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“Communication Tourism” and Problem of Tourist’s Psychological Adaptation in Different Ethnic Culture

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Abstract

In the article we have presented our experience of the “ethno-cultural assimilator for the Tatar culture” creation. “Ethno-cultural assimilators” are type of situational training to become familiar with the culture of other people through the analysis of situations of interpersonal interaction. Modern situation on tourism market shows increasing tendency to exclusive character of touristic programs and consistency of these programs with specific consumer’s internal motivations, which can include not only traditional recreation aspects but also self-overcoming, self-exploration, search for senses. Modern tourists want broad interaction with other culture which can be most easily achieved via intensive inter-personality contacts with local population in areas of work and leisure, holydays, feasts, rituals and traditions. Such kind of tourism could be called “communication tourism”. In fact, main aim of this type of tourism is frequently better understanding of one’s own culture which reveals oneself much better in comparison with other cultures customs and traditions. In this situation preparations for the meeting with different culture cannot be ignored. Knowledge of other cultures traditional values can prevent frustration or adverse incidents in contacts with the local population and various ethno-cultural trainings are effective methods of psychological preparation of personality to another culture in tourism.

Keywords: ethno-cultural assimilator; communication tourism; psychological preparation of personality in tourism, Tatar culture.

Introduction

Mentality of modern touristic services consumers is now changing in direction of higher extent of independency, activity and individualization of requirements in various aspects of recreation. Especial values for modern tourists are possibility of free touristic route development, self-reliant choice of times of trips, exclusive character of touristic programs and consistency of these programs with specific consumer’s internal motivations (Limongelli

C., Sciarrone F., Temperini M., Vaste G., 2012), which can include not only traditional recreation aspects but also self-overcoming, self-exploration, search for senses.

We suppose that dominating tendencies in tourism in several future years will be following:

- decreasing of portion of standardized packages of touristic services on market;
- continuing individualization of requests and tastes;
- change of accents from quality of touristic service (which will become more unified) to interest to endemic cultural and heritage features of touristic route region.

In modern time these tendencies already appear in developing new modes of tourism, for example: couch surfing, ecotourism (Zeng W., Cheng L., Ouyang L. 2013), ethno-tourism (agro-tourism, rural tourism, jailoo tourism, festival tourism, backpacker tourism, new age tourism). Popular book "Eat pray love" from Elizabeth Gilbert (Gilbert E. 2006) became well-known advertising of touristic escapism for townspeople suffering from existential crisis.

Specificity of such modes of tourism is close proximity of tourists to material and spiritual culture and ecological environment of trip region. Amount of people who are ready to pay for standard set of touristic simulacra of other cultures (trite sites, touristic myths and legends) are continuously decreasing. Modern tourists want broad interaction with other culture which can be most easily achieved via intensive inter-personality contacts with local population in areas of work and leisure, holydays, feasts, rituals and traditions. Such kind of tourism sometimes is called "assimilation tourism" but we prefer to call it "communication tourism" because word "assimilation" can have some negative meanings particularly "loosing own culture". In fact, main aim of this type of tourism is frequently better understanding of one's own culture which reveals oneself much better in comparison with other cultures customs and traditions.

"Deep immersion" tourism has own financial and psychological advantages but on the other hand it has a number of problems. Main psychological problems related to communication tourism are:

- some of cultural elements can arouse shock;
- some counterfeit knowledge about other culture;
- high probability of intra-personality conflicts in cross-cultural contact.

All these problems can be attributed to "acculturation stress" syndrome. In literature acculturation stress described in details for migrants who lived in other culture several years running but for tourists this phenomena is poorly studied yet. The reason is the meaning that psychological and social consequences of short-term stay in other culture's conditions are not significant. However, a short-term stay in other culture environment where acculturation does not pass one's own full cycle, starting with the cultural shock and following adaptation, may give the most negative stereotypes and inadequate behavior. Preparations for the meeting with different culture cannot be ignored. But this aspect is more often "disastrous" for tourist services, which are limited to the provision of tour package that includes a list of rules and simple guides to legal restrictions and a guide-interpreter. This set is rather not guide in another culture but the promoter of its well-known simulacra. Knowledge of other cultures traditional values can prevent frustration or adverse incidents in contacts with the local population and sometimes even save life and health. Many cases of violence against tourists are linked to their low awareness of traditional values of the host country. For

example, in Pakistan in 2012 tourist was put to death by a mob for suspicion of desecrating traditional religion.

