Cross-Cultural Tourism and the Role of Media: Exploring Impacts and Influences

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Abstract

The concept of tourism has been in existence since ancient times, evolving alongside the development of communication. As means of communication improved and expanded, so did the world of travel. (Andreu, n.d)Through barter systems and exchange networks, people began to journey in pursuit of their needs and desires. Communication played a fundamental role in this process as individuals learned about new places through stories and accounts from others, prompting them to embark on journeys themselves.

The world has seen significant transformations from medieval times to the present day, and this has had an impact on communication, travel, and tourism. Throughout different eras, various events have occurred. In ancient times, Naradji traveled from place to place in order to spread awareness of other cultures(Scharfe, 2002) (whether positive or negative). Some refer to him (NaradJi) as the first traveler in terms of tourism, (DISCOVER INDIA: India Tourism, 2012) while others see him as the pioneer journalist in mass communication.

In medieval times, numerous emperors and kings from various parts of the world were drawn to the wealth of Aryawart and visited the region. This led to the emergence of cross-cultural tourism, accompanied by a surge in media communication through scriptures, paintings, and handicrafts.(Theilmann, 1987)(Pilgrimage in the Middle Ages, 2004) The rapid development attracted raiders who invaded India multiple times. In modern times, we can see India's Prime Minister drawing inspiration from Japan's spiritual and cultural preservation efforts seen in their Kyoto heritage model. He is now implementing a similar strategy to safeguard India's own heritage properties. This represents the enduring impact of communication on nurturing cross-cultural tourism from ancient times until today. (Thomas, 1994)

This paper aims to demonstrate the significance and ethical responsibility of intercultural communication in facilitating tourism development. The long-standing collaboration between cross-cultural tourism development and media/communication is a valuable alliance.

Key words: cross-cultural tourism, development communication, media, culture, intercultural communication

Introduction

The beginning of the great travel dynasty involved crossing mental boundaries and journeying in search of basic necessities like food, shelter, and clothing. (Thomas, 1994)As people traveled from one place to another, they encountered different cultures and initiated an ongoing process of mutual learning from each other's experiences.(Gmelch, 1997) These collective experiences gradually gave rise to a form of tourism that was not specifically named at the time – known today as cross-cultural or intercultural tourism.(Cultural tourism, 2003)

In simpler terms, we can understand it like this: if a group of foreigners visit our country and stays at our university. And because of their culture they wear short and small types of clothing, which looks stylish on them. This immediately influences the students at our university when they see them dressed in such attire. (What is Cultural Appropriation?, 2008)The students will feel that they too can look good in these clothes, so why not give it a try. This willingness to explore is referred to as cross-cultural tourism development.(Лысикова, 2012)

Cross-cultural tourism has become a significant component of the travel and leisure industry globally, as it allows individuals to immerse themselves in diverse cultural experiences.(Xu, 2020) The rise of digital media and communication technologies has further facilitated the dissemination of information about cultural destinations, making it easier for tourists to seek out unique experiences.(Govers, 2001)

Tourism refers to the activity of individuals or groups traveling from one location to another for leisure, enjoyment, and rejuvenation, typically staying for more than 24 hours but less than 365 days.(Panich et al., 2014) Communication involves the sharing or exchange of information through speech, writing, or other means. Media encompasses major channels of mass communication such as television, radio, and newspapers when considered collectively. These instances illustrate how cross-cultural tourism has evolved in connection with media and communication.(Butler, 1990).

Cross-cultural tourism

When different cultures are exposed to each other through media and communication, there is an increasing curiosity and desire to learn more about one another. This leads people to start venturing into each other's territories(Arriaga, n.d). An example of such cross-cultural tourism can be seen in the voyage of Portuguese explorer Vasco de Gama, who became the first European to reach India via the Atlantic Ocean when he arrived at Calicut on the Malabar Coast.(Seland, 2014)

De Gama departed from Lisbon, Portugal in July 1497, rounded the Cape of Good Hope, and anchored at Malindi on the east coast of Africa. With assistance from an Indian merchant he met there, he then set off across the Indian Ocean. Upon arriving in Calicut, De Gama was not warmly received by Muslim merchants and had to fight his way out of harbor during his return trip home in 1499. In 1502,(Vasco da Gama, 2002) he led a squadron of ships back to Calicut seeking retribution for the massacre of Portuguese explorers there; he succeeded in subduing its inhabitants but fell ill and died while serving as viceroy in India.

