

A Study on Changing Guest Profile and the Challenges in Fulfilling Guest Expectations of Generation Y and Z

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Abstract

This study was conducted to analyse the changing guest profile in the tourism industry. Tourism industry is one of the most popular industries in India. To conduct the research, the challenges faced by the tourism sector to meet the expectations of generation Y and generation Z were analysed. Generation Y and generation Z have different expectations for their tour. Generation Y and generation Z both are likely to enjoy their tour with music, adventure activities, bourn fire, games, etc. The tourism agencies prepare an itinerary with almost all the activities that are to be performed by the generation Y and generation Z. It is certainly challenging for the tourism industry to meet the expectations of both the generations. The generation Y and Z expect to do all the adventure-oriented things such as skiing, scuba diving, cliff jumping, river rafting, ski diving, etc. To conduct the study, a simple questionnaire was prepared for the respondents who belonged to generation Y and generation Z, and also, returned from a tour within past 0 to 15 days. They were asked to rate their trip on a scale of 1 to 3 on the basis of meeting expectations, where 3 means extremely agree, 2 means do not know, and 1 means extremely disagree. The results showed that expectations of generation Y and generation Z are getting fulfilled. Most of the participants said that their experience was extremely good. The study concludes that the expectations of generation Y and generation Z are fulfilled by the tourism industry.

1. Introduction

Tourism is among the fastest growing industries in the world and there is no denying that this industry faces various challenges. Firms in the industry face extreme competition from their rivals. One of the main purposes of the tourism industry is to meet the expectations of the tourists. If the industry keeps fulfilling expectations on giving unforgettable experience then industry will keep growing at a good pace. Now, one of the new challenges the industry is facing currently is fulfilling the expectation of generation Y and generation Z. Generation Y contains the population of people who were born between 1978 to 1994 (Sheahan, 2006). Generation Z includes the population of people who were born between 1995 to 2010 (White, 2017). The expectation of this generation from tourism is relatively different from the generation X. Generation Y and generation Z like adventure tourism the most and expect good cleanliness, hygienic food, adventure with significant safety, quality pictures and good comfort. Keeping these things in mind, the tourism industry has developed many adventurous activities tied up with good hotels and restaurants to provide as much as good quality services to tourists from these generations. It was observed that tourism industry is continuously working on providing all the good quality service to their tourists. They create new adventure activities on almost all the tourist-oriented destinations whether it is a hill station, a beach, or a desert. Adventurous activities such as rock climbing, skiing, rafting, scuba diving, wakeboarding, kayaking, trekking, desert sailing, etc. are favourite of generation y and generation z (Sheahan, 2006).

Aim: Researching the changing guest profile in the tourism industry and analysing whether the expectations of generation Y and generation Z are getting fulfilled.

The main objectives of this paper are:

- To examine the changing guest profile in the tourism industry.
- To examine the challenges of tourism industry specially from modern generation.
- To examine whether expectation of generation Y and generation Z are met by the industry.

2. Literature Review

A study on the changing expectations of millennials and post millennials from tourism was conducted by researcher Salvatore Monaco (2018). He studied the changed expectations of generation Y and generation Z from Italy. He conducted an online survey for his research. He asked number of questions from the participants that were related to both the generations and studied the kind of planning the generation Y and generation Z do before going on a tour. In his study, he found that the generation Y and generation Z are getting exposed to the advanced technology on the daily basis and they get reviews and ratings for almost all destined places on the internet. It makes them choose the best destination where all of their expectations get fulfilled. The travellers of generation Y and generation Z can find specialty of destined places to eat, because there are numerous hotels, lounges, cafes, and restaurants.

In the research paper, "The Motivations and Experiences of Young Chinese Self-Drive Tourists", Claire Liu (2018) studied the preferences of generation Y from the group tour packages when they travel abroad. He hypothesized that expectations from the group tour and non-group tour are similar (Liu, 2018). He did factor analysis and identified six service dimensions that include safety, activities, comfortableness, accommodation, etc. The researcher found that there is no difference between the expectation of group and non-group travellers (Liu, 2018). Importance of the local guides while traveling abroad was explained in the research analysis. The main expectations of any generation whether it is X, Y or Z are safety and comfort (Liu, 2018).

