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CRITICAL FACTORS AND CONSUMPTION PATTERNS OF PERGAMON MUSEUM'S VISITORS (BERLIN, GERMANY)

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Abstract:

This research tries to go into the consumption patterns of tourists visiting museums in Berlin. Indeed, the importance of the museum tourism market in Berlin has created a need for information on the motivations of cultural tourists, as attention has shifted from historic and architectural tourism model or "bildungsbürgerlich tourism" (Spode and Gutbier 1987: 30), towards broadening the range of cultural attractions, *unter alia* museums regarded with both: traditional and contemporary culture. In particular, the city of Berlin gives an accurate picture of what European cities are willing to do in response to the growing relationship between tourism and museums with more than 170 museums of the world culture.

In this context, a visitor survey (200) was conducted in one of the most important Museums of Berlin, the "Pergamon Museum", in order to investigate the motivation, image, socio-demographic profile, opinions and consumption patterns of cultural tourists visiting Berlin. The findings of this research indicate that today's cultural tourists in Berlin are generally well-educated people with high status occupations, good incomes, heavily concerned with the environment, and that not all cultural visitors are cultural tourists, as the level of cultural motivation varies greatly from one tourist to the next.

Keywords: Marketing patterns; consumption; cultural tourism.

1. Introduction

Cultural tourism represents one of the major future growth activities of global tourism demand for this new millennium. The importance of this market for the development of tourism and cultural attractions has created a need for information on the motivations of cultural tourists. In fact, understanding the behaviour of this type of tourists is a starting point required for the management, marketing or planning of the tourism industry and the government in order to improve the quality experience of the visitor. In this sense, the main purpose of this research is to investigate the motivation, socio-demographic profile, consumption patterns and image, held by tourists visiting cultural attractions.

In terms of defining the concept of cultural tourism, exists a wide range of activities from traditional to innovative that are now considered to be part of this growth phenomenon. This diversity demonstrates the complexity of cultural tourism products. In fact, this multi-disciplinary subject covers not just the consumption of the cultural products of the past, such as archaeological sites, but also of contemporary culture, such as fashion and design museums. But De Esteban Curiel (2008:84) insists that "it is difficult to define what is culture and a term ´cultural tourism´ is a complex term as well". Therefore, Silberberg (1995) affirms that cultural tourism is "visits by persons from outside the host community motivated wholly or in part by interest in the historical, artistic, scientific or lifestyle/ heritage offerings of a community, region, group or institution". In this sense, Tighe (1991) confirms that "cultural tourism is travel undertaken with historic sites, museums, the visual arts, and/ or the performing arts as significant elements". Hence, Christou (2006) mentions that "the term ´heritage and cultural tourism´ refers to that segment of the tourism industry

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that places special emphasis on heritage and cultural attractions. These attractions are varied, and include performances, museums, displays, archaeological sites and the like. In developed areas, heritage and cultural attractions include art museums, plays and orchestral and other musical performances. Tourists may travel to specific sites to see a famous museum or to hear a special musical performance. In this context, Richards (2001) states that "cultural tourism can be seen as covering 'heritage tourism' (related to artefacts of the past), 'arts tourism' (related to contemplation and contemporary cultural production) and 'creative industries' (related to participation and contemporary cultural production)". On this point, this research takes this definition as the conceptual framework and it focuses basically on the analysis of visitor's characteristics drawn mainly by visiting museums.

2. Research aim and objectives

This research investigates the motivation, image, socio-demographic profile opinions and consumption patterns of cultural tourists visiting Berlin. Hence, some objectives that must be achieved to fulfil the research aim are:
- ✓ To examine the different consumption patterns of residents, national and international visitors with respect to cultural tourism in Berlin.
- ✓ To compile a profile of tourists visiting museums cultural products that could be used by marketing managers.
- ✓ To explore the ways of information and the use of tourism intermediaries undertaken by cultural tourists visiting museums attractions in Berlin before and during their visits.