Readiness to meet different culture must be designed in the preliminary work with the client and should include following components:

A) psychological

- the development of creative thinking, flexibility and the ability to navigate in the information flow;

- the development of the communicative tolerance that means improvement of interethnic communication through the overcoming of communicative conflicts between representatives of different cultures;

- strengthening resilience in non-standard situations of communications.

B) culturological

- learning the significant cultural characteristics, beliefs, attitudes;

- developing the ability to distinguish between internal and external aspects of culture;

- knowledge of cultural taboos.

Another aspect that we would like to put on the forefront is the importance of restoring the person's own cultural identity. Usually this aspect is not paid enough attention in context of cross cultural contacts. For person the main objective of many tourism practices is finding oneself, maintain one's own psychological integrity. In a modern unified world persons tend to reach self-identify, looking and studying ethnic roots to perceive themselves special, with its own history and deep-seated cultural traditions. Perception of other cultures and ethnic features allows person to develop a comprehensive picture of the multifaceted world of peoples and Nations, unique in its individuality. We believe that the existential sense of tourism practices is that persons return to the roots of their culture and overcoming their cultural marginality in the modern world, afresh feels a commitment to the set of values, beliefs, symbols of their own cultural tradition, through knowledge of other cultural worlds.

Method

Effective methods of psychological preparation of personality to another culture in tourism are various ethno-cultural trainings. These include "ethno-cultural assimilators" created as type of situational training to become familiar with the culture of other people through the analysis of situations of interpersonal interaction.

There are currently a large number of similar trainings, focused primarily on migrant visitors carrying out educational or professional activities in another country. But for tourists, oriented for a short stay in another culture and having rather contingency purpose travel, adaptation technologies are yet waiting to be developed. Moreover, such methods could be used not only for the outside, but also for domestic tourism, particularly in the case of multi-cultural region.

Due to the fact that Tatarstan has acquired the status of an attractive destination of domestic and foreign tourism, and understanding the urgency of developing practical methods to improve inter-ethnic communication, we have created the world's first model of "ethno-cultural assimilator for the Tatar culture". Status of popular touristic center of Tatarstan have

been established by great cultural and sports events: commemoration of the Millennium of Kazan - the capital of Tatarstan (2005) and Universiade XXVII (2013).

At the beginning of the 19th century Karl Fuchs, the professor of the Kazan University, who has studied the life and culture of the Tatars, has stated that: "... the Tatars, for more than two centuries, conquered and scattered among the Russian people, so amazingly was able to preserve their customs, just as they lived separately" (Fuchs K., 1844). As a subject of the Russian Federation, secular society, Tatarstan has managed to keep its national traditions, and some lengthy interaction between Christianity and Islam on their territory, the Eastern and Western cultural motifs.

The aim of the work with "ethno-cultural assimilator" is to help to individuals adapt to communicating with members of another ethnic group via orientation in the field of specific culture senses. User of the "ethno-cultural assimilator" in work with offered inter-ethnic contact situation must choose correctly attribute to behavior of the different ethnic cultures representatives. The "ethno-cultural assimilator" presents to the user potential-conflict or cognitive duality situations of inter-ethnic communication. For the convenience of users, the assimilator divided into semantic blocks: national etiquette, religiously cultural tradition, gender norms of interaction, etc. Each block is preceded by a small introductory article, which describes the customs and traditions of the people.

Selecting the correct attribution is based on knowledge of culture features (ethnic customs, rules, and regulations). Condition for the selection of the correct attribute for the assimilator is working with informants, the real bearers of culture, acting as experts.

Conclusion

Preparation of the tourist with the use of ethno-cultural training is particularly valuable in domains of ethno-tourism and couch-surfing. Ethnic tourism promotes closer links, exchange of representatives of different nations, inclusion of their culture to the world's cultural heritage. Couch-surfing allows to understand practical household features of different social groups, to familiarize oneself with the host country language and non-verbal elements of communication and acquire unique voyages experience. The important task is also to enhance the cultural competence of tourist guides via the ethno-cultural training aimed at raising awareness about the ethnic characteristics of its culture, its traditional, ceremonial side.

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