean cruises. This increased demand puts pressure on the industry to supply more specialised experiences for special interest groups. Concluding thoughts include recommendations for tourism providers on how to cater for older travellers.

Where this book really excels and focuses its strengths is Patterson's ability to pull together literature from a variety of sources and time periods to show a development in the market. This plus the addition of numerous statistics from reputable sources really cements this book as a one of its kind. The only thing that I think could be improved is the inclusion of a more

global view of the ageing population as the book mostly focuses on the Western world. While a universal view would have delivered some interesting arguments, it is understandable why the author chose to focus on the parts of the world where the ageing populations are more prevalent at present.

This book fills a gap in the sense of the intersection of tourist behaviour and different life stages, creating an awareness of the importance of the socio-demographic shift in the Western world. This dynamic and complex topic provides an interesting premise for understanding the often-complicated issues surround tourist behaviour in diverse market segments. It also gives a voice to a significant, yet mostly ignored market segment.

While maybe not particularly written with the intent of being a textbook, I do believe that there is value in the book as a teaching aid. In particular, tourist behaviour focused modules have too often focused on the generic market segments and younger life stages while often leaving out senior travellers despite their higher disposable incomes, free time and general sense of wanderlust. The case studies and examples presented in the chapters focus on particular travel markets are of particular importance here, especially looking at adventure tourism as an example as that is one type of tourist that most people would probably not associate with an older market segment.

Overall, I would recommend this book in particular to scholars who are interested in furthering their understanding of tourist behaviour and non-traditional market segments, students (both under- and postgraduate) studying current issues in tourist behaviour, as well as tourism industry practitioners who might be losing out on a lucrative market segment simply due to lack of awareness.