3. Why Berlin?

Concerning tourism, Berlin has a wide range of resources: museums, theatres, musicals, expositions, parks, bars, discos, shopping centres, etc. Existing resources are bundled together to sell the city as a 'cultural city', a 'sports city', a 'fun city', etc. Therefore, it is important to understand how Berlin is changing and how it is responding to the change that is taking place, in order to place tourism on a more sustainable basis, capable of delivering a quality experience for the tourist. In other words, the central challenge for Berlin as a destination is how can the tourism activity and its growth expected for the next decades, be managed in such a way as to ensure that it respects the limits of its resource base and those resources' capacity to regenerate, whilst being commercially successful.

With regards to cultural tourism, in the study of Van der Borg (1994 in Richards 2001: 48) Berlin scored 15 out 19 as the main perceived cultural tourism destinations in Europe). It must be mentioned that, according to this study of Van der Borg, Paris, Rome, London captured more attention in terms of culture than Berlin, showing at that moment a more successful policy on management, interpretation and marketing of cultural resources.

Hence, Berlin has turned into one of the most visited cities for cultural reasons of Europe thanks to its old city centre, its important cultural heritage, its bustling nightlife and the open cosmopolitan character of its people. In fact, Berlin shines in a cultural dimension with the "Museum Island" where the Bode Museum, the Neues Museum, the Alte Nationalgalerie and the Pergamon Museum trace an itinerary comparable to the "Museum District" (London), the "Walking Art" (Madrid) or the "Mall's Museums" (Washington). Empirically, Berlin is a metropolis where it can be identified the three products categories commented as the conceptual framework of this research, that is: heritage, arts and creative industries.

In this sense, the selection of the Pergamon Museum in Berlin, seems to be appropriate as the research focuses on cultural tourists interested in museums. Indeed, the aim of the Pergamon Museum is to encourage public access to the various exhibits summarizing six thousand years of culture, history and art in the ancient Near East. So, with area covering 2,000 square metres in *Mitte* Berlin, this museum is visited by approximately 850,000 cultural visitors every year, making it the most visited art museum in Germany in the last decade.

4. Methodology

4.1 Questionnaire design

In order to achieve the objectives seen above, a 28 survey-questionnaire has been undertook at "Pergamon Museum" in Berlin. The questionnaire applied has been adapted from the one used by the "Association for Tourism and Leisure Education, ATLAS"

ATLAS is an international organisation which is considered as a leader cultural tourism project for research:

> *'ATLAS provides a forum to promote staff and student exchange, transnational research and to facilitate curriculum and professional development. ATLAS currently has members in more than 70 countries.'*

ATLAS (2012)

On this point, it must be said that the authors contacted Professor Dr. Greg Richards, from ATLAS, with the intention of getting enrolled on the research project since 2005. The survey instrument has been adapted to the characteristics of Berlin from the original ATLAS questionnaire. The original questionnaire of ATLAS is composed of 24 questions, so the researchers have added 4 questions to the questionnaire in order to analyse the cultural tourist´s opinion about the prices, the occupancy, the environment and the concept of culture. The questionnaire is composed basically by closed-questions which must be ticked on the appropriate box; some questions were asked for a numerical data; some questions to rate the importance of something using the type Attitude statements/Likert scales´ ranging from 1 (disagree/unimportant) to 5-10 (agree/important); and one opened-question about the respondents opinions on culture.

