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An Expansion of Typology of Cultural Heritage Visitors

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to expand the typology of cultural heritage tourists. Cultural heritage tourists are either compared with other types of tourists, or are segmented based on cultural experience and activities. However, these tourists are not compared within the existing tourists typology framework including other tourists who visit cultural sites and events. This study is based on a survey conducted with a randomly selected 1,938 tourists visiting 17 cultural heritage sites and three events in Arizona, USA. This study segmented the cultural heritage tourists into two groups and five sub groups based on their most influential reasons for taking the trip. This study suggested that tourists visiting cultural heritage attractions can be divided into two groups, “true cultural tourist” and “spurious cultural tourist.” Further, true cultural tourists can be sub grouped into two types, “cultural site”, and “cultural event” tourists. Similarly, spurious cultural tourists can be further divided into three sub-groups, “nature”, “sport”, and “business” tourists. Comparisons among these groups in terms of demographics, importance of attractions, and motivations suggested that two types of cultural heritage tourists are different from each other.

INTRODUCTION

Culture and heritage are important motives for tourism. Studies in recent years have suggested a substantial percentage of tourists seek cultural and heritage experiences. The Travel Industry Association (TIA), for example, has estimated that two-thirds of US adult travelers included a visit to a cultural or heritage site or attraction (Silberberg, 1995). In some regions with high numbers of cultural attractions, cultural heritage tourism is especially important such as Arizona where estimates have suggested at least half of visitors go to historic sites (Shilling 2000). Though these types of estimates indicate that the cultural heritage market is a significant niche, one criticism of the studies has been that every tourist who visits a cultural, historic, arts, or heritage site or event is classified as a cultural heritage tourist. Because tourists often engage in a wide variety of activities, simply attending a culturally oriented venue does not necessarily suggest that an individual’s primary motivation is a cultural or heritage experience. Nyaupane, White and Budruk (2006), for example, found that visitors to three cultural sites fell into three motive segments with varying emphases on cultural experiences.

To date, the definition of cultural tourist remains vague (Aluza et al., 1998). Because the primary focus of market segmentation and target marketing is to profile and understand visitors to better meet their needs and to understand visitors’ relationships with attractions, the ability to

more precisely describe and understand groups of visitors is very important (Bloom, 2005). Motive or benefit based segmentation can be especially helpful toward this end (Andereck and Caldwell 1994; McKercher 2002; McKercher and du Cros 2003; Ryan and Huyron 2000). Studies have been done to examine the differences between cultural heritage visitors and other visitors (Martin, Bridges and Valliere 2004) and to create typology of cultural heritage tourists (McKercher 2002). However, there is a lack of research on different types of cultural tourists and its comparison with other tourists visiting cultural sites and events. The purpose of this paper is to more clearly define the nature of the cultural heritage visitors by expanding the typology of cultural tourists.

RESEARCH METHODS

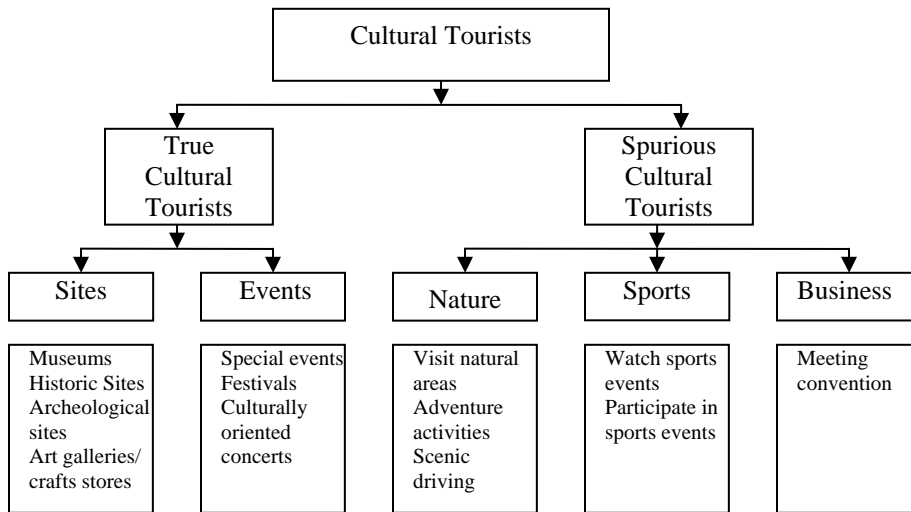
This study is based on a survey conducted from October 2004 through September 2005 including both in-state and out-of-state (including international) tourists, all visiting cultural heritage tourism attractions in Arizona. Seventeen diverse sites and three events were enlisted to ensure representation of the variety of cultural heritage attractions and geographic locations in Arizona. The focus of this study was cultural heritage tourism, with an emphasis on visitors to sites interpreting Arizona history and culture, including those with a Native American and/or Hispanic focus, rather than the visual or performing arts.

