

## THE EFFECTS OF THE INNOVATIVE ADAPTATION TO THE REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN WINTER TOURISM

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### ABSTRACT

*In recent years, consumer behavior in tourism sector has been changing extensively as a more sophisticated and specific market, mainly aiming at the availability of unique activities existing at the places visited. Especially businesses in relatively smaller destinations such as winter tourism, in an era dominated by consumer's requests for specific experience, which plays a key role in being able to meet the demands of the tourism industry to stand out from the competition. Given this context, technological innovation and rapid adaptation to these innovations in transport, telecommunications, business organizing, logistics and related activities will affect small tourism destinations such as winter tourism and provide new opportunities for regional development.*

**Keywords:** *Tourism, Winter tourism, Innovation, Regional development, Competition*

### 1. INTRODUCTION

For many countries that are improving the income that is arising from tourism, said income is quite essential for them economically. Countries that are based their economies commonly in agriculture see that the economic benefits an effects of the tourism are greater that the countries with the already developed country economies. Especially after 1980, in order to create new employment areas the exchange cash income is required and in order to create interregional economic balance tourism has a key role and therefore developing countries are beginning to give additional special attention for the development of their tourism industry. Said importance shows itself as increase in the resources that are transferred to the tourism industry, administrative, fiscal and legal facilities in the industry and visitor access of the areas that have great potential for the tourism industry. (Bahar & Kozak, 2006).

On the other hand, whether tourism industry can be the locomotive of the development alone is an important subject of discussion. The greatest reason of this discussions, tourism industry can be affected various external factors like contagion, natural events, terror, civil disturbance etc., directly. However, some of the opinions state that in the process of industrialization; the countries and

regions that are late for the process or having various obstacles on the industrialization are leaning toward to the alternative operations such as tourism and by this mean reducing the regional development differences to a minimum with this rational solution.

Even if it is a broad term, if it is required to give a general description the regional development concept can be described a general effort executed in order to support the economic activities in the backward regions for the purpose of reducing the inequality arising from the result of the collection of the activities that are generating employment and welfare (OECD, 2016).

However, before anything else, the problem in here is in order to improve the economic development the physical and human accumulation should be increased and technological change to lead this subject will be required. Within this context considering the developing areas, income per individual and therefore savings are low and connected to this the technological chance is not sufficient and therefore the process of development has its obstacles (Lucas , 1988). Not having enough technological development and the collection of the capital, forces the area for the exportation of the low added value and lowly dense technological products are being the focus and this circumstance

increases the regional development differences. At this point, the regions may use the tourism activities as an exit point in accordance with their attributes as an alternative income source.

However, the tourism industry has an important share within the global economic income. For the year 2014, the total GSMH within the world has direct tourism contribution of 2.364 billion American dollars and 3,7%. The total contribution is 9,8% and 7,580 billion American dollars. It has been foreseen that this number will increase in ratio in 2025 for GSMH for 11,391 billion American dollars and 10,5%. In addition to this within the year 2014 in global employment tourism provided 9,4% share and 276 million individuals in total employment and the visitors have generated 1,383 billion dollars of exportation income. Accordingly, tourism industry appears as an essential industry on all world economies (UNWTO, 2015); (WTTC, 2015).

The share that tourism industry has approximately 10% in the total income globally provides a great opportunity for the developing countries to close the differences arising from the development. At this point, the share that will be obtained from the income generated for all the countries that are competing within the tourism industry will increase the speed of the growth rate of the country and reduce the regional development differences. In example, as it is known, in Turkey east regions and west regions have serious development differences between. In order to reduce the development differences between regions and to provide balanced growth between regions and to ensure development, tourism industry has the potential to have a key role. Tourism in general and specifically developing alternative tourism activities has an important role on the active usage of these areas. Therefore more foreign tourists visit the location and the positive externalities to be generated by the industry and forward-backward connection between the industries, new business lines, employment income and added value to be generated from the service industry and therefore the sustainable development has an important step to be realized. (Bahar, 2007),

## 2. THE IMPORTANCE OF THE TOURISM ON REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Towards the end of the 20th Century, Tourism has been emerged as an efficient regional development vehicle in various countries. Tourism activities, especially in the regions that they are being

realized, have caused important changes on the social and economic levels in these regions. Tourism directly effects the employment and income of the foreign exchange. In addition in less developed regions have the equal opportunities to become integrated with the economics of the country and benefit from the growth.