The questionnaire, which normally takes about 8 minutes to be completed, was divided into two sections: general information about Berlin City as a cultural tourism product, and the cultural tourist itself. In the first section, general information about the city of Berlin is sought from the survey such as visitor motivation, activity at the destination and marketing data:

Activity at the destination:
- Attractions visited
- Accommodation used
- Form of travel arrangement (package/independent)
- Booking channels (travel agent/tour operator/ National Tourist Office-NTO)
- Length of stay
- Expenditure at the destination

Visitor motivation:
- Motivation type
- Previous visit
- Holiday type
- Global image of the cultural destination

Marketing data:
- Use of media, internet

In other words, the aim of this first section of the questionnaire is to study the motivations, consumption patterns and destination image of cultural tourist visiting museum attractions in Berlin. In this first section, there is a development about the nature of the study of cultural tourism from the cultural 'content' of tourism (high culture, popular culture, etc.) towards the 'context' in which culture is consumed (as part of a process of learning about a city, as a process of distinction, repeat visitors versus first time visitors, etc). In terms of cultural tourism policy, a similar shift can perhaps also be identified in the emergence of 'cultural programming' of cities in place of cultural planning. Another emerging area of the work in this first section of the questionnaire involves the concept of 'place' - which indicates that the study of cultural tourism is following spatial turn in the social sciences. Closely linked to place is the idea of distinctiveness, which seems to have been posed as an alternative to authenticity in some cases. Participation is also an emerging concept which seems closely linked to place - since the participation is usually the residents of a particular location.

In the second section, the researchers asked about the **cultural tourist itself:** their socio-demographic profile and their opinion about culture.

Socio-demographic profile:
- Employment (including cultural occupations, civil servant)
- Education
- Area/country of residence
- Gender

Opinion about culture:
- Prices of culture
- Level of interest regarding the environment
- Heritage, arts and creative industries

4.2 Simple random sampling

The total visitors´ population consists of all visitors who have been visiting cultural attraction and have been surveyed at "Pergamon Museum" who were 16 years old or older. In principle, only visitors over 16 years of age should be interviewed. A category for ages under 16 has been included on the questionnaire because sometimes it is not possible to exclude respondents under 16. To be reliable, the authors have taken a sample of 200 respondents. The questionnaires have concentrated on all kind of visitors: residents, national and international tourists. The way in

which this has been achieved, was as follows: where interviewers have been used?, visitors have been interviewed in the exit of the Pergamon Museum. Visitors have been selected on a simple random basis- for example by approaching every tenth visitor who was leaving the museum. If a group of visitors was approaching, the selection of the respondent from the group aslo has been randomised in the "next birthday" principle. Members of the group have been asked 'who has the next birthday?'. In this semse, the person with the birthday date nearest to the interview has been interviewed. This principle provided a random sample of the respondents within groups, and has avoided bias, such as the tendency for men or older people within groups to take over the task of answering the questions.

4.5 Conducting the questionnaires

The questionnaire was designed to be used either by an interviewer or through self-completion. In general terms, interviewer-completed questionnaires give a higher degree of accuracy and may generate a higher response rate. Visitors are more likely to be willing to be interviewed if they know why the survey is being conducted, and if they are sure that their responses will remain anonymous. For that, the authors required the help of one more interviewer who was especially prepared for this data collection.

Interviews have been held wherever possible over different days and time periods to ensure that all visitor groups are sampled. In particular, the questionnaires were carried out from Friday 15 July to Tuesday 19 July 2011 (both dates included). The selected time-table corresponded with the opening hours of the Pergamon Museum, precisely, from 10:00 to 18:00. A mixture of weekends and weekdays has been included in the sample as well, that provided sufficient midweek visitors reasonable returns. Regarding the place, the interviewers carried out the questionnaires on the way-out of the museum where apparently the visitors had more time to complete them. Hence, we know that it is important to try to make interviews with all selected visitors; in this sense, inevitably there were visitors who have refused to be interviewed. Most of them said that they did not have time to be interviewed. Therefore, some common objections have been overcome. The interviewers pointed out that the questionnaire takes only 6 minutes to complete (which is certainly the case for the basic questionnaire). Where foreign visitors have refused on the basis of not being able to speak the language, they have been offered a copy of the questionnaire in their own language to fill in themselves (German, Spanish, English and French). If visitors refused, a record has been kept and in this way it allowed to calculate the total refusal rate of the survey.