Visitors to the sites were sampled over the course of one year. Target sample sizes were 200 at each site, 60% of which were targeted to be out-of-state visitors. To draw a representative sample of visitors, 20 randomly selected survey days were selected throughout the year. A total of 10 prospective respondents was the daily target for sampling, for a total of 200 questionnaires per site. At the three events, survey teams randomly selected participants for the study during the event. At one site, researchers collected data at five two-day time periods throughout the year. A one page on-site questionnaire was completed at the venue and prospective respondents were given a mail-back questionnaire to take home and send in later. Reminder postcards were sent to the homes of non-respondents about two weeks after the initial contact, with a second questionnaire with a cover letter and reply envelope being sent to non-respondents another two weeks later. During the year-long survey period, 1,980 out-of-state visitors were contacted with 1,046 returning their questionnaires for a response rate of 54 percent. The response rate for in-state visitors was 44 percent, with 892 returns out of 2,035 questionnaires. Total response rate was 48 percent, with a sample of 1,938.

FINDINGS

To begin to address the primary purpose of this paper, respondents were segmented into two primary groups and five subgroups (Figure 1). The primary group of true cultural tourists, subdivided into two sub-groups, site (n=338) and event (n=158) visitors, was defined as those who stated the most influential reason for taking the trip was participation in cultural, arts or heritage activities, or attending a special event or festival. The second primary group included the remaining visitors and was named spurious cultural tourists. This group consisted of three subgroups again defined based on most influential activity including: nature (visit the Grand Canyon, drive to view scenery, natural area activities, adventure activities, n=422), sports (watch sports events, play golf, participate in other sports activities, n=58), and business (business engagement or convention, n=67).

Figure 1. Typology of Cultural Tourists



Following development of the conceptual typology, the five groups were compared on several variables using Chi-square and ANOVA tests. First, several demographic variables were found to differ among the groups as were several trip related characteristics (Table 1). All variables tested demonstrated significant differences except gender and income. Both groups of cultural tourists, as well as nature tourists, tended to be middle aged while sports tourists were somewhat older, and business visitors somewhat younger than the others. Business visitors had somewhat higher education levels (70% college degree) than others as did sports tourists (62% college degree), followed by nature tourists and cultural site tourists (60% college), and lastly by event tourists (52% college degree). Cultural event visitors were more likely to be Hispanic than the other types of tourists. True cultural tourists in general were less likely to have children in their household as well as being less likely to have a spouse or partner than others. True cultural visitors were also more likely to be in-state while most other travelers were from out-of-state. Among out-of-state visitors, event visitor were very likely to have visited Arizona before as were sports tourists, while nature tourists were least likely to be repeat visitors. Sports tourists had a very long length of stay as many were likely winter visitors, cultural site and nature tourists had moderate length of stay, and business travelers and event tourists had the shortest length of stay on average. Finally, among in-state visitors, cultural visitors in general traveled the shortest distance to the attraction.

