



A THEORETICAL AND EMPIRICAL REVIEW OF THE INNOVATION IN TOURISM

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ABSTRACT

The study of innovation in the tourism sector is recent; it is considered that tourism businesses are not innovations developers because they acquired them from external suppliers and for this reason are not considered as triggers of a series of innovations. However, this does not preclude that investigations carried out in this sector. Transportation, technologies of information and communication, among others, has an important role in the tourism sector since it benefits destinations and tourists. Currently, there is a new market segment that are more informed, demand new experiences and greater quality in its trips, forcing companies and destinations to innovate, to offer new products and services that are highly competitive and differentiated. This article presents a review of theoretical and empirical studies published by experts in international refereed journals and books on topics related to tourism innovation that are discussed stressing the importance of the main approaches to the study of tourism development.

KEYWORDS: Empirical Works, Innovation, Marketing, Tourism, Theoretical Works.

JEL: L83, D83, O30.

1. INTRODUCTION

During the last decades, tourism has experienced a continued expansion and diversification, becoming one of the fastest growing economic sectors in the world. Currently, there is a new

segment of tourists known as Millennials, who are more informed, demand new and higher quality experiences on their trips, forcing businesses and tourist destinations to make innovations to offer new products and services, for example the transport and communication systems as the train, automobile, aircraft, the Internet and social networks.

This new market segment often consults websites for reviews and feedback, as well as web pages with information about the destination before embarking on the journey; they use social networks as a system of communication to meet the destination and know what is happening at all times. Also, they travel with phones, laptops, tablets and they need to be connected to the Internet at all times, so that the wireless connection is a prerequisite. Therefore, hotel chains, airlines and other tourism businesses must innovate in order to satisfy this particular market segment.

Although the study of tourism innovation is an important issue, research in this field is recent. The few studies available have examined innovation in tourism from different areas, whether relating to the level of destination ([1] Stamboulis and Skayannis, 2003, [2] Volo, 2005; [3] Hjalager, 2006), hotel companies ([4] Camisón, 2000; [5] Law and Jogaratnam, 2005; [6] Orfila-Sintes, Crespi-Cladera and Martinez-Ros, 2005; [7] COTEC, 2007; [8] Tseng, Kuo and Chou, 2008; [9] Martinez-Ros and Orfila-Sintes, 2009; [10] Orfila-Sintes and Mattsson, 2009) or small and medium tourism enterprises ([11] Weiermair, Peters and Frehse, 2005; [12] Pikkemaat and Peters, 2006) ([13] Hjalager, 2010).

The process of innovation in the service sector has not yet been studied enough because it is considered that tourism businesses are not developers of innovations because they purchased from external suppliers and for that reason they are not considered as triggers of a series of innovations ([14] López et al. 2014).

Moreover, it is not common for tourism companies to have departments or resources dedicated to research and development (R & D) to create or enhance innovation. However, this doesn't keep develop research in this sector. Therefore, this article aims to identify the literature on tourism innovation, highlight the theoretical evidence and present empirical evidence. This

review concludes by making a call to the scientific community to continue to conduct research to make a tourism innovation theory and show its importance.

2. INNOVATION IN SERVICES

This section begins with the definition of the word service and then we continue with the rise of innovation in services.

A service is an act that gives one part to another; it is an economic activity that creates value and provides benefits to customers in specific times and places ([15] Lovelock et al., 2004).

Services have four principal characteristics: intangibility, heterogeneity, caducity and simultaneity of production and consumption ([16] Lovelock, 1997). However a service may be composed by a commodity to accompany (eg. cars.); a hybrid that combines equal parts of goods and services (eg. a restaurant.); a primarily service with goods or services that accompany minors (eg. air travel) ([15] Lovelock, et al., 2004).

Research innovation in the service sector began in the 1970's, but during this decade and in the 80's, research focused mainly on technological innovations. The theoretical contributions of Barras ([17] 1986, [18] 1990) described the services as an industry dominated by suppliers and require the boost of manufacturing to develop innovations. Since the nineties, the study of innovation in services has expanded, resulting in significant contributions, such as the adoption and use of technology in the service sector ([17, 18] Barras, 1986, 1990; [19] Evangelista, 2000; [20] Miozzo and Soette, 2001) and the differentiation of innovations used between the service sector and in manufacturing ([21] Hall and Williams, 2008; [22] Sundbo, 1997).