4.6 Self completion or interviewed questionnaire

In total 148 questionnaires were completed by self completion and 52 were conducted by an interviewer. The average time of completing a questionnaire was 9 minutes. In this sense, the visitors had time and place to be able to fill in the questionnaires comfortably. There was provided a table in order to allow people to fill out the questionnaires, and if not, clipboards were used as a substitute. Therefore, there were available sufficient suplies of pen that allowed a number of visitors to fill out the questionnaire at the same time.

The questionnaires were filled out as complete as possible. During five days of the fieldwork the interviewers approached 295 persons and only 95 persons refused to answer. In total were collected 200 questionnaires with a response rate of 67.80%. Additional we should say that in the collected questionnaires some data were missing, above all in those which have been self-completed. Finally, data analysis has been performed through software *Statistical Package for Social Sciences* (SPSS, version.18.0)

5. Main findings

This section presents some of the main findings obtained in the survey of the 200 cultural tourists at "Pergamon Museum". Thus, the analysis was divided into different topics: (1) the socio-demographic profile of respondents; (2) the conditions of access and visit of the cultural tourists; (3) the critical factors for the motivation of the visit; (4) and the expenditures during the visit.

5.1 Socio-demographic profile of respondents

The profile of the cultural tourist visiting "Pergamon Museum" is based on the questions related to the socio-demographic aspects of the questionnaires. In this sense, the distribution per gender displays a bias towards female, with a slightly difference: 56% female and 44% male. The age of these cultural tourists is predominantly towards 40's years of age profile, with 31.5% of the sample around 40 and 49 years old, followed by tourists aged 30-39 years with 23% of total respondents.

Based upon the principle that occupation is linked to educational attainment, the results suggest that the groups of cultural tourists possess high levels of educational attainment. More than three quarter of the sample (85.5%) had a bachelor, a master or *PhD* degrees. Moreover, the big majority of the respondents were employees or self-employed (68.5%), followed by the collective of unemployed, retired persons and housewives (20.5%), then by students (12.5%). Regarding the occupation, there was a predominance of professionals, such as doctors, lawyers, teachers, etc., with a percentage of 30.8%. Technical professions (e.g. technicians, nursing, etc), clerical and administration posts were presented with 26.3% of the sample. Moreover, there were more respondents who were working on services, sales, craft or the industries of construction or agriculture (22.4%) than directors or managers (16.9%). With reference to the public service administration, only 12% were working as civil servants, whereas the absolute majority 87% were enrolled in the private or "non-governmental organisation" (NGO) sector.

### 5.2 Conditions of access and visit of the cultural tourists

Analysing the information regarding the conditions of access of the tourist to Berlin and the characteristics of their visits, it can be commented that basically the respondents were using the local transport (39.5%). Metro (S-Bahn, U-Bahn and Tram), bus and taxi were indeed the preferred means of transport to move around Berlin. Walking is considered by cultural tourists (29.3%) as well, whereas one out ten takes a plane (9.4%), above all the international visitors.

Concerning the residence's place of the visitors, more than half of tourists came from abroad (57%) and the rest 31% came from another parts of Germany, and 12% were local residents of Berlin (as a city or as a State). Concerning the nationalities of those who came from foreign countries, the two main groups of visitors were Americans (15%) and Russians (12%). Others "origin-countries" of cultural tourists were the United Kingdom (11%), Spain (10%), Italy (8%), France and the Netherlands (both with 7%). The rest of respondents were grouped under the categories: "Rest of Europe" (19%) and "Rest of the World" (11%). In this sense, the authors have tried to incorporate as many nationalities as possible on the sample, in order to increase the reliability of the research.

