

Tourist Typology

Typologies are limiting structures used in social science and especially in sociology. Typologies shape a phenomenon or a process in an abstract pattern, based on its distinctive features (Yoo, Yoon and Park, 2018). Researchers apply market segmentation techniques to develop tourism typologies. Typologies are therefore conceptual and multi-dimensional segmentation approaches. They provide managers with a better understanding of tourist behaviours and preferences. This understanding helps to appreciate the interrelationships between products and services, competitors and tourist demand, resulting in better-informed strategic and tactical marketing decisions. Commonly used grouping criteria in typologies include demographic (age, gender, education), geographical (place of residence), psychographic (attitudes, values) and behavioural variables.

Nearly 50 years ago, researchers formulated the typologies of tourists and their behaviour. The classic tourist typology studies were by Cohen (1972), Plog (1974) and Smith (1989), as shown in the table. Typologies by Cohen, Plog and Smith are widely accepted in the literature as familiar types, and changes in consumer health, income, leisure time, family and work do not alter the typologies. As the classic typologies were researched based on travellers living in Europe and the USA they are generalizations and ignore cultural differences. There has been far less research on types of tourists found in Asia, Africa and the Middle East, and this may yield very different results.

Cohen's tourist typology model is an early conceptual framework for the sociological analysis of modern tourism. Cohen (1972) was the first to suggest that there are different types of tourists. He defined four different categories of tourists in terms of institutionalized or non-institutionalized features (Prince, 2017). The organized mass tourist is served by the modern, institutionalized mass tourism industry dedicated to making the travel process as easy as possible for its consumers. The mass tourism industry aims to minimize travel risks and inconvenience by managing predictability, convenience and order for its clients. Cohen divides individual mass tourists in two groups: explorers and drifters (*ibid.*). The individual mass tourist has a measure of control over time and route and is not tied to a location. Individual

mass tourists and organized mass tourists differ slightly from Cohen's tourist typologies. Explorers organize their tourist trip alone. They prefer to be as far from a ready-made itinerary as possible and do not need comfortable accommodation or reliable means of transportation. Drifters are travellers with the highest desire to seek novelty, far from the most visited regions and their country's habitual lifestyle. They make no connections with tourism organizations and focus on the casual tourist experience (Cohen, 1972).

Plog (1974) stated that the psychological characteristics that explain the different behaviours of tourists are effective in the selection of tourist destinations. In Plog's psychographic typology, tourists are classified according to their personality traits. They are classified as allocentrics at one end of the spectrum and psychocentrics on the other (Plog, 2001). Psychocentrics are self-centred and prefer to travel to familiar areas. They have high generalized anxiety and prefer not to travel at all or to stay close to home. They carry out ordinary activities in the tourist areas they visit and avoid taking risks. They may travel with their own cars and prefer the food and drink they are familiar with (Plog, 1974). Near-psychocentrics prefer to travel to familiar destinations. They have little tolerance for new and unfamiliar destinations and they visit familiar areas regularly. They prefer comfortable and easy lodging, activities and flow of vacation. Mid-centric tourists prefer trips for relaxation and pleasure. They try to forget the problems and troubles in their lives. Tourists like to walk around the unique markets of the region and they do not neglect to shop in these markets. Near-allocentrics follow the recommendations of allocentrics. They are seeking adventure and calculated risk. They stimulate tourism growth and support new businesses. Near-allocentrics talk to their friends, relatives and partners about their wonderful experiences in this new place back home, generating word-of-mouth advertising. Allocentrics seek adventure and discovering new regions. Such tourists enjoy exploring and seek new activities and destinations. They enjoy new experiences and a sense of discovery before other tourists visit the area. They do not seek much luxury and comfort in hotels and engage with authentic experiences (Plog, 1974). Destinations are progressing and as the recognition of a destination increases, its attractiveness declines (Dodds, 2020; Plog, 2001). Total tourist arrivals gradually decline

Classic tourist typologies

Studies	Seeking Familiarity	Seeking Novelty
Cohen (1972)	Organized mass tourist	Individual mass tourist
Plog (1974)	Psychocentric	Mid-centric
Smith (1989)	Charter	Incipient mass tourist
	Near-psychocentric	Explorer
	Mass tourist	Near-allocentric
		Unusual tourist
		Off-beat
		Elite
		Drifter
		Allocentric
		Explorer

and the destination attracts more psychocentrics as it loses the popularity it once enjoyed (Milan, 2017).