A second series of tests were done to compare the five segments with respect to the importance of specific types of cultural attractions using ANOVA and significant differences were found for all of the types of attractions (based on a five point importance scale) (Table 2). As might be expected, visitors to cultural sites ranked the highest among five segments for all of the cultural attractions, especially museums (m=3.62), historic sites (m=3.67), cultural sites (m=3.44) and Native American reservations (m=2.69). Event visitors, of course, ranked highest on special events/festivals (m=3.92) as well as on culturally oriented concerts (m=2.73), but unexpectedly ranked only three types of attractions similar to site visitors (theater, art/craft venues, and local/ethnic food) and the rest significantly lower than site visitors. Nature tourists were the least likely to rank events, theater, concerts, art galleries/craft stores and local/ethnic food as important but reported visits to archaeological (m=3.07) and historic sites (m=3.45) equally important as cultural site tourists. Sports tourists and business tourists tended to fall in the middle for most of the attraction types.

Table 1. Differences in the five types of tourists visiting cultural sites/events by demographic characteristics

Demographic Characteristics	Cultural Sites (N=334)	Cultural Events (N=156)	Nature (N=419)	Sports (N=58)	Business (N=66)	Total (N=1033)
Gender						
Male	39.5%	32.1%	40.1%	34.5%	43.9%	38.6%
Female	60.5%	67.9%	59.9%	65.5%	56.1%	61.4%
	$\chi^2 (4, N=1033) = 4.55, p=.337$					
Age categories						
30 and under	5.1%	3.9%	4.6%	6.9%	.0%	4.5%
31-40	9.3%	7.2%	6.3%	3.4%	10.6%	7.5%
41-50	14.2%	14.5%	20.1%	17.2%	37.9%	18.3%
51-60	28.3%	34.9%	27.6%	20.7%	34.8%	29.0%
61-70	31.6%	30.9%	30.0%	41.4%	13.6%	30.3%
70 and older	11.4%	8.6%	11.4%	10.3%	3.0%	10.4%
	$\chi^2 (20, N=1021) = 45.02, p=.001$					
Education						
<than high school	.6%	1.3%	.7%	1.7%	3.0%	1.0%
High school grad.	11.4%	5.1%	9.6%	1.7%	6.1%	8.8%
Some college/ tech school	27.5%	40.8%	29.2%	34.5%	21.2%	30.2%
Four year degree	31.7%	27.4%	30.8%	20.7%	33.3%	30.2%
Masters degree	20.7%	19.7%	23.6%	32.8%	24.2%	22.6%
Doctoral degree	8.1%	5.7%	6.0%	8.6%	12.1%	7.2%
	$\chi^2 (20, N=1030) = 32.82, p=.03$					
Ethnicity						
Hispanic	5.5%	16.4%	3.4%	3.4%	4.6%	6.1%
Non Hispanic	94.5%	83.6%	96.6%	96.6%	95.4%	93.9%
	$\chi^2 (4, N=1016) = 34.84, p=.001$					
Children under 18 yrs						
Yes	14.7%	16.8%	18.2%	20.7%	39.7%	18.3%
No	85.3%	83.2%	81.8%	79.3%	60.3%	81.7%
	$\chi^2 (4, N=1015) = 22.50, p=.001$					
Spouse						
Yes	79.2%	74.5%	86.9%	83.9%	83.1%	82.1%
No	20.8%	25.5%	13.1%	16.1%	16.9%	17.9%
	$\chi^2(4, N=1033)=14.76, p<.01$					
Residence						
Instate	68.3%	67.1%	33.9%	41.4%	19.4%	49.6%
Out of state	31.7%	32.9%	66.1%	58.6%	80.6%	50.4%
	$\chi^2 (4, N=1043) = 134.52, p=.001$					
Visited AZ before						
Yes	81.1%	94.1%	67.3%	88.9%	79.6%	75.5%
No	18.9%	5.9%	32.7%	11.1%	20.4%	24.5%
	$\chi^2 (4, N=530) = 25.58, p=.001$					
Instate tourists miles traveled	64.64	67.94	151.70	81.50	155.42	F=17.71***
Length of time in AZ (days)	12.09	6.13	13.39	23.26	7.16	F=3.79**