Local guide plays a key role in providing proper instructions to the travellers, especially foreigners, during the tour. When people travel in a group then they are more likely to perform adventure activities with their friends. Mostly generation Y and generation Z go in the group of 3 or more. Therefore, they are likely to expect more than good hospitality and good local guide. Tourists agencies spend money to provide adventurous activities so that they and travellers both get benefitted. In the capital of United Arab Emirates, Dubai, there are number of adventure related activities such as Zip Lining, Shark Diving, Snorkelling, Deep sea fishing, etc created by the government to attract more and more tourism from generation Y and Z (Khan, 2018).

In a study by Cavagnaro, Staffieri and Postma (2018), a survey was conducted that reached to 423 Dutch who belonged to generation Y and generation Z. Different needs of both the generations' tourists were found. The researchers found that the generation Y and generation Z look for the unpretentious enjoyment while travelling (Cavagnaro, Staffieri & Postma, 2018). For these generations, travelling means relaxation and escape from the daily routine they follow (Cavagnaro, Staffieri & Postma, 2018). Hedonic travel is not something these generations look for but they look for more interesting tour (Cavagnaro, Staffieri & Postma, 2018). They want to explore as well as relax while travelling. The working-class people and the students would like to come out of their lives with same daily routine to freshen up their minds. There is no denying that the expectations of each individual are somewhat different. It becomes a challenge for the tourism firms to make each individual satisfied with the tour they go for. According to the report of UNWTO (United Nation World Tourism

Organisation), new generation is inclined towards visiting the destination that are under environmental and socio-political stress such as Kashmir and North-East(Cavagnaro, Staffieri& Postma, 2018).

Uraiporn Kattiyapornpong (2009) studied the generation Y travel attitudes and behaviour. He studied destination preferences of generation Y through a large sample of 46000 participants (Kattiyapornpong, 2009). He found the contrasting results as compared to the other researchers. He found that generation Y is likely to prefer holidays with no adventure activities(Kattiyapornpong, 2009). He emphasized that generation Y like to enjoy their holiday in a short break so that they can escape from the daily life activities(Kattiyapornpong, 2009). Generation Y have very limited destination preferences for long trips(Kattiyapornpong, 2009). It might be possible that preferences differ among different places. People who live very uncomfortable or busy life like to go trips for peace of mind. The expectation gets changed with respect to the place they are opting. Generation Y who is living in Australia may also have different expectation from tour as compared to generation Y living in India.

3. Methods

Participants and Data

Primary data was used to conduct this study. The study was conducted on 100 participants who belonged to the generation Y and Z to know if their expectations are fulfilled by the agencies which they hire for their tour. All the selected participants gave interview after knowing all the pros and cons of taking part in the study. Only Indian participants took part in the study. A questionnaire was provided to all the participants in which questions related to their favourite tourism, preference for tourism destination, activities, hotel hospitality, comfortability, etc. were asked. Participants were asked to answer on the basis of their tour experiences. There were five questions in the questionnaire. The participants were asked to answer if they agree or disagree by giving points from 1 to 3 to the safety, food quality, comfortability, activities, travel guide (1 point = strongly disagree, 2 = do not know, and 3 = strongly agree).

4. Analysis

Safety points given by the participants.

Tourism Safety Expectations



Figure 1.1

Figure 1.1 shows whether the safety expectations of the tourists were met or not. 80% of the participants strongly agreed that the safety expectations were met, only 5% of participants strongly disagreed on meeting of the expectations and 15% do not know if their expectation were met. It can be concluded from the above graph that the tourism industry is able to fulfil expectations of generation Y and generation Z from tourism. The participants who strongly agreed said that the local guide and instructors of adventure activities treated them in a good way and instructed during each activity. They were also asked to take the required precautions. Tourists who disagreed explained that they got injured or lost during the trip. One of the participants said that he fell from the horse because of the imbalance during the horse riding. Some complained about the lack of skills of bus drivers. They said that the bus drivers were driving too fast and even after complaint to the guide provided by the tourist agency, the driver did not change his speed. According to them, the road experience on hills was horrible.