Concerning the organisation of the trip and the accommodation chosen by the tourists coming outside from Berlin, just 14% decided to use an "all-inclusive package". The rest of this group booked the transport and the accommodation separately. Most of them found the transport through the Internet (26%) or via a travel agent (6%). The rest preferred to arrange it on its own (5%), or even they got transport without any booking in advance (3%). The type of accommodation mainly was hotel (55.2%). Staying at "Relatives' and Friends' " place is second most used type of accommodation for these cultural tourists (17.5%), and the third type is youth hostels (9.5%), where above all young visitors made the overnight. Furthermore, considering just the visitors outside from Berlin, almost half of them (51%) spent at least three nights in Berlin, hence it means a minimum stay of four days. However, the big proportion of tourists stayed in Berlin for four nights (23%).

Referring the source of information to organise the visit before getting to Berlin, one third were searching on Internet websites (33%) (see Figure 1). Near similarly, another third part used friends and relatives to get some practical information about Berlin and its tourism products (31.26%). The last third part got some guidebooks (12.58%), or has been informed through travel agencies (4.43%), or previously has been in Berlin (3.65%), or finally has acquired some newspapers/magazines (2.91%). In this sense, we should mention that only 1.21% entered in a "Tourist information centre" or were looking for some brochures to collect some information for their visit. However, the source of information used in Berlin, mostly one out four tourists (26.75%) got some advices from the "Tourism information centre" to organise their visits in the city, followed by a similar percentage of visitors who have been surfing on Internet websites (24.27%) or have been consulting guidebooks (16.79%). The use of brochures was represented by 12.03% and it could be explained as those tourists were seeking some specific information on an event rather than the city itself. On the other hand, only 7.89% tourists were asking some information to their "Friends and Relatives". To sum up, almost all tourists have consulted different sources of information before and during their stay in Berlin.
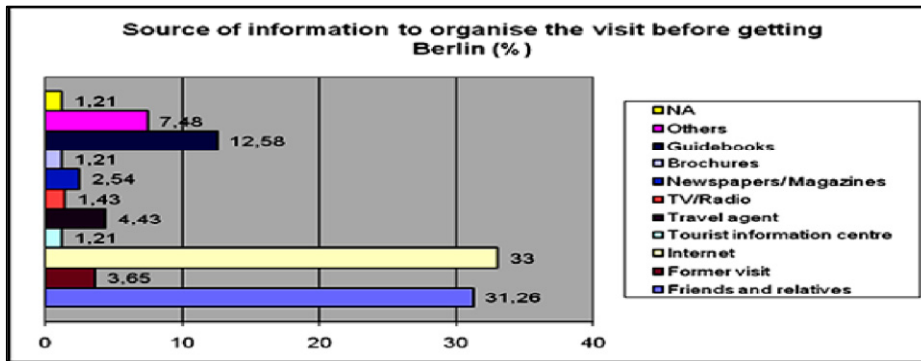
(Source: Own elaboration)

Fig.1. Source of information to organise the visit before getting to Berlin

5.3 Critical factors for the motivation of the visit

In this section we will analyse the critical factors (external and internal) for the motivation of the cultural tourist to visit Berlin. Gibson *et al* (1997: 199) assert that "motivation can be ´inspired´ by different things". Hence, Sigala and Leslie (2006) affirms that cultural and heritage attractions "can evoke feelings of admiration, but they probably do not evoke feelings of personal attachment". In this sense, our research shows that the principal motivations to visit Berlin were "to experience the atmosphere of the city" and "to find out more about the culture of Berlin", but "sightseeing", "of being entertained", or just "to learn new things" were mentioned as quite important factors as well. These results indicate that the visitors had a great interest in the city *per se*, and an inclination for the culture. However, concerning the respondents who were not living in Berlin, most of them declared that the key purpose of their current trip was for holidays (41.7%). Subsequently, their second purpose was to attend some "sport event" (18.5%) in Berlin.

