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## **THEORY OF GENERATIONS IN TOURISM: TRANSFORMATION OF DEMAND AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE SERVICE MARKET**

### **ТЕОРІЯ ПОКОЛІНЬ У ТУРИЗМІ: ТРАНСФОРМАЦІЯ ПОПИТУ ТА РОЗВИТОК РИНКУ ПОСЛУГ**

The article explores the application of generational theory to the analysis of tourist preferences. The concept of Howe and Strauss, which considers generations as social cohorts formed under the influence of historical and economic factors, is analysed. It has been determined that taking into account age characteristics contributes to the development of effective marketing strategies in tourism. The tourist preferences of generations are studied: Baby Boomers (1943–1963) choose comfort, organised tours, cultural and health tourism; Generation X (1964–1982) combines comfort with active recreation, prefers ecotourism and gastronomic travel; Millennials (1983–1996 (2000)) actively use digital technologies, choose non-standard and eco-friendly routes; Generation Z (1997 (2000)–2012) focuses on personalised travel and social trends; Generation Alpha (2013 onwards) is characterised by the integration of technology and environmental awareness. It has been established that the adaptation of tourism services to the needs of different generations will contribute to the development of the industry, the use of digital technologies and personalised solutions.

**Keywords:** generational theory, tourism, tourist preferences, sustainable development, personalisation of tourism, trends in tourism.

У роботі досліджено застосування теорії поколінь для аналізу споживчих вподобань у туристичній галузі. Проаналізовано концепцію, розроблену Нейлом Хоувом та Вільямом Штраусом, яка розглядає покоління як соціальні когорти, що формуються під впливом історичних подій та соціально-економічних факторів. Визначено, що теорія поколінь дозволяє деталізувати туристичні уподобання різних вікових груп, що сприяє підвищенню ефективності маркетингових стратегій та вдосконаленню туристичних продуктів. Досліджено туристичні вподобання поколінь: Baby Boomers (1943–1963) віддають перевагу комфорту, організованим турам, культурним подорожам і санаторно-курортному відпочинку. Вони обирають надійних туристичних операторів, класичні маршрути та високий рівень сервісу. Популярними напрямками для них є оздоровчі курорти, історичні місця та круїзні подорожі; Покоління X (1964–1982) поєднує комфорт із пригодами, цінує якість обслуговування та активно використовує самостійне планування подорожей. Вони віддають перевагу екотуризму, гастрономічним турам, а також поєднують традиційні та активні види відпочинку. Важливими є автентичність досвіду та гнучкість у виборі напрямку; Millennials (1983–1996 (2000)) орієнтуються на цифрові технології, соціальні мережі та нестандартні туристичні формати. Вони активно використовують онлайн-платформи для бронювання, віддають перевагу самостійним подорожам, нестандартним маршрутам, екстремальному та екологічному туризму. Велике значення мають унікальні враження,

соціальна відповідальність і можливість поділитися досвідом у соцмережах; Покоління Z (1997 (2000)–2012) використовує персоналізовані туристичні програми, орієнтується на думку лідерів громадської думки, вибір подорожей залежить від соціальних трендів. Вони уникають стандартних турів, віддаючи перевагу гнучким маршрутам, цифровим сервісам та інтерактивним елементам, таким як VR-екскурсії; Покоління Альфа (2013–далі) характеризується повною інтеграцією технологій у всі аспекти життя, включаючи подорожі. Очікується, що їхні туристичні вподобання будуть максимально персоналізовані, базуватимуться на штучному інтелекті та доповненій реальності. Також важливим аспектом стане екологічна орієнтація та вибір сталих, етичних туристичних продуктів. Встановлено, що розвиток туристичної галузі залежить від урахування потреб різних поколінь. Запропоновано адаптацію туристичних послуг відповідно до змін у споживчих запитах, використання цифрових технологій, персоналізованих та екологічно відповідальних рішень. Визначено, що тенденції цифровізації, сталого розвитку та соціальної відповідальності стануть ключовими факторами у майбутньому розвитку туристичної індустрії.