There are different approaches in manufacturing that were adopted to innovation in services ([23] Gallouj and Savona, 2009; [24] Gallouj and Windrum, 2009): the technical approach (or assimilation) compared innovation in services with the adoption and use of technologies in the context of the manufacturing industry ([17, 18] Barras, 1986, 1990; [19] Evangelista, 2000; [20] Miozzo and Soette, 2001). The service-oriented approximation approach (or differentiation) sought to identify particular characteristics in the nature of each sector as a way to develop a specific framework for innovation in this field ([21] Hall and Williams, 2008; [22] Sundbo ,

1997). The integration approach (or synthesis) is based on the trend towards convergence between manufactured goods and services to develop a common conceptual framework. This approach overcomes the materiality and technology bias in the services sector ([23] Gallouj and Savona, 2009).

The progress that has been made in the study of innovation in services have developed a framework of the innovation process that applies both manufacturing and services, covering specific aspects of each sector in the innovation process ([24] Gallouj and Windrum , 2009).

3. TOURISM INNOVATION

Tourism is a sector that is in constant process of innovation, because it is a service that sells products, it has to provide new emotions for tourists, if not innovate; therefore, stops providing emotions and decrease the number of tourists ([25, 26] Plog, 1974, 1987).

Tourism requires that the companies innovate in order to keep up with the competition (Hall and Williams, 2008). In addition, due to the nature of tourism, tourism enterprises and destinations have more difficult to protect their innovations because competition can easily see what others are doing and new ideas can rarely be protected by patents or other mechanisms ([27] Hjalager, 2002).

OECD ([28] 2005) described innovation as the renovation and expansion of the range of products and services markets; the establishment of new methods of production, supply and distribution; the introduction of changes in management, work organization, working conditions and skills of the workforce.

Hall & Williams ([21] 2008) point out that innovation is the process of bringing a new idea to solve a problem: ideas reorganization, reduce costs, propose new budget systems, improve communication or assemble products. Therefore, innovation is the generation and implementation of new ideas, processes, products or services and also the ability to change and adapt to obtain at the end a competitive advantage.

Innovation in tourism is determined by certain specific features of production and marketing of tourism products; Weiermair ([29] 2006) points out some features: (1) tourism produces and sells intangible product packages; (2) products cannot be stored (simultaneity of production and consumption); (3) the consumption of tourism products involves the active participation of tourists; (4) the production and marketing can involve high capital goods (airlines, hotels, etc.); (5) many service providers are involved in the creation of a tourist experience; and (6) the ability and motivation of human resources are essential. These features require companies to stand out from its competitors and make proactive changes based on the preferences of tourists, quality and technological interfaces ([30] Den Hertog et al, 2011; [31] Dwyer and Edwards, 2009; [32] Victorino et al., 2005). In this context, several studies have pointed the importance of technology as a determinant of tourism innovation ([33] Buhalis and Licata, 2002; [34] Kumar et al, 2008; [6] Orfila-Sintes et al., 2005).

Therefore, companies need to invest in quality, diversify their products and innovate constantly to maintain their competitive advantage. Consequently, innovation is a key to provide value to their products ([29] Weiermair, 2006). In fact, the specific characteristics of the tourism industry influence innovation, while some studies indicate the potential for innovation in this sector ([27] Hjalager 2002; [35] Sundbo et al., 2007).

Studies on tourism innovation still rely on exploratory and qualitative cases where the phenomenon is investigated and explained from various angles. However, there are some studies on tourism innovation seeking to compare the levels of measurable innovation in the sectors of tourism and across national borders, ie, making comparisons between tourism enterprises and tourist destinations internationally ([36] Hall, 2009).

4. TYPES OF INNOVATION

[37] Schumpeter (1934) argues that innovation can be seen as a phenomenon that includes technical aspects (eg. new products, new production methods) non-technical aspects (eg. new markets, new organizational forms) as well as product innovations (eg. new product or service) and process innovations (eg. new process). Other aspects can also be identified, such as the creation of new jobs and the emergence of new professions. Innovation may belong to one of the four types proposed in the work of:

- Incremental (eg. Washing machine).