Food ratings given by participants



Figure 1.2

Figure 1.2 shows that around half of the participants were fully satisfied with the food quality they experienced during their tour and 50% of the participants said that their expectations of quality food were met. 20% of the participants said that food quality was below their expectations while 30% do not know if their expectation were met. Some participants said that the taste was disaster. Half of the participants praised the quality and taste of the food. They explained about the culturally influenced food they ate at their particular destined places. People who gave only 1 rating were totally dissatisfied and said that the experience of the food on the first stop before reaching to destination was terrible. Both vegetarians and non-vegetarians gave 1 rating to the restaurant. In the explanation, they said some of their mates also threw up in the bus or car because they ate unhealthy food. It can be concluded that most of the tourist firms are able to fulfil the food quality expectations of generation Y and Z.

Comfort ability Expectations



Figure 1.3

Figure 1.3 represents the fulfilment of comfortability expectation of the participants during the tour. 60% percent of the participants were fully satisfied with the comfort they got in the hotels and other places during their tour. They praised the hotel services such as cleanliness, food services in hotels, entertainment services in hotels, laundry, etc. Some participants said that they got high quality services. Only 12% of the participants were not happy with the comfort they got during their tour. They complained about the washrooms of hotels, beds, and bad quality food and laundry services. They briefly explained how bad was their experience. Their guide did not provide them many services which were mentioned in the itinerary. 28% of the participant gave the comfortable services 2 ratings and explained some good as well as some bad experiences.

Adventure Activities Expectations



Figure 1.4

Figure 1.4 shows the ratings on the adventure activities participants performed during their tour. Participants were talking enthusiastically about their adventure activities. All the participants were almost happy with the adventure activities. 72% of the participants strongly agreed that their expectation on fulfilling adventure activities was met. They talked about the various activities they performed during their tour. It was concluded on the basis of participants' interview and ratings that tourism agencies are fulfilling expectations related to adventure activities of generation Y and generation z.

Travel Guide Expectations



Figure 1.5

Figure 1.5 depicts that 55% of participants strongly agreed on the fulfilment of their expectations on tour. Participants said that they expected that the guide will explain them about the history and geography of the place. 30% of the participants were not satisfied with the services of the local guide. They had various reasons for giving low ratings but the most common was that the guide did not have proper knowledge of the place. As the number of participants whose expectations were not fulfilled is very low, it can be concluded that guide services in tourism industry is up to mark but some improvement in the services would do better.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

This paper examined the changing guest profiles and the challenges that the tourism industry is facing currently with respect to the expectations of generation Y and generation Z. It was found that the guest profile in the tourism industry is changing. Generations Y and generation Z not only look for the adventure but also, are inclined towards exploring the places which are under socio-political and environmental stress. The changing guest profile also brought some challenges to the tourism industry. The industry is trying and actually able to fulfil all the tour expectation of generation Y and Z. With the following recommendations, the tourism industry would be able to fulfil expectations of tourists belonging to the generation Y and Z:

- Tourism industry must understand the expectations of generation Y and generation Z. Firms should conduct regular surveys for both the generations and ask them to tell their expectations from the tour.
- The focus of the industry should not only be on making the profit but also, on making both the generations feel that they received service worth of the money they spend. Some people irrespective of the which generation they belong spend their money carefully and expect return in the form of great experience. Therefore, they should make itineraries in such a way that the client does not feel cheated.
- Tourist agencies must provide customers with some quotations or itineraries from which they can select the best for them. This is the clear way an industry can fulfil expectation of both the generations as well as its own.
- Tourist agencies must evaluate the drivers regularly and also, ask the clients for feedbacks. It will help tourism firms in providing best quality service to their clients. It was observed that some of the driver drive carelessly on the hills. This must not be done as not all the people from both generations are in support of this.
- Both the generations feel great when they are welcomed in the hotel. Therefore, the tourist's firms should ask the hotels to provide warm welcome to their clients.

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