

Huang, J. & Hsu, C. H. C. (2009). Interaction among fellow cruise passengers: Diverse experiences and impacts. Journal of Travel and Tourism Marketing. 26. 547-567

- Exploratory study of **how interaction** between tourists encountered in the tourism space contributed to the **cruise experience** to various extent.
- **Levels of interaction** followed **Levinger & Snoek's (1972)** model of relationship development:
 - o Unilateral impression
 - o Surface contact (superficial and role-bounded interaction)
 - o Increasing mutuality (relationship beyond role prescription)

3 Levels of C2C Interaction:

- No interaction or Superficial interaction:
- **Definition of Superficial interactions: Very limited or no interaction with fellow guests takes place. Privacy and interaction with own travel companion(s) is prioritized. Interactions occur only because it is imposed by the hostel (example: brief greetings exchanged during breakfast).**
 - o Participants kept more within their own group (parents, spouses, friends)
 - o Levy (2005) Travellers with strong intra-group ties may put forth less effort in socialising with other strange travellers
 - o C2C was unintended or may be imposed (eg. sharing table at breakfast)
 - o C2C did not occur out of participants' initiation
 - o Tendency to communicate with other customers was dependent on their frame of mind that oriented their attention toward their travel companions
 - o Interaction with other passengers was undertaken in a half-hearted way.
 - o They would not use words like 'friendship' or 'friends' but still describe people they meet as 'nice', 'interesting' and 'friendly'.
 - o Acquaintance (as opposed to friends) was the name given to the interactional counterpart.
 - o 'C2C interaction, if any, remained at a superficial level, characterized by role-bound encounters, instrumental communication and little knowledge about their interacting partners except for their public self-representation. Occurrence of C2C contact was dictated by external context and there was little concern for maintaining relationship with a particular person'.
 - o These contacts did not have much substantive impact on a person during the course of the cruise vacation.
- Spontaneous interactions
- **Definition of Spontaneous Interactions: Impulsive and free-flowing interactions where by conversations covering a wide range of topics (work, family, food, lifestyle, culture, travel tips) occurs on the spot. Interaction does not extend beyond the duration of the hostel stay.**
 - o Interaction still remained unintended but real communication (not mere exchanges of greetings) occurred among passengers. This was viewed as an added part of a cruise vacation.
 - o Sharing of daily cruise experience with others (what they did or did not but wanted to do)
 - o Discussion of previous travel experiences
 - o Information from others, particularly seasoned cruisers, was very helpful for first-timers or those not prepared.

- Participants valued input from fellow passengers, especially people who had been to the places before, to help them make decisions about where to go and what to see.
- Some participants already researched and pre-planned their cruise vacation so they already made up their mind. In such cases, the functional value of the information interchange diminished but the social value of the interaction gained prominence.
- Interaction was seen as a window through participants obtained insights about other people's lifestyles, cultures and other places.
- Communication not only involved people's experiences and attitudes about the world, but was also combined with self-disclosure to some extent
- 'C2C interaction was impulsive and free-flowing and passengers got to know others a little bit. Interaction at this level remained spontaneous and on the spot, and seldom lasted beyond the course of the cruise vacation. The wide range of topics discussed was seen as an add-on to the cruise experience, with both instrumental and autotelic functions'.
- Autotelic aspect of interaction created a more enjoyable experience for participants (ie. Social interaction created playful spaces on cruise ship (Yarnal, 2003)

- Close interactions – PERSONAL INTERACTIONS

- Definition of Personal Interactions: There is a bond with other guests and friendships are established. Unintended interactions with other guests develop into purposely coordinated activities to be experienced together. The relationship is more meaningful and extends beyond the boundary of the hostel.

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- Bonds with particular others were established
- Passengers met others when engaged in small group activities (dinner, games) and got to know others gradually during the process
- When people felt they had much in common or could get along well, bonds began to develop.
- Initial C2C interaction occurred not out of a person's efforts of actively seeking socialisation, but more of a natural process in group activities.
- When people found others interesting or compatible, they began to set aside time to meet each other or plan activities together, signalling a transition from unintended interactions with whomever happened to be at the same spot at the same time to intended or planned interactions with particular others.
- The movement from coincidental encounters to coordinated activities signified the establishment of mutual bonds or a connection between passengers.
- They became more involved in group activities as a result of meeting others
- They tried new things as a result of meeting others
- Interaction at this level described as very 'active' and 'close'.
- Making friends meant that intermittent interactions were turned into meaningful relationships, which usually extended beyond the boundary of a cruise trip
- Participants expressed a desire to meet their newly made friends again and a few have done so afterwards
- Participants used words like 'definitely' 'absolutely' to affirm positive contributions from friends they made to their cruise experiences.
- Sociability on board with newly made friends was often recognised as one of the highlights of cruise experience and benefit of cruise experience.

- **Definition of Superficial Interaction:** Very limited or no interaction with fellow guests takes place. Privacy and interaction with own travel companion(s) is prioritized. Interactions occur only because it is imposed by the hostel (example: brief greetings at breakfast table).
 1. I interacted frequently with other hostel guest(s)
 2. Other hostel guest(s) were friendly towards me
 3. I interacted with many hostel guest(s)
 4. Other hostel guest(s) usually kept to themselves
 5. Other hostel guest(s) had their own circle of friends
 6. Other hostel guests were not approachable

- **Definition of Spontaneous Interaction:** Impulsive and free-flowing interactions where by conversations covering a wide range of topics (work, family, food, lifestyle, culture, travel tips) occurs on the spot. Interaction does not extend beyond the duration of the hostel stay.
 1. The other guest(s) in the hostel shared their travel experience with me
 2. The other guest(s) in the hostel exchanged travel information with me
 3. The other guest(s) in the hostel had conversations about their family with me
 4. The other guests(s) in the hostel had conversations about their working life with me
 5. It was easy to talk to other hostel guest(s)
 6. Other hostel guests told me about their past hostel experience

- **Definition of Personal Interaction:** Friendships are established because there is a bond with other guests. Unintended interactions with other guests develop into purposely coordinated activities to be experienced together. The friendship extends beyond the boundary of the hostel.
 1. I have developed friendships with other guest(s) I met at the hostel
 2. I enjoyed spending time with other guest(s) at the hostel
 3. The other guest(s) in the hostel made my time here more enjoyable
 4. The other guest(s) in the hostel offered me help when I needed it
 5. I went sightseeing with other guest(s) from the hostel
 6. I had dinner with other guest(s) from the hostel
 7. I shared food with other guest(s) from the hostel
 8. In the future, I plan to meet up with the friend(s) I have made at the hostel