- Radical (eg. Micro processor).
- New technological systems (eg. Just in time).
- New technology, such as the Internet.

For Schumpeter ([36] 1934) innovation is associated with the introduction of a new product (or improvement of quality of a product which already exists), the introduction of a new production method (process innovation or innovation process), opening new markets, new sources of supply of raw materials as well as a new form of organization.

The Schumpeterian approach of category of innovation has been applied to some extent in tourism research. Hall study's ([36] 2009) is made up of the four categories of the OECD in innovation, Hjalager ([13] 2010) provides a basic categorization close to Schumpeter, while Weiermair ([29] 2006), slightly modified. Product innovations, process, organizational/business and market constitute the main body of the categories of innovation. Distribution innovations and institutional innovations are examples of attempts to consider the characteristics of the tourist innovation.

The four types of innovation of the Oslo Manual ([28] OECD, 2005) can be applied to manufacturing and services: (1) product innovation: involve new goods and services and significant improvements in them; (2) process innovation: significant changes in production and delivery methods; (3) marketing innovation: referring to changes in product design and packaging, product promotion and methods for pricing goods and services; (4) and organizational innovation: referring to the implementation of a new organizational method in business practices of the company, labor organization or external relations.

Hjalager ([27] 2002) has proposed another classification of innovation according to their degree of innovation (ie, [38] Pikkemaat and Peters, 2006): regular or incremental innovations, niche innovations, architectural innovations and revolutionary innovations. Regular innovations are developed with the skills and relationships, and can be translated into increased productivity, improved quality and training of staff in new media. The niche innovations (eg. the cooperation of a hotel with a tour operator) emphasize new forms of cooperation and do not alter the competence, while the architectural innovations (eg. a design hotel or boutique) introduce new

business models and alter relationships with customers and current markets. Revolutionary innovations remain unchanged business structures and markets-objectives, although redefine services incorporating new technologies.

In the following table some types based on the nature of the innovations that have been developed are shown, but particularly in the area of services.

Table 1. Types of innovation in the services.

Author	Typology	Scope
[39] Jacob, Tintoré, Simonet y Aguiló, (2004).	<p>Product: new or improved services.</p> <p>Process: new or better ways of producing what is offered.</p> <p>Marketing: new or improved distribution processes and delivery or service provision.</p> <p>Internal organization: developments and improvements in the structure and processes of the company.</p> <p>External organization: establishing new relationships with other agents.</p> <p>Market: introduction of the company into new markets.</p>	Tourism companies
[40] Damanpour, et al. (2009)	<p>Service: new services to existing and new customers and offer new services to new customers.</p> <p>Process:</p> <p>a) Technology: new elements introduced into production systems or service operations to generate products or services to customers.</p> <p>b) Administrative: new approaches and practices to motivate and reward employees, to design new strategies and change management processes of the organization.</p>	Service companies
[7] Cotec (2007).	<p>Product: distinguishing features on proposals for common business in the sector.</p> <p>Customer Service: differentiation related to accommodation, catering, health and beauty, leisure and entertainment or sports services.</p> <p>Infrastructure and space design: incorporating distinctive</p>	Hotels

features related to infrastructure and equipment.

Process: changes to the form and sequence of doing things, to improve the results in terms of time, cost and / or quality (administration, accounting, personnel, reception, booking, billing).

Organization: changes in the organizational and management structures.

Marketing: incorporation of new ways to present the goods and services of the company in the market and facilitate access by potential customers to them.

Goods or services: novel changes considered for consumers.

[13] Hjalager
(2010)

Process: initiatives to increase efficiency and productivity, supported mainly by technology investments.

Management: new ways of organizing internal collaboration, executive management, responsibilities of employees and promotion systems and rewarding.

Marketing: changes in the modes of communication and relationships between service provider and customers.

Institutional: new structures of cooperation or new regulatory frameworks that improve businesses in certain fields of tourism.

Tourism companies

Source: based on the literature.

Although there are different types of innovations, the OECD ([28] 2005) notes that it is difficult to distinguish between different types of innovation, and that innovation in a field leads to further innovations in others ([17] Barras, 1986).