**Ключові слова:** теорія поколінь, туризм, туристичні вподобання, сталий розвиток, персоналізація туризму, тренди у туризмі.

**Statement of the problem.** The theory of generations is an important methodological tool in the field of consumer preferences research and the formation of effective market strategies. It is widely used in different countries to optimize the mechanisms of service market management, in particular in the tourism industry. The use of this approach contributes to a deeper understanding of the motivations and needs of different socio-demographic groups of consumers, which allows adjusting marketing and management strategies in accordance with the dominant value orientations of a particular generation.

**Analysis of recent research and publications.** Both foreign and domestic scholars have studied the theory of generations, including Strauss W., Howe N., Bruner E., Denysenko M., Davydenko N., Bliznyuk T. [1–5] and others. Despite the considerable scientific interest in the application of this theory, a number of its important aspects still remain insufficiently studied. In particular, the issue of differentiation of travel preferences within certain age groups requires further study, which would allow for a deeper understanding of the factors that influence their travel decisions.

**Formulation of the research task.** The purpose of the article is to analyze the impact of different generations on the development of the tourism market, to determine their consumer preferences and behavioral characteristics, and to develop strategies for adapting tourism services to the needs of each age group.

**Summary of the main research material.** The concept of generational theory, proposed by American researchers Neil Howe and William Strauss, is of particular importance. Their approach is based on a comprehensive analysis of the socio-cultural, economic, historical and psychological factors that influence the formation of the worldview positions of different generations. The main principle of this theory is to identify specific characteristics inherent in each generation, which are formed under the influence of unique socio-political and economic conditions of a particular historical period [1; 2].

In the context of the tourism industry, generational theory allows us to identify the specific needs of different categories of tourism consumers, determining their expectations regarding the quality of service, leisure formats, and key factors that influence decision-making on the choice of a tourism product. Thus, companies in this industry can tailor their offers to suit their target audiences, creating more personalized and competitive tourism products.

The Baby Boomers (1943–1963) are optimists, team players, quite active, highly respectful of curiosity, and love to talk. For these people, it is important to be heard and understood, the "packaging" does not matter to them, it is how a particular product/service will help them.

This group of tourists prefers comfort, safety and quality service. They are inclined to organized tours, cruises and health tourism. Cultural and historical aspects of travel are important to them, including visits to museums, historical sites, and natural attractions. They often use traditional travel agencies to plan their trips, choose reliable operators and prefer well-known hotel chains. They also tend to travel with family or groups of like-minded people. Health and wellness resorts, sanatoriums, and hiking trails with minimal physical activity are particularly popular among this generation.

Generation X (1964–1982) – for these people, knowledge, expertise, and status come first. They are autonomous and always busy. These are people who care about the title of their business card. They are characterized by great individualism, informality of views, readiness for change, as well as economy and pragmatism.

These tourists prefer a combination of comfort and adventure elements. They are interested in outdoor activities, ecotourism, gastronomic tours, and independent travel. They are characterized by a high level of loyalty to their favorite brands, but at the same time seek a quality price-to-service ratio. Generation X is quite tech-

savvy, although not as dependent on digital platforms as younger generations. They value travel authenticity and the opportunity to immerse themselves in the culture of a country or region. In addition, they actively use mixed tourism formats that include elements of both traditional and outdoor activities.

Generation Y/Millennials (1983–1996–(2000)). This generation is characterized by freedom-loving attitude and desire to get positive emotions. They are energetic and mobile people. They value personal comfort, are easy-going, want to act here and now, to do everything at once. The key word is not "should" but "want". For them, a violent combination of unrealistic expectations, overestimated self-esteem, and vulnerability that requires special treatment is acceptable. This generation has very high demands on service: they need impeccable service 24/7.