Table 2. Comparison of five groups of tourists with importance of cultural attractions

Importance of cultural attractions for visiting the sites	Cultural Sites	Cultural Events	Nature	Sports	Business	F value
Museums	3.62 ^a	2.60 ^b	2.98 ^c	3.12 ^{abc}	2.87 ^{bc}	23.99***
Historic sites	3.67 ^a	2.73 ^b	3.45 ^{ac}	3.13 ^{bc}	3.18 ^{abc}	17.70***
Cultural sites	3.44 ^a	2.79 ^b	3.12 ^b	2.89 ^b	2.87 ^b	9.28***
Archaeological sites	3.03 ^a	2.26 ^b	3.07 ^a	2.71 ^{ab}	2.60 ^{ab}	11.73***
Native American Reservations	2.69 ^a	2.10 ^b	2.51 ^a	2.42 ^{ab}	2.60 ^{ab}	5.03**
Special events/festivals	2.68 ^a	3.92 ^b	1.90 ^c	2.60 ^{ad}	2.10 ^{dc}	76.69***
Theater	1.80 ^a	1.82 ^{ab}	1.55 ^b	2.00 ^a	1.66 ^{ab}	4.87**
Culturally oriented concerts	2.06 ^a	2.73 ^b	1.57 ^c	1.80 ^{ac}	1.82 ^{ac}	28.76***
Art galleries/crafts stores	2.77	2.57	2.41	2.80	2.43	4.64**
Local/ethnic food	2.79	2.82	2.47	2.56	2.58	4.38**

*significant at 0.05 level, **significant at 0.01 level, ***significant at 0.001 level

^{a, b, c} indicate significantly different groups at .05 level.

Finally, ANOVA tests were conducted to determine group differences with respect to push motives for visiting Arizona (based on a five point importance scale) (Table 3). Differences were found for every motive item except one, spend time with family. The primary differentiating motive for cultural site visitors was learn about Arizona history/culture which they ranked highest (m=3.71) while event visitors were highest on be entertained (m=3.30) as well as have fun (m=4.08). Both the true cultural tourist groups ranked experience other cultures the same (m=3.50) and higher than the spurious cultural visitors groups. Nature tourists tended to have the most diverse motives ranking many high, but higher than all other groups for experience nature (m=3.82) and view scenery (m=4.32). Sports tourists were primarily interested in having fun (m=4.31), experiencing the nice weather (m=3.63), and doing many things (m=3.47). Business travelers tended to fall in the middle for all motives, but ranked more general motives including have fun (m=3.66), see interesting sights (m=3.60), and viewing scenery (m=3.45) as the most important.