The types identified in the Oslo Manual can be adapted to tourism, providing a classification derived from the types of innovation based on the literature review:

- Product innovation: a new product or service that can be marketed; it can also refer to the changes directly observed by tourists and considered new, either in the sense that they were never seen before, or are new to the company or to the destination

(cableways, new water sports). Such innovations can become a factor affecting the purchase decision ([13] Hjalager, 2010).

- Process innovation: refer to initiatives aimed at increasing efficiency, productivity and flows. Investments in technology are the mainstay of this type of innovation ([13] Hjalager, 2010).
- Organizational innovation means implementing changes in management: a challenge for tourism businesses is to develop methods to retain staff, improve workplace satisfaction and develop internal expertise and assets to compete ([21] Hall and Williams, 2008; [41] Shaw and Williams, 2009).
- Marketing innovation: new marketing concepts can become innovations when such approaches change the way it conducts communication, and with tourists, and how the relationship between the supplier and the tourist are built. Therefore, marketing strategies are implemented to develop the market. Marketing innovations also involve the co-production marks, an activity that takes place in gastronomy and tourism ([42] Hankinton, 2004).

Therefore, the types of innovation in the services area and in the hotel sector could be summarized as follows:

- Services or goods: create new goods or services or improve existing ones for consumers.
- Process: changes in the form and sequence of doing things, with greater efficiency and productivity, relying on various tools such as ICTs.
- Organization: changes in the ways of carrying out the administration of the organization; search for new structures of cooperation between the public and private or seek to improve the regulatory framework in which tourism areas are based on.
- Marketing: new forms or changes in the forms of communication to publicize the services or goods to the target market and potential customers, making use of ICT.

Innovation is a complex process; several empirical studies have suggested that knowledge is a major component in the innovation process ([43] Smith, 2005).

5. KNOWLEDGE-BASED VIEW

Resource-based view (RBV) resulted in knowledge-based view, suggesting that from all possible resources that a firm has, knowledge base is what provides a sustainable source of differentiation and therefore a competitive advantage ([44] Dierickx and Cool, 1989; [45] Lippman and Rumelt, 1982).

Knowledge-based view considers that, as knowledge is a key factor for competitive advantage, the greater investment in knowledge, the greater the benefits for the firm ([46] Reus et al., 2009). Knowledge can be placed in the routines, processes or organizational structures, or in social relations created with other companies and institutions ([47] Nieves, et al., 2014).

In service businesses, knowledge is one of the most important resources and is particularly significant due to the performance of activities that require interaction, collaboration and communication with customers ([48] Atuahene-Gima, 1996; [49] Sirmon and Hitt, 2009). In the tourism industry, human capital has become a priority, especially when it is consider that most of the workers in this sector are semi-skilled ([27] Hjalager, 2002; [50] Walsh, Enz, and Canina, 2008).

In this context, intellectual capital has been seen as a competitive advantage ([50] Walsh, Enz, and Canina, 2008), as well as innovations in service quality and organizational structures ([51] Yang, 2007; [52] Yang and Wan, 2004). However, there is also a growing body of research about the transfer of knowledge and expertise in the hotel sector ([53] Jacob, Tintore, Gilo, Bravo and Julet, 2003; [6] Orifila-Sintes, Crespi-Cladera and Ros, 2005; [10] Orifila-Sintes and Mattsson, 2007).

Nieves, Quintana and Osorio ([47] 2014) suggest that if firms wish to evolve and adapt to their environment through the development of innovations, they are required to have at least three major resources based on knowledge: first, knowledge, skills and abilities employee (human capital); secondly, collective knowledge (organizational knowledge); and thirdly, the willingness and ability of managers to access a knowledge beyond organizational boundaries (external social relations).

6. EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE

In terms of empirical evidence, some studies analyze the effects of innovation on competitiveness, on productivity, on knowledge or market attractiveness. Hall and Williams ([21] 2008) links innovation to the propensity to survive as a company in a highly competitive market it is tourism.

Victorino et al. ([32] 2005) evaluated the impact of innovation in different hotels categories in North America, and their empirical evidence suggests that innovative companies gain a competitive advantage and a subsequent customer preference to return to that place. This has a dynamic effect in response to improved technology; many service-oriented businesses strive to integrate new features into its products or services. Companies that differentiate their products are more successful than those that don't, but this effect is enhanced if there is a development of the human capital, as shown by Walsh, Enz, and Canina ([50] 2008).