Millennials get their information mostly from the Internet, but they cannot be attracted by direct advertising, and traditional marketing methods only cause irritation. It is not easy to win the trust of millennials, because before

making a purchase, they rely on recommendations from friends and relatives, read reviews, look at photos and ratings, compare prices and look for discounts. In general, they are actively collecting information.

This generation is largely shaping the modern travel market, as they actively use digital technologies to plan their trips. Millennials prefer unique experiences, independent travel, extreme tourism, short-distance travel, and eco-friendly routes. They actively use social media to share experiences and seek recommendations. They also have an increased interest in "instagrammable" places – beautiful and unusual locations that can be showcased on social media. Millennials are more likely to choose budget accommodation options, such as apartments or guest houses, and are largely guided by reviews from other tourists. They also favor the concept of work & travel and digital nomadism, which allows them to combine work and travel. Generation Z (1997–(2000)–2012) is characterized by a rapid process of social adaptation and receipt of all necessary information mainly from the Internet, in particular through social platforms. For this generation, style, modernity, and the desire to keep up with current trends are of particular importance. At the same time,

their preferences and value orientations are in a state of dynamic formation and constant transformation.

Effective communication with Generation Z requires a specific approach, as they are highly critical of traditional advertising strategies. Only unique, bright and personalized offers that best meet their individual needs can attract their attention. In particular, in the field of travel services, they prefer individually designed trips that take into account their personal interests and current travel trends rather than standard package tours.

One of the key sources of inspiration and consumer decision-making for this group is influencers and bloggers. Therefore, the choice of tourist destinations is often determined by the popularity of famous people on social media. Thus, relevance and compliance with fashion trends play a significant role in their choice of travel products and services.

When communicating with Generation Z, it's important to keep in mind that visual content is much more attractive to them than textual information. In addition, they do not need long-term communication contacts with representatives of travel companies, and excessive attention, such as frequent reminders or personal messages, can be perceived as intrusive. This is the first generation to grow up in the digital world, so their travel preferences are focused on interactivity, personalization, and technological innovation. They often choose to travel on a budget, but with

a lot of impressions, and are committed to environmental responsibility and socially significant initiatives. Online platforms, mobile apps and artificial intelligence play a key role in their choice of destinations. Generation Z relies heavily on technology, including augmented and virtual reality, to choose their travel destinations. They prefer flexible, independent, and fast solutions, such as booking through mobile apps and searching for budget-friendly vacation options with a high level of autonomy.

Generation Alpha (2013 onwards). This is the youngest generation that has not yet fully formed its travel preferences, but several trends can already be identified:

- full integration of technologies. Use of artificial intelligence, VR/AR to select and organize travel;
- personalization. It is expected that their travel experience will be maximally adapted to their personal interests;
- environmental awareness. They are growing up in a world where ecology is a key topic, so sustainable tourism will become the norm for them;
- family tourism. In the early stages of their lives, the choice of travel will depend on the preferences of their parents (millennials and Generation Z).

Each generation has its own values, so when choosing a particular type of tourism and attitude towards it, preferences are built for each generation separately, namely, taking into account external factors and the time period of life.

**Conclusions.** The theoretical foundations of the theory of generations allow not only to predict the dynamics of changes in consumer behavior, but also to develop long-term strategies for the development of the tourism sector, taking into account global socio-cultural trends. Thanks to this approach, tourism market players are able to create more effective marketing campaigns, improve customer satisfaction, and contribute to the sustainable development of the industry as a whole. The development of tourism largely depends on the preferences of different generations. Taking into account their needs allows the tourism business to adapt its offers, improve services and expand the market. Trends related to digitalization, sustainability, and personalization will be the determining factors in the future development of the travel industry. In addition, technological innovations and changing values of younger generations, including the growth of environmental and social responsibility, will lead to the transformation of travel service models. The development of digital platforms, process automation, and the use of big data will help the tourism sector remain competitive in a dynamic global environment.

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