In developing economies exchange cash obtained from the exportation of the agricultural products are not sufficient and these transactions are not covering the financials of the targeted economic change and therefore expectations for the tourism in these countries have arisen. Increase of the importance of the tourism is not only arising from the foreign cash collection, payment balance of the debts throughout the country or having more opportunities for employment. Aside from all of these, creating added value and with the increasing effect helping the country to increase the national income level and enabling the payment of the external debts and increasing the public income. The roles are quite various and therefore tourism is swiftly becoming a strategically important industry. On the other hand this industry also has forwards and backwards connection with the other industries and therefore its importance and effect increases substantially (Incekara A. , 2001).

Considering the indirect contributions, the tourism sector has economic effect of significant sizes. As services exportation the foreign cash and foreign capital that have been provided to the region will increase and new employment possibilities are created and the employment is direct increased and the improvement of the infrastructure and the increasing the speed of the global integration of the regional economies will be considered as a role on direct regional development (Incekara A., 2001). Considering these positive effects if a country has less developed regions increasing the tourism actives there will be meaning the reducing the economical balance problems within the less developed regions and more developed regions. Within this line new sources will be transferring to the regional economy and new business lines and employment areas will be created and income provided in each industry within the regional economics will be increased in parallel to such operations. However, in tourism industry, serious investments are required and lacking essential infrastructure, having less capital accumulation and not having the entrepreneurship spirit will be obstacles on the fast development process. (Bahar, 2007). Exceeding this obstacle is a matter of economic politics. Therefore with the investment

incentives to the industry enough support should be given and required policies should be applied for this situation. Then again, for the tourism activities to be seen within the region, human investments and technology adaptation for the region provides both national and international competition opportunities and makes the region more appealing while being an essential matter. Therefore for the determination of the tourism activities regionally and to apply the incentives and investments accordingly, the lowly developed regions would be the essential element for the change.

### **3. EFFECT OF INNOVATION IN WINTER TOURISM ON COMPETITION AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Winter tourism can be described where skiing and other winter sports are available and the travels to the destinations applicable for aforementioned and as a complement of activities of travel, accommodation and benefiting from other services. (Incekara A., 1998). Winter tourism usually being able to developed at where the snow is and on mountainous areas and in accordance with the period of snow with availability of the geographical features. In addition, infrastructures and superstructures such as various mechanical facilities, accommodation and transportation should be available and sufficient in order to develop this kind of tourism and enable it to make contributions to the regional economy. (Ülker, 1999), (Gönençgil & Güngör, 2002).

Winter tourism, as an alternative kind of tourism can make significant contribution to enlarge the tourism income on twelve months. As it is known, tourism income usually increases on summer months and decrease in other months. These seasonal fluctuations forces employment to be reducing in the specific months of the year and Resources remain dormant and operational costs of the facilities would be too high to be covered up and other relevant problems affect both industry and regional economy and therefore the country. Therefore, considering not to focus of tourism income in the summer months and to spread it to the other months would be important for the alternative tourism activities and therefore winter tourism is important. However winter sports are the locomotive activity of the winter tourism but these destinations may continue their tourism activities outside of the winter months. These locations that are being used for the support purposes within winter months may be used in other months as various tourism kinds such as hunting tourism,

tableland tourism, mountain tourism and congress tourism. With this attribution they may add contributions for rage region in the tourism income in other months of the year. (Albayrak, 2013: 199).

Within this context the essential attributes of the winter tourism can be described as follows (Albayrak, 2013:199).

- Winter tourism, is a tourism type with the winter sports, adventure and desire for adrenaline and the passion to live within a specific height, inclination and in the snow fields in the mountain area in the winter, with the aimed objectives of both sports and a healthy lifestyle. Executing winter tourism in the winter months will provide contribution to the spread of the twelve months. However, during the winter, regions that are subjected to winter tourism are appealing in every season and the facilities that are used for the winter tourism can be used as other activities such as nature tourism, tableland tourism, youth camps, and congress tourism mountain tourism within the summer season.
- Winter tourism enables the usage of the remaining dormant fields by allowing the creation of demand for tourism in these regions and to obtain a share of the tourism industry.
- In the region that the winter tourism is being realized, all the income from the employment and tourism economy can be increased but considering other tourism type it requires more infrastructure and superstructure investment. Because winter tourism can only be executed on a certain height. Therefore for this reason, in the regions that are subjected to winter tourism accommodation, logistics and transportation being in the first place all the investments to satisfy the needs and the requirements of the tourist should be fulfilled first.
- Winter tourism participants are from each age group and various educational levels but however they are usually are in the high income level and they spend more considering the tourists that are executing other tourism types. Main motivation for tourist to this tourism type is to execute different kinds of sport and the need for the learning and curiosity. Tourists that are executing winter tourism are looking for some difference and under the desire of learning and exploring the difference with the need for risk, excitement, adventure, challenge and innovation.