Blake, et al. ([54] 2006), conducted some surveys on the impacts of different types of innovations in productivity, they found that the accommodation and the attractiveness of the companies are related to marketing innovations and products that are important for the company and productivity, while managerial and organizational innovations affect less to increased productivity.

On the other hand, the study of Nieves, et al. ([47] 2014) analyzed the innovation by combining knowledge-based view and relational view. They evaluated how a set of resources based on knowledge innovation influenced the Spanish hotel industry. The results of this study showed that in the tourism sector, knowledge is important: high levels of knowledge about the business environment (competition) and relationships with persons or entities outside the organization contribute significantly to achieving innovation in the sector. This implies that the introduction of innovations in hotel industry is essentially related to existing knowledge beyond organizational boundaries ([47] Nieves et al., 2014).

In the following table we will list other empirical studies that have been done:

Table 2. Empirical studies on tourism innovation.

Author	Contribution	Variables	Scope
[6] Orfila et al. (2005)	Hotel companies are an industry dominated by suppliers and innovate by introducing R & D and applying technology. The higher rated hotels and hotel chains, is more the tendency to innovative.	Size and hotel category, governance, chain of command, ways to introduce technology, innovation activity, staff skills, target market, occupancy rate, seasonally.	Innovation in hotels.
[55] Ottenbacher and Gnoth (2005)	A survey of 184 German hoteliers identified nine factors that promote successful service innovations. The study found that the nature of the innovation is far less important than the effectiveness of a hotel's human resources management and employee training, empowerment, and commitment to the service.	Human resources, corporate governance, staff training, empowerment, target market, public relations, media, nature of service and innovation.	Innovation in hotels.
[56] Ottenbacher, Gnoth and Jones (2006)	Their study is based on a large scale survey to examine hotel innovation projects to gain insight about the impact of level of innovativeness on the factors that are linked to new service success and failure. They found the factors that determine the success in developing new services: market attractiveness, strategic HR management, responsiveness to market, empowerment, training and employee engagement and marketing synergies.	Attractive market, strategic management of human resources, market responsiveness, empowerment, training and employee engagement and marketing.	Marketing, Innovation in hotels.
[57] Ottenbacher, Shaw y Lockwood (2006)	They found that the success of innovation projects in hotel chains is linked to the attractiveness of the market, process management, responsiveness to market and empowerment. In independent companies, the success is linked to attractiveness of the market, empowerment, effective marketing communication, commitment of employees, evaluation based on performance, training and marketing synergies.	Attractive market, process management, responsiveness to market, empowerment, communication, marketing, employee commitment to the company, employee behavior and training.	Innovation in hotels.

[12] Pikkemaat and Peters (2006)	They investigate innovation in alpine tourism and conclude that: a) there are low levels of innovation in all areas of the value chain hotel; b) the larger hotels and higher grade have higher levels of innovation; c) the innovations generally aim to a certain group of clients or the organization itself, but never innovates for market or for the sector; and d) innovation is fundamentally in processes.	Size hotel, hotel category, ways of introducing technology and innovation, governance, customer satisfaction, quality hotel.	Innovation in hotels.
[12] Pikkemaat and Peters (2006)	They investigate innovation in alpine tourism and conclude that: a) there are low levels of innovation in all areas of the value chain hotel; b) the larger hotels and higher grade have higher levels of innovation; c) the innovations generally aim to a certain group of clients or the organization itself, but never innovates for market or for the sector; and d) innovation is fundamentally in processes.	Size hotel, hotel category, ways of introducing technology and innovation, governance, customer satisfaction, quality hotel.	Innovation in hotels.
[8] Tseng, Kuo y Chou (2008)	Their study shows some facts about the importance of innovation in the service economy, and especially the hotel industry by classifying the configurations of innovation in Taiwanese hotels. The main factors of innovation for their study: using technology and equipment, introduction of new technology and equipment, frequency of launching new products, efficiency of technological systems, participatory organizational environment, coordination between departments, cooperation between individuals and organization, creating new ideas, employee training and incentives for the development of new skills.	Technology and equipment, frequency of launching new products, efficiency of technological systems, participatory organizational environment, coordination between departments, cooperation between individuals and organization, creating new ideas , employee training and incentives for the development of new skills.	Innovation in hotels.
[10] Orfila y Mattson (2009)	Their study provides empirical evidence on technological activity in the Spanish service sector, in particular for the tourist accommodation in the Balearics and they determinate the factors influencing the decisions of innovation in hotels.	Tour operators, hotel groups, type of governance, additional services.	Innovation in hotels.
[9] Martínez y Orfila (2009)	The establishments that have introduced incremental innovations are more likely to make radical innovations, and vice versa.	Management, marketing strategy, size and location.	Innovation in hotels.