Smith's (1989) tourist typology takes into account the number, purpose and adaptation of local norms. Explorer tourists are willing to explore and search for new information. The number of tourists of this type tends to decrease day by day as other tourists discover the destination. They actively participate in the life of the communities they visit, as they see themselves as anthropologists exploring cultures. Elite tourists are very few in number. They have been to almost every part of the world. They are different from explorer tourists. They benefit from all opportunities provided by travel agencies, regardless of whether they plan their travel in detail or not. Off-beat tourists desire to get away from the crowds and heighten the excitement of their vacation by doing something beyond the norm. These types of tourists include those who currently visit Toraja Regency to see the renowned Torajan funeral rites or trek in Nepal. Unusual tourists take part in organized tours and also enjoy visiting authentic places during their travels. Unusual tourists buy a tour to visit the Kuna Indians for a day while visiting South America on an organized tour. Incipient mass tourists are individuals from a small organized group and travel using some shared services. Such types of tourists prefer going together and paying separately. Mass tourists are middle-class travellers with average income. Due to the diversity of individual tastes and budgets they travel around the world en masse. Charter tourists visit destinations that generally attract mass tourists. Charter tourists buy packages from tour operators and are served at special tour desks (Smith, 1989).

Decrop and Snelders (2005) have adopted a tourist typology based on decision-making variables and processes. They found that decision making is an ongoing process with many contextual effects. The decision-making styles of the tourists are supported by demographic and socio-psychological criteria. Habitual tourists are those who have limited interest in planning vacations and repeat the same holiday behaviour almost every year. They are governed by their habits. They are vulnerable to risk taking, cannot afford to 'miss' their vacation, and they love to feel at home in the resort. Rational tourists are not willing to take a holiday that will strain their budget in their holiday

choices. They are not willing to go on holiday at all costs. Risk aversion has a strong effect on the holiday. They plan carefully and take facilitating and inhibiting constraints into account as they appear. Hedonic tourists like to think, dream and talk about their vacation. While they encourage their friends to go on holiday, they also can't help recommending certain places. Emotional motives always take precedence in their decision making and they rehearse both planning and experiencing their dream trip. Opportunistic tourists do not like to think and talk too much about the holiday. Opportunistic tourists can be thought of as unplanned tourists, because they follow different strategies depending on opportunities. They expect a social or economic opportunity and travel accordingly. Sudden decisions at the last minute increase the risk of vacation. Constrained vacationers face contextual barriers such as limited financial resources or the intervention of situational variables (e.g., moving house, health problems). Instead of controlling the limited tourist vacation decision-making process, they personally experience the vacation decision-making process. Adaptable tourists enjoy going on holiday and travelling and continuously dream of future travel plans. These vacationers adapt their plans dynamically, revise their decisions and modify their behaviour. Vacation plans are flexible and decision-making style is adaptable to their context.

These typologies are still relevant and can explain travel behaviour. However, there are different ways in which tourists engage with destinations and travel decision making. For example, Fan, Buhalis and Lin (2019) explore tourists' online and face-to-face social contacts and their effects on travel experiences. They created a six-fold tourist typology identifying different behaviours, namely: disconnected immersive traveller, digital detox traveller, diversionary traveller, dual zone traveller, daily life controller and social media addict. Different tourist types required different services and engage in tourism behaviour differently.

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