Vis-à-vis the preferred holidays, for the 33.4% respondents the ideal vacations were associated with the cultural tourism, more than a "city trip" (22.4%) or a "sun and beach" (18.3%) tourism. Therefore, we would like to mention some facts on respondents' current or former occupation, the majority of them were not connected with culture (56%) and the rest 42% were those who are or have been working in the cultural sector or could be considered as "cultural intermediaries" who are spending their free-time in attending cultural attractions. Thus, the potentiality for cultural tourism seems to be one of the keys for the development of new tourism products.

5.4 Expenditures during the visit and annual incomes

In this paragraph we would like to talk about the economic impact of a cultural tourist visiting Berlin in its individual perspective. For that, the authors have used the mean in order to establish the expenditure average per person during the visit. Thus, the total expenditure of the visit was 473.33 Euros per tourist. In this sense, five days in Berlin was an average stay in this city and with a simple division the average expenditure per day was 94.66 Euros. On the other hand, the subgroups of these expenditures were as follows: the highest sum of money spent by one tourist was on accommodation (137.04 Euros); secondly, on travel or transport (110.14 Euros); on shopping (97.87 Euros): on food and beverages (93.46 Euros) and finally, on attractions' admissions (34.82 Euros).

Therefore, this research investigated the visitors' annual gross incomes and we can point out that the biggest group of cultural tourists earned yearly around 20.001 and 30.000 Euros (see Figure 2). In this sense, we must mention that there was a significant percentage of respondents who did not provide a data about their incomes (16.5%) and there were given several explanatory arguments, like: a lack of knowledge of the household income: students who live with their families; no incomes at all (e.g. unemployed without any subsidiarity); respondents that think always in another currency instead of Euros and did not want to make the conversion (even if a table of currency conversion was available); fear to say their income level to the interviewer; or respondents who did not want to provide data because of personal reasons. However, skipping the "not applicable data", there was a considerable distance between the group with more respondents of the sample, that was those who gained 20.001 and 30.000 Euros (29%), and the group with fewer respondents that was those who earned 5.000 Euros or less (6%). The rest of the groups were relatively equally proportional (between 9.5% and 14%).

6. Conclusions

The cultural tourists visiting the "Pergamon Museum" in general can be characterised as tourists who have a high-level education, because the big majority of the interviewed tourists have obtained a bachelor or master degrees. They

were adult persons in their 40's with annual incomes ranged between 20.001 and 30.000 Euros, most of them with a job in the private sector, predominantly as professionals (doctors, lawyers, teachers, etc) with no connection to the culture.

Mostly, they have arranged their trip on their own: the transport and the accommodation through the Internet. In particular, most of the visitors used the local transport system or were walking to visit the different cultural attractions in Berlin. The preferred accommodations were: the hotels or the friends' and relatives' houses; and the information about Berlin fundamentally was extracted from the Internet or personal recommendations from "family and friends".

In terms of the cultural visitors' motivations in this study, an outline can be established of a typical cultural tourist of Berlin as someone who primarily is motivated "to experience the atmosphere" and secondly desires to find out more about the culture. It means that the cultural tourist comes to Berlin to experience its character or its lifestyle. In other words, he/she wants to "change the scenario" and to experience the spirit or ethos of Berlin.

Regarding the economic impact, the total expenditures of one cultural tourist has been determined in 473.33 Euros for the visit. The sub-terms of these expenditures mostly were on accommodation, transport and shopping. Food, beverages and ticket admissions were the other sub-terms. Accordingly, the average stay in Berlin were four days, so with a simple division, the expenditure per person and per day was approximately 95 Euros.

Summing up the results of the research, it seems that today's cultural tourists in Berlin are generally high-educated people with high status occupations and good incomes. These elements represent the stereotype of the typical cultural tourists. However, not always all cultural visitors are cultural tourists, and the level of cultural motivation varies greatly from one tourist to the next. They are often looking for a mixture of culture, entertainment and relaxation, not just traditional 'high' culture products. It is also clear that 40 years old tourists are much more important than it has previously been recognised, and this segment will be particularly important in the future for repeating visitors.

Acknowledgements

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