### 3.1. Innovation of the Winter Tourism and Competition

Considering these attributes of the winter tourism, the most attractive attribute of the winter tourism comparing to the other tourism types is the tourist that are choosing this tourism activity are usually with the more income level and their per individual expenses are higher and they want to discover what is different having new experiences and innovation for their essential motivations. On the other hand, the requirement to establish mechanical facilities in the beginning, accommodation, logistics, transportation and other infrastructure and superstructure investments are extremely required and they are increasing the costs and expenses and these are the negative aspects considering the other tourism types.

Since the income level and the spending per individual are high, this tourism activity is an advantage for the center regions. However, the tourist preferences of the discovery of different, having the different experiences and their innovation may provide disadvantage for the winter tourism centers. At this point, innovative ideas and differences that may be cover these preferences and being able to provide these within this framework, may enable the tourism centers both regional and in international competition to be on the front if they are able to actively use innovation and adapt quickly.

In addition, innovative activities are not only being able to satisfy the ever-changing needs of the customers and being able to provide different Products. Of course, all innovative approaches to satisfy all the requests and needs of the customers have an essential role on the preference on their winter tourism. On the other hand for tourism facilities to increase their profit margins or for the Organization structure to provide advantage on the costs, management structure, budget management, information and communication transfer techniques, logistics and marketing areas require innovative ideas or being able to adapt to the already available innovative techniques.

However in winter tourism, innovation is depending on the development of new Technologies, new combinations of the already available Technologies and other information and it is not a mere subject of technology and Organization. This situation also has a psychological and socio-cultural nature. Because a product, service, marketing method or management

understanding may differ with the innovation management for an individual to individual, Organization to Organization or country to country. Therefore in the winter tourism destination, demographical, sociological, psychological and cultural attributes will directly Change to viewpoint on the innovation and the speed of adaptation. (Bulu, Eraslan, & Bakan, 2008).

At this point two essential questions regarding the effect of innovation on the winter tourism emerges. First question is how innovation promotes this tourism type and what advantages does it bring on the competition. The second question is what innovation in tourism is and how the tourism can adapt to a new Technology. The responses for these two questions can be found in the description of the innovation and the effect on winter tourism of different innovation types in tourism general and especially in winter tourism. Innovation is a broad term and there may be several various description but the summary may be as follows; within the operational applications within the business, in the Organization of workplace or in external relationships a new or remarkably improved product (goods or services) or a process, a new marketing method or realization of a new organization method. (OECD & EU, 2006: pp.50). With a different description innovation may be defined as process of bringing in something new out or new business organization ideas, cost cutting by providing new budget systems, improvement of information systems or mixing different Products together may also mean as innovation includes the process, new ideas in the products and services and its application. Approval and application is always in the center of this description because change and adaptation capacity is always within this subject. (Hjalager, 2010).

In the literature there are several classifications and descriptions for the types of innovation. In general these classifications were being subjected to Schumpeterian approach and applied to the tourism sector in certain areas. Such as, Hjalager, (2010), Hjalager, (2002), Weiermair, (2006), Hall, (2009) and Nordin, (2003) in their studies describe the innovations in the product, process, Organization/management, marketing and corporate structure as the essential elements that are within the innovating category in tourism.

Products and services innovation means that the novelties that are directly visible to the customers and accepted as new, never before seen or accepted as new for the businesses and the destinations.

(Hjalager, 2010). For the development of the businesses or regions, to protect the values and locations on the competitive market, affecting the purchase of the tourists; product and services innovation have a big role. This category in the commercialization stage consists of completely new or interchangeable products and services. The innovation is visible for the producers, suppliers, customers and the rivals. Customer royalty programs, environmental sustainable accommodation facilities and local traditional organizations may be examples of these kinds of innovation (Nordin, 2003). However for the winter sports, lifts, snow board parks, dog sleds, snow canoes, snow bikes navigation games, accessories development and sales and similar various Products and services may be the innovation and provide the customers to have a bigger palette of experiences (Hjalager, 2010).