Table 3. Comparison of five groups of tourists with reasons for visiting

Reasons for visiting Arizona	Cultural Sites	Cultural Events	Nature	Sports	Business	F
Experience new and different places	3.62 ^a	2.99 ^b	3.94 ^c	3.62 ^{ac}	3.28 ^{ab}	20.19***
Learn about AZ history/culture	3.71 ^a	3.14 ^b	3.36 ^b	3.46 ^{ab}	2.95 ^b	11.88***
Have fun	3.88 ^a	4.08 ^{abc}	4.07 ^{ac}	4.31 ^c	3.66 ^b	6.12***
Get away from everyday life	3.32	3.32	3.60	3.49	3.20	3.37**
For excitement/adventure	2.93 ^{ab}	2.79 ^a	3.17 ^b	3.25 ^{ab}	2.67 ^{ab}	4.75***
Take it easy/rest/relax	3.38 ^{ab}	3.38 ^{ab}	3.72 ^{ab}	2.88 ^a	3.30 ^b	4.89***
For the nice weather	2.93 ^a	3.35 ^{bc}	3.27 ^{bc}	3.63 ^c	2.76 ^{ab}	7.61***
Do many different things/activities	3.17	3.02	3.26	3.47	2.83	3.28*
Experience nature	3.15 ^a	2.79 ^a	3.82 ^b	3.27 ^a	3.00 ^a	26.69***
Be physically active	2.88 ^a	2.71 ^a	3.17 ^b	3.06 ^{ab}	2.67 ^{ab}	5.76***
See interesting sights	3.94 ^a	3.53 ^b	4.20 ^c	3.90 ^{abc}	3.60 ^{ab}	15.65***
View scenery	3.61 ^a	3.13 ^b	4.32 ^c	3.65 ^{ab}	3.45 ^{ab}	41.84***
Experience other cultures	3.50	3.51	3.28	3.10	3.16	3.28*
Be entertained	2.84 ^a	3.30 ^b	2.58 ^a	2.85 ^{ab}	2.84 ^{ab}	9.64***

*significant at 0.05 level, **significant at 0.01 level, ***significant at 0.001 level

^{a, b, c} indicate significantly different groups at .05 level.

APPLICATION OF RESULTS

Most studies of cultural heritage tourists have considered all visitors to a cultural or heritage attraction as cultural tourists. Similar to Nyaupane et al. (2006), this study suggests visitors to these types of sites and events have a variety of characteristics and interests and should not all be segmented into the cultural heritage tourism market. Even among a group of visitors to cultural heritage attractions, there appears to be two major subgroups of cultural visitors, those who are “true” cultural tourists with a strong interest in cultural attractions, activities and motives, and a group of “spurious” cultural tourists that have an interest in visiting cultural attractions but are primarily motivated by other

interests and activities. There are even substantial differences between the event and cultural site visitors within the true cultural heritage tourism market.

Because market segmentation is attempting to determine meaningful group differences to develop target markets, the more well defined a market the better the ability of tourism marketers and managers to direct appealing promotional messages to markets and develop products and services to meet visitors' needs. Cultural site visitors would probably respond to promotions that feature cultural sites specifically and emphasize the educational nature of the experience. Event visitors would be more responsive to event specific promotions that focus on the entertainment value of events. As well, in-state promotional campaigns emphasizing cultural sites and events would likely be effective.

Finally, to appeal to spurious cultural tourists, messages that emphasize other types of experiences but with culture as a component to diversify and add interest to the visit would be effective. Nature tourists in particular seem to have a wide variety of interests, and including cultural, historical and archaeological sites as part of the message could prove worthwhile as these types of sites are often found together with natural attractions.

DISCUSSION

This study expanded the typology of cultural heritage tourists. Cultural heritage tourists can be divided into two groups: true cultural tourists and spurious cultural tourists. True cultural tourists' primary reasons for taking the trip is participation in cultural, arts and heritage activities, or attending a special event or festival, whereas spurious cultural tourists' most influential activity is not culture, but nature, sports, or business. The true culture tourists are subdivided into two groups: cultural site tourists and cultural event tourists. Similarly, spurious tourists are further divided into three groups: nature tourists, sport tourists, and business tourists. Cultural heritage tourists are often considered as a homogenous market. However, this study found that cultural site and cultural events tourists are very different in terms of demographics, importance of different types of cultural attractions, and motivations. Interestingly, in many aspects of the importance of cultural attractions, culture sites tourists are more similar to nature tourists than cultural events tourists. This suggests that there are some overlappings between cultural sites and nature tourists, particularly for visiting historic and archeological sites. In terms of demographics, event tourists stand out from other types of tourists. Event tourists are more likely to be in-state, tend to stay shorter, more Hispanic than other types of tourists. Perhaps, this is because of the types of events organized in this study area. Therefore, further research is needed in other states and countries to confirm this typology framework.

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