The discovery of America (an outcome motivated by travel) is exemplified by Christopher Columbus (1451-1506), an Italian explorer who sailed across the Atlantic Ocean with hopes of finding a route to India for spice trade during four voyages between 1492-1504.(Cinnamon, peppercorns, nutmeg and cloves, 2000) His explorations ultimately led to the colonization and exploitation of the indigenous peoples of the Americas, drastically altering cultural dynamics in those regions and beyond.(Timothy, 2019)(Xu, 2020)

During his third expedition (May 30, 1498 - October 1500), Columbus sailed farther south reaching Trinidad and Venezuela including exploring e Orinoco River mouth where no european since Viking Leif Ericsson had stepped foot onto American mainland before him.(U.S. History, 2003)These examples demonstrate how cross-cultural tourism has been inextricably linked to colonial conquest, power imbalances, and exploitation throughout history (Manurung, 2010)(Journal of Tourism, n.d)(Kant, 2022).

Well-known accounts like these serve as prime examples demonstrating how communication channels have spurred individuals like Columbus towards journeys aimed at discovering spices or wisdom, As observed even Faxian,a Chinese Buddhist monk(The Journey of Faxian to India, 1999) made a similar arduous journey on foot all through China into India.

It's evident that numerous cases show how cultural exchange occurs through tourism fueled travels while highlighting significant role played by media communications promoting this phenomenon."(Richards & Wilson, 2006)(Walle, 1996)(Manurung, 2010)Cultural Tourism can be defined as that form of Tourism that focuses on the culture of a destination - the lifestyle, heritage, arts, ceremonies and traditions of the people in that destination" (Csapó, 2012).

Cross- cultural communication

The term cross-cultural communication refers to the ability to effectively build, nurture, and enhance relationships with individuals from a different culture. This requires an understanding of various elements such as values, perceptions, behaviors, social dynamics, decision-making practices of the other culture group.(Chen, 1989) It also involves grasping how members of that group express themselves verbally and non-verbally in both professional and social settings. Similar to learning a new language or acquiring a new skill like riding a bicycle, mastering cross-cultural communication entails practice and guidance rather than just theoretical knowledge.(DeVoss et al., 2002)

A comprehensive cross-cultural training program equips participants with the necessary knowledge, insight, and competencies for successful interaction across cultural boundaries.(Thomas, 1994)

Recent developments illustrate positive outcomes in this area: there has been significant progress in communication between countries such as India – Nepal, India – USA, India and Japan,(Carnevale & Choi, 2000) due to advancements in media communications policies. these changes are visible through initiatives like the Kyoto treaty between India and Japan,(Joint Declaration on Security Cooperation between Japan and India, 2008) visa on arrival arrangements with several countries,and resolutions by Indian government addressing border issues with Nepal.These instances demonstrate an improvement communicative collaboration among nations especially within tourism-related contexts.(Importance of Travel and Tourism, 2012)

Cultural differences in behaviour

The general populace perceives that the primary reasons for ineffective policies in promoting communication and tourism are inadequate planning and insufficient management. However, the issue is more extensive than this; it also involves cultural disparities in behavior. (Pizam & Sussmann, n.d)The study asserts that by highlighting these differences to the global community, enthusiasm and awareness about traveling and communication will be rekindled, ultimately contributing to a better travel experience worldwide.(Reisinger, 1997)

Outcomes of the studies

After significant political upheavals and numerous acts of terrorism, there has been a rise in cross-cultural activities. Despite the tragedies, tourism continues to serve as a bridge connecting different parts of the world. While media plays its role in keeping people informed about global events, various tourism agreements work towards fostering international relations.(Mir & Ramazani, 2013)

This study sheds light on the positive impact of today's journalism and mass communication industry which works for societal betterment. Media and communication provide hope by uncovering truths behind scandals such as coal scam, commonwealth games, spectrum scam, and international financial frauds.(Section I. The Core Principles of Journalism, 1999)

Despite these unfortunate events, there is hope in the development of cross-cultural tourism through dialogue, relationships, and communications. Ultimately, it is believed that global progress will be driven by tourism and communication–uniting where terrorism divides."(Tourism, 2023)

Conclusion

The role of media and communication in cross-cultural tourism cannot be overstated. Through the dissemination of information, media helps in creating awareness and a sense of global community. While cultural differences do pose challenges, effective communication strategies can help bridge these gaps. Overall, cross-cultural tourism facilitated by media can bring people together, promote understanding, and drive positive change (Journal of Tourism, n.d)(Hawali & Cyrielle, 2020)(Xu, 2020).

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