In example, in Australia after 1950's cable car system was begin to be adapted to the tourism industry. From then it was updated and in the 1990's the system has converted to low cost Monocable Detachable Gondolas. This innovation activity was aimed for the transportation first, but when it was being applied to the Australian winter tourism in short term its results were positive for the advertising and marketing. (Mayer, 2009).

Process innovation is usually consisting of productivity, efficiency and business flow that are background in the activities. Technological investments are the basic premise of the process innovation and from time to time business Organization is restricted in order to be executed (Hjalager, 2010). Process innovation is aiming for the preservation of the quality and its development and effects for reduction of the prices. Process innovation is for the goods and the services to be new or substantially changed improved distribution or distribution method or other supportive activities, technicalities, equipment and software change. New or substantially changed, improved production Technology, supplied method, distribution method of the product will be within the context of the process in innovation. The outcome of the process innovation is production amount, product quality, and product and distribution costs. Information and communication Technologies, computer supported management and monitoring and similar innovations may be shown as a process innovation in the recent years for the tourism (Bulu, Eraslan, & Bakan, 2008). Especially Information and Communication Technologies are the backbone of the process

innovation in the recent years. Innovations are in information and communication Technologies back-office systems, reservation systems etc. For the internal restructuring and electronic businesses are proving great opportunities. On industrial basis, with the technological chance, obstacles before the telecommunication have been reduced and information processing and communication costs have reduced. As results, through the tourism value chain, touristic enterprises have gained access for bigger amount of data, much easier. The essential purpose on using this information is to integrate the information that have been provided by a great volume of suppliers, to develop the database for the customers, to provide information mapping regarding the personalized services presentation and to provide savings from the cost and time. (Stamboulis & Skayannis, 2003).

When applying innovations like information transfer technologies, computer supported management and monitoring to the winter tourism the aforementioned costs are being minimized, logistics services are being executed more efficiency and for the efficiency of the Office and reservation systems, and both control security of the technical and mechanical facilities such as cable cars, ski lifts and slopes the efficiency has become more important. However, for relatively small and isolated from the outside of World, these tourism activities to be subjected to marketing on global scale will improve the tourism activities.

Considering the industry qualification differences and the development on the services that have been provided by the businesses of the winter tourism, improving the efficiency of the introduction-based activities and increasing the productivity and the competitiveness within this frame can be seen by the how the information transfer techniques are being used and the adaptation speed to the new technologies. Within this context, as an example for the Information Society Strategy and its annex Action Plan that has been implemented "goturkey" project is an important example.

Organizational or managerial innovation includes more novelties than the new or substantially changed goods and services. Business models, managerial techniques, strategies and organizational structure may be considered at organizational and managerial innovation. (Hjalager, 2010).

The main challenge for many winter tourism businesses is to being able to keep the personnel, being able to continue with the flexibility, providing the sustainability and controlling the costs. Within this context increasing the satisfaction within the workplace, staff training and improving the personnel abilities is quite important (Hjalager, 2010). Organization and the managerial innovation is to create and apply managerial methods or new or substantially change Company structures for the business execution efficiency development or goods and services qualities or the information usage level of the Company. Within this context especially with the different publicity, marketing techniques and the attracting properties such as Customer royalty program improvement may be used as an example. These programs enable the relationship to be long term for the tourism provide and the Customer and contributes for reduction of the marketing costs. Organizational and managerial innovation however will be consisting of the new or substantially improved information management systems, substantial changes on the business organizations, partnerships, Company mergers and accusations and external source usage and by usage of such the Company have new methods between other companies and institutions (Bulu, Eraslan, & Bakan, 2008).

Corporate innovation includes the organizational or legal framework and structure and increases the efficiency on various kinds of the tourism. Corporate innovations are above the Company based innovations. However at the same time they have consisting of the innovations with broader and more comprehensive innovations that are affecting the customers and the companies. Such as usage of credit cards in the tourism industry has a broader effect and represents the corporate innovation. Similarly installation of the computer reservation systems on the industry can be considered as corporate innovation for the competition and the pricing within an industry that have too much variety. Aside from these; regulations such as copyright leasing and licensing, branding and certifications may be shown as examples for the corporate innovation. These novelties enable winter tourism to improve the industrial competition power and create attraction. (Hjalager, 2010).