[30] Den Hertog et al. (2011)	Innovation in the Dutch hotel industry is a widespread and multidimensional phenomenon where technological innovation and non-technological are mixed and mutually supportive. The biggest innovation intensity is associated with a higher organizational performance.	Types of technological innovation and technology not used in hotels.	Innovation in hotels.
[58] Ordaniny Parasuraman (2011)	They analyze different variables from two facets of innovation (volume and radical) and its impact on organizational performance.	Collaboration with customers, partners and employees; customer orientation and mechanisms of knowledge integration and organizational performance.	Innovation in hotels and marketing.
[14] López et al. (2014)	They presented and classified some examples of innovation in tourism; they highlight the role played by social networks as a source of knowledge acquisition, and specifically online reviews as an important basis for innovation of tourism businesses.	ICT's and social networks, products, knowledge, employees, governance.	Innovation in hotels.

Source: based on the literature.

For many companies, innovations are a continuous and endless process and from this, a snowball effect is created. For example, Nieves, et al., ([47] 2014) shows that more creative use of Internet in hotel enterprises leads to other benefits for managers and employees. ICT is a reconstructive factor that introduces a new interactive interface between tourism providers and tourists, and has widespread effects in the creation, production and consumption of adventure, as found by Stamboulis and Skayannis ([1] 2003).

The most comprehensive study that has been conducted to date is based on the National Innovation Statistics of Australia and New Zealand ([36] Hall, 2009). The study shows that accommodation and restaurants are innovative at a level which is quite comparable with other economic sectors.

6. CONCLUSIONS

Tourism is an important sector for many regions and national economies, and in some cases is the leading sector for the countries, for example Mexico. Nevertheless, despite this, recognize of the importance of tourism fails. Nowadays companies from all economics sectors are facing a global increasingly demanding and highly competitive environment. This is why innovation is a fundamental activity for success, even for the survival of the tourism.

Tourism is generally ignored as a target sector in innovation because is characterized by public goods, free riding and weak barriers to imitation. Yet difficulties, innovation in tourism must be encouraged.

At first, theories of innovation focused mainly on goods industry, but in recent years, it was observed a growing academic interest to investigate innovation in the services sector.

From a conceptual point of view, innovation has been defined in terms of different approaches taken by different authors, being that there is no consensus on the definition of innovation. Of the theoretical and empirical studies reviewed in this article, we can determine a series of variables that influence in tourism innovation:

1. Services or goods: additional services, creating new ideas, frequency of launching new products, hotel category, hotel groups, nature of service, occupancy rate, seasonally, hotel size, quality hotel, products.
2. Process: coordination between departments, efficiency of technological system, ICT's and social networks, ways of introducing technology and innovation, process management, technology and equipment.
3. Organization: chain of command, collaboration with customers, cooperation between individuals and organization, employee behavior and training, empowerment, governance, incentives for the development of new skills, organizational performance, knowledge, mechanisms of knowledge, partners and employees, staff skills.

4. Marketing: attractive market, communication, customer orientation and satisfaction, engagement and marketing, marketing, media, public relations, market responsiveness, target market.

This article analyzed studies in which some attempts have been made to explore theoretically and empirically the key concepts of the literature on innovation in tourism. This research concludes that further studies are still needed on this issue because there are new tourists and new needs to be met; with the new technologies of information, tourists are demanding more and more for their travel needs, that's why, tourism business and destinations need to innovate to stay in the market and have competitive advantages, but without forgetting that tourism is a diverse sector and has unique characteristics, for example, it is produced and consumed in the same place and it is difficult to protect innovations because it is easier that the competition have knowledge of it.

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