

## SUSTAINABLE TOURISM: FROM THEORIES TO POLICIES

**Dr Faranak Seifolddini\***

This paper is an attempt to present a theoretical bases for the tourism literature and guidance for policy making. Tourism has been considered as an economic option for future

Tourism is a temporary but continuous movement of people from an origin to a destination for traveling and enjoyment purposes. Tourism is a flourishing industry in the whole world. So, its development is an important issue. With globalization of activities, tourism has turned into a global issue. Different scientific disciplines such as recreation science, Sociology, Geography, Economic, Psychology, Anthropology, Political Science, Urban and Regional Planning have been used to enrich tourism science.

This paper is an attempt to provide a theoretical foundation and fundamental concepts of tourism literature and guide for policy making and defining strategies. Core theories and models related to tourism industry have been driven from theories and models of other disciplines. It is necessary to understand how each theory can help to theoretical foundation of tourism literature. Planning and management of tourism industry is not possible without referring to the connections between theories and actions. Understanding of basic related theories is very fundamental for policy making. Development of sustainable tourism needs sustainable local and regional strategies to help us to achieve to our goals and objectives.

Keywords: Sustainable Tourism, Stages of Development of Tourism Industry, Planning Theory, Economic Tourism, Policies and Strategies.

### **Theories**

Tourism theories needs to be understood and to be related since theories and models are taken from other disciplines and their understanding helps tourism industry. Planning and management

**\*Tennessee State University in Nashville**

of tourism industry will be more effective with the understanding of the relation between theory and practice. Understanding of the basic concepts and related theories and determining the policies and planning is very important. It is very important to relate concepts with theories and determine methodologies for practical cases with different conditions. Sustainable tourism includes local, regional and national strategies to achieve goals and objectives.

Theories justifying the need for recreation were defined in England in 19<sup>th</sup> century. The number of working days was reduced and people developed a tendency to escape from cities and more freedom in spending holidays (Lanf ant, 1955b). At the end of 1960s, in different parts of the world, recreation areas were established (Lanf ant, 1955a). Tourism industry was introduced into economy as a new option in the world. In year 2000, tourism industry was considered as a pioneer industry in the world and has experienced continuous growth since 1960s (Lanf ant, 1995b).

To understand tourism, one should understand the meaning of the leisure. Leisure time is a part of life that should be spent free and without any commitment (Smith et al, 1971). The concept of recreation has roots in our experiences. It can be defined as being free from the requirements of the job and daily activities. Recreation can be defined as being free from the limitations created for human beings. The function or definition of leisure time can be defined considering different theories. Most of theories mention that recreation keeps or strengthen health and identity. Recreation is escape from daily activities. Recreation is obtaining a situation or experience about real life.

Theories expressing goals and reasons of the need for the recreation are as follows:

1- Surplus Energy Theory: Explains that recreation and plan helps to release

The surplus energy (Elus, M. J, 1971).

2- Relaxation Theory: Explains that there is a need to rest and to be away from daily stresses for a while. Although, sometimes recreation doesn't reduce stress. Recreation can have competitive and cause stress (Smith, 1985, 1986, 1999).

3- Preparation Theory: Play and recreation makes us ready for daily activities (Mellow, Eleni, 1994).

4- Recapitulation Theory: Recreations that make historical activities alive and brings them back into action. Many activities such as “throwing games”, “following”, “hiding” can be observed at world level (Mellon, Eleni, 1973).

5- Cathartic Theory: There is need to express the feelings that are not organized and are detrimental. For example, children with scolding and arguing with their dolls empty their emotional anger (Ellis, M. J, 1973).

6- Compensation Theory: Some of our needs that are not fulfilled in our daily activities are compensated through recreation. Getting bored and feeling tired might cause incentives for recreation (Baker, G, et al, 1988).

7- Competence Theory: Human beings are always trying to optimize their desires. For example, if the music is loud, we would turn it down and opposite (Harter, 1993).

Another justification for need for recreation is that all human beings need interaction.

Goals from spending time for recreation and traveling in different theories are:

1- Health: Results of studies in Britain show that one major goal is maintaining physical and mental health. From the start of the century, this has become a norm for middle income people to spend a number of days out of their homes. With the growth of capitalist system and welfare planning, the policy about work changed from “burn-up” to “maintenance”. Taking vacation was considered as one type of investment in labor force. Adorno even claims that tourism is searching for organized benefit (Newman, 1973). Holidays should be different from working time to making working hours more effective. Some of the analysts claim tourists through moving are looking for what they are looking. Nature, freedom, purity, acting rationally are other objectives (Lanfant, 1995b).

2- Authenticity: Mac Cannel writes that tourism activities can be an attempt for one to discover oneself (1989). Through seeing some locations, they can discover their origin which cannot be found in their daily activities. Tourist might be able to find his/her origin. According to Mc Cannel, tourists might look for their origin and others real life. To prevent the interference in people’s private life and to earn benefit, tourist spaces are created (Turner, 1975). Burner and Ash wrote that since tourists stay in one place for a short period of time, dimensions of culture

can be presented for them. Brewer, K, et al writes that some travel to find their origin and identity (1995).

3- Prestige and social status: Traveling was defined as an indicator of social status until 19<sup>th</sup> century. With increasing trip facilities, group trips became more common. Twentieth century, trip mode (airplane, private car, train...) and destination was used as an indicator of prestige (Urry, 1990a). Some locations are selected for their prestige.

4- Escape: Recreation and traveling is an escape from work. One of the characteristics of modern world is the need to travel and to rest (Urry, 1990). A place away from work, stress and daily activities. Burkart, A and Madlik wrote that the primary incentive for trip is escaping and being away (1981).

5- Identity: Division of labor and dominant role of work leads to the presentation of one side of the personality. Profession present one side of the personality. Traveling can help to discover the identity (Lawrence, 1976). Klapp writes that in twenty centuries, new identities are discovered at the time of welfare which might be lost during working and encourages people to search for identity during leisure time (1993).

6- Psychological needs: Ryan hypothesis is that the personal and the psychological needs determine how he/she will spend leisure time (1991).

The result is that there are a lot of differences between people, desires, needs and goals and tourists do not have homogenous goals needs. A group of tourists might go to the same destination but have different reasons for visiting one destination.

### **Tourism Development Process**

In 1980s, Butler describes the stages of tourism development (1993) . The following stages are described:

1- Exploration Stage: Butler believes that at this stage there are few tourism centers. So, there are not enough facilities and tourist activities are called pre-tourism. Tourism industry does

not exist formally and it is on the edges. The number of tourists are not many to justify the threshold needed to establish some facilities. The amount of revenues received are low. The relation between tourism with local economy is very limited. Local people control local condition. The contact with tourists are usually intimate and tourists are honor guests before the emergence of tourism activities. Tourists in this stage usually adjust themselves to local condition.

2- Involvement Stage: Is the process of