However cooperation of the public and the private sector can be included in the corporate innovation for the reform and application of the incentives. To this end health tourism concept and financial reforms and incentives may be exemplary. Within this framework aforementioned incentives and

reforms to be applied to the winter tourism may enable the destination management systems to be able to transfer in sensitive areas and to install the credit providing institutions and to Change the obtainability possibilities of the available institutions and financials and these applications may help development of the winter tourism greatly. (Bulu, Eraslan, & Bakan, 2008).

### **3.2. Effects of Regional Development**

Winter tourism may be used as an important factor on the regional development when swiftly adapting to the technological, organizational and corporate innovations that are arising from the World conjuncture and by application of correct policies and investments. Like all industries, winter tourism has some obstacles and limitations. Innovation has an important role on mineralization of these obstacles and the limits and to enable the industry sustainable for the regional economy.

It is possible to embrace the obstacles of the winter tourism oriented on two parts: the demand and supply. The obstacles on the demand part are especially the ever-changing Customer profile and their preferences. According today's tourism Customer wants to have different experiences looking for novelties and waiting for high quality and standards in the services and wanting to have the fastest and the more correct information regarding the region they are going to visit and the tourism Products they are going to consume, environmentally conscious, have grate cash flexibility and being able to use the information and communication Technologies efficiently. This change on the target audience for the winter tourism increases the competition in the industry and the industrial institutions are required to actively participate in innovation. Within this framework considering the value chain of tourism, innovations such as application of the new marketing strategies and executing the development of the different Products, services and processes will increase the effect of the winter tourism on the regional economy. (KUDAKA, 2011).

Considering the demand, winter tourism Products are different from other Products in various angles. In general in the industry production and the consumption becomes realized simultaneously and the Customer actively participate to this process. However, winter tourism requires important investments considering the other tourism activities. These factors, most of time causes limitations such as not being able to store the

Products on the industry or being forced to work with the low profit margins. Aside from all of those, not having the appropriate weather conditions for the winter sports, risks arising from the high costs for the maintenance and sustainability of the winter sports facilities and immigration of the workforce with the education from the region is among the important factors. Therefore, to overcome the limitation and problems and to increase the value of the Products within the industry innovation has critical importance. (KUDAKA, 2011).

Considering the above, in order to increase the qualification of all actors within the value chain of winter soldier and to be able to use this tourism type for the regional economy as an effective vehicle innovation has a key role. Therefore, adaptation of the innovative activities to the winter tourism is especially important on the technological, corporate, Organizational and managerial subjects. Such as usage of products (different Products regarding the winter sports, different activities) or innovative approaches on the information transfer and transportation technologies (getting information, reservation and usage in the purchases) have important effect on the winter tourism. Similarly in order to improve the winter tourism in the regional means, application of the incentive mechanism and its development in line with the requirements of the private industry, establishing the administrative and legal infrastructure within this process and having corporate innovations designed just for these activities and organizational and managerial innovations for the increasing the businesses and facilities will have increase the role of the regional development and the development of the winter tourism.

Innovation have effects on the regional development within the context of the winter tourism with the foreign and local tourists visiting the region, date of accommodation and the increase on the occupancy of the facilities and the increase on the expense amounts per tourist and the reducing the tourism income difference depending on the seasons increasing the total regional tourism income and increasing employment increase in the tourism value chain, increase in the newly established business number within the tourism value chain, the increasing of the profits within the tourism value chain, increasing the tourism investments and increasing the income per individual from to tourism will be reflecting directly and indirectly. (KUDAKA, 2011).

#### 4. RESULTS

In recent years, tourism has placed in the forefront within the swiftly emerging industries. In addition, even if the several external factors are affecting it, tourism still adds value to the regional development on various angles. Also, considering the developments of the last quarter century it will not be correct to evaluate the tourism industry only a labor-heavy industry. Like all other industries, tourism industry is also an industry within the world conjunction to apply the technological, organizational and corporate innovations.

Aforementioned innovations effects the increasing of the alternative tourism requests; efficiency of the industry and the competition, minimalizing the costs and increasing of the profits of the tourism in general and especially in winter tourism. These effects show itself in the new employment and creation of the business areas and providing the increasing of the income arising from the tourism and provide important contributions on the regional development directly or indirectly.

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