

Tourist Roles Preference in Greece

Georgia Yfantidou, Greece, gifantid@phyed.duth.gr

George Costa, Greece

Maria Michalopoulos, Greece

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Abstract

Tourism industry became in the 90s a highly specialized commodity. Thus, new forms of tourism were generated such as sport tourism, adventure tourism and ecotourism. Cohen (1972), was one of the first researchers to suggest that tourists could be classified on the basis of similar observable behaviors. Also Pearce (1982), identified specific behaviors associated with each travel role. Yiannakis and Gibson (1992), addressed this issue, specifically devising a comprehensive classification of leisure tourists and they designed the Tourist Roles Preference Scale (TRPS) and some years later Gibson & Yiannakis presented again the latest version of TRPS on 2002. They identified 15 tourist roles Sun Lover, Action Seeker, Anthropologist, Archaeologist, Organized Mass Tourist, Thrill Seeker, Explorer, Jetsetter, Seeker, Independent Mass Tourist I - Independent Mass Tourist II, High Class Tourist, Drifter, Escapist I - Escapist II, Active Sport Tourist, Educational Tourist and afterwards, Murdi (2001) added two more tourist roles: ecotourist and nature lover. Furthermore, Hall (1992), determined sport as a particular form of tourism, Gibson (1998), referred that sport tourism is journey for recreation that lead people outside from their local societies, in order to participate at athletic activities, to attend them or to visit places that are related with sports. The purpose of this study was to determine whether the 15 leisure tourist roles devised by Yiannakis and Gibson exist in the Greek context today and to determine the preference among men and women for each tourist role. Depended variables: tourist roles and independent variable: gender. The data was consisted of a stratified sample by age and sex of 1675 tourists from about fifty countries who visited Greece in summer (June-July-August 2007). The range of age was from 17 years old to 80 years old (Mean=36 years). The data was consisted from 773 men and 845 women (missing values 57). The questionnaire is based on "Tourist Roles Preference Scale" of Gibson Heather/Yiannakis Andrew (2002), and translated in Greek, German and Russian (control of cross-cultural validity) by Yfantidou G., Costa G. & Michalopoulos M. (2007). Having the questionnaire in four languages it covered the majority of tourists. The questionnaire included 89 Likert Questions or closed questions that record:

- a. description of tourist's activities,
- b. description of vacation destination,
- c. examination of major human needs,
- d. demographical and personal data and
- e. certain destination preference.

The questionnaires were distributed at the two bigger airports in Greece: Eleftherios Venizelos at Athens and Macedonia airport at Thessaloniki. The questionnaires were distributed to the tourists after the check in at the airport at depart from Greece to their countries after their visit to Greece. For the statistical analysis it was used the SPSS. Cronbach a was used to examine the reliability of the questionnaire of tourist roles ($\alpha = .81$). Furthermore, a principal component analysis and quartimax rotation was used to verify the validity of TRPS questionnaire of the 34 variables of the tourist roles, for the specific sample. The analysis identified seven variables which explain the 52.78% of the total variance. Furthermore, to verify the validity of the TRPS, multi-dimensional scaling models were developed for the entire sample and for males and females and the tourists roles which revealed are presented at Figure 1, since most tourists have multiple tourists roles, the figures exceed 100%. This yielded a stress value of 0.02 and a squared correlation coefficient of 0.99.

1	Sun Lover	SNL	45,3%
2	Action Seeker	ACT	9,1%
3	Anthropologist	ANT	25,6%
4	Archaeologist	ARC	24,3%
5	Organized Mass Tourist	OMT	4,3%
6	Thrill Seeker	TRS	4,7%
7	Explorer	EXP	5,9%
8	Jetsetter	JST	3,8%
9	High Class Tourist	HCT	4,6%
10	Seeker	SKR	5,8%
11	Independent Mass Tourist I	IMT-I	18,6%
	Independent Mass Tourist II	IMT-II	17,5%
12	Drifter	DTR	2%
13	Escapist I	ESC-I	36,2%
	Escapist II	ESC-II	12,8%
14	Active Sport Tourist	AST	2,3%
15	Educational Tourist	EDT	4%

The stress value is a goodness of fit measure between the data and the solution, with values from 0.00 to 0.15 indicating good fit (Stalans, 1995). The coefficient is a complementary concept measuring the proportion of variance not accounted for by the configuration. Values above 0.85 are generally accepted as indicating a good fit (Yiannakis & Gibson, 1992). Crosstabulations were used to determine cell size for tourist role preference by gender (Figure 2).

Tourist Roles	gender		Total
	Male	Female	
SNL	20,4%	24,6%	45%
ACT	5,2%	3,6%	8,8%
ANT	11,5%	13,9%	25,4%
ARC	11,2%	12,9%	24,1%
OMT	1,8%	2,3%	4,1%
TRS	2,3%	2,4%	4,7%
EXP	3,2%	2,6%	5,7%
JST	1,8%	2,1%	3,8%
HCT	1,9%	2,6%	4,6%
SKR	2,9%	2,8%	5,7%
IMT-I	9%	9,9%	18,9%
IMT-II	8,2%	9,2%	17,5%
DTR	0,8%	1%	1,8%
ESC-I	16,9%	19,2%	36,1%
ESC-II	6,1%	6,8%	12,9%
AST	1,6%	0,6%	2,2%
EDT	2%	2,1%	4,1%

Concluding Sun lover, Anthropologist, Archaeologist, Independent Mass Tourist and Escapist I are the most famous tourist roles in Greece, so it is revealed a lack of other forms, which means less tourists. As far it concerns Sport tourists the numbers are disappointing, there are a lot that can be done to increase these numbers. The percentages between men and women are almost same, but small at ten of the fifteen roles. Greece destinations should provide successfully the small scale tourist roles and maximize the tourism products.

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