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# 17 Misbehaviours of emerging tourism markets

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**The objectives of this chapter are to:**

- Highlight dimensions of tourists' roles in causing misbehaviours and impacts;
- Classify types of impact by seriousness and intentionality;
- Illustrate the effects of new market with indicative cases;
- Provide a gradient of solutions to be employed in concert to manage misbehaviours.

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**Keywords:** cross-cultural roles, intentionality, outcomes of contact, severity of misbehaviours, remedial strategies

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## Introduction

The media and social networks appear to love stories about tourists behaving inappropriately, foolishly or destructively (Andriotis, 2010). Contemporary YouTube clips, items in blogs, narratives and media exposés all offer critiques of the behaviours of new waves of tourists (Williams-Burnett, Skinner and Fallon, 2018). Groups from Asia and China are central to these reports (Wu, 2017). In this chapter, there is an attempt to move beyond the sensationalism and media stories by introducing some structure and analysis into the discussion about tourists' bad behaviours. It can also be noted that the condemning voices of the present era are not unlike those of earlier times when American and Japanese tourists first emerged as visible, yet unfamiliar groups in select destination communities (Rosenow and Pulsipher, 1978).

The flow of the argument in this chapter initially traces a line of research in sociology and social psychology about strangers and interaction processes. The meaning of new markets is then briefly restated to maintain the continuity of meaning for chapters in this book. From these considerations, a four cell model is developed to structure the chapter. The model is characterised by two dimensions – first, intentionality and second, the type of impact. The first pole of the intentionality dimension identifies acts that are clearly planned and cause offence. This pole is counterpoised by sets of behaviours that are troublesome but were not carried out with a full awareness of the impact. A second dimension separates the impacts according to their focus – some are damaging to the natural world while others harm the well-being of individuals, social groups and cultures. Additionally, the seriousness of the reported problems helps frame the discussion.

The major intent of the chapter is to deepen our understanding of the easily observable phenomenon of tourists' less appealing behaviours, most notably when the tourists are unfamiliar to the hosts in a destination. It is noted towards the end that correcting and ameliorating the impacts demands a patterned approach to the reduction of the undesirable impacts. Not all of these corrections and ameliorative efforts can be achieved through focusing on tourists themselves. Additionally, as with all work describing tourists, it is constantly necessary to avoid overgeneralization and attempts at remedial actions must consider the many differences among new waves of tourists and the way they travel (Galani-Moutafi, 1999; Pearce, 2019).

## The impact of strangers

Georg Simmel (1950) was one of the first social science scholars to consider the concept of the stranger. The main emphasis in Simmel's early twentieth century work was on strangers who joined a community (Riley, 2008). By stressing the importance of the stranger as a position with a certain status in the social fabric, Simmel laid a foundation for the study of social interaction as a key research topic. Further, by emphasising that people are typically engaged in dynamic dyadic interchanges and evolving communication networks, Simmel emphasized roles as a way to escape the nomothetic and ideographic conundrum. In brief, every individual interaction is not subject to universal rules and laws (the nomothetic approach) nor is it so variable that patterns cannot be detected (the ideographic view). Instead, Simmel's foundation work suggested that we can define certain types of interactions based on roles and seek to describe common patterns within specific contexts (see also Argyle, Furnham and Graham, 1981).

Viewed through these academic lenses, communities who encounter groups of tourists do so while performing common roles in diverse social

interaction contexts. Several key questions can be asked. Is the local community already familiar with other types of tourists and has there been a long history of tourism in that destination? Alternatively, are the members of the new market the first tourists of any kind to venture into the community or location? Additionally, is the new market culturally similar to or culturally different from the host community? The distinction between culturally similar and culturally different can be understood in multiple ways: language, ethnicity, religion, wealth, and interests (cf. Bochner, 1982). Further, are the visiting tourists ensconced primarily in a resort enclave or do their holiday activities encourage their dispersal throughout the community and landscapes of the destination?

The earliest writers on the effects of intercultural contact provided some tentative answers to these types of questions by following the principles first set forth by Amir (1969). He developed a set of propositions about new groups in contact. In his proposals, the positive outcomes of interaction would be more likely when the two parties and their roles were culturally linked, the interaction was intensive rather than brief, and opportunities for meaningful friendships possible. Less positive interactions would prevail when the interactions were short, impersonal and functional, the parties were culturally different, and the number of people involved was large. Dramatic and destructive outcomes have indeed resulted when the interactions conform to these last mentioned principles. These include a rise in crime, lowered self-esteem due to social comparison processes, the takeover of traditional land uses and a rejection of tourists themselves and the tourist industry. From the long inventory of such negative impacts, some key summaries across different research eras can be found in Finney and Watson (1977), Pearce, Moscardo and Ross (1996) and Sharpley (2018). The positive outcomes tend to occur in situations where the interactions are small scale, culturally compatible and more personal. The mutual benefits here include sharing of international views, the development of friendships, employment and retention of young people in communities due to the economic income generated, and community pride linked to the revitalization of local traditions and practices. Documentation for these positive effects is also widespread, most especially when the principles for positivity enunciated by Amir prevail in contemporary small scale cultural settings and ecotourism operations (Aznar and Hoefnagels, 2020; Buckley, 2003; Cukier-Snow and Wall; 1993; Naidoo, Pearce and Sharpley, 2017; Scheyvens, 2000). An extension of the notion that bad behaviours can be understood through key principles defining the social interaction can be extended to interaction with the physical environment. Here too, familiarity and the chance to be well informed matter. Without such awareness about the physical environment, its species and the attendant sensitivities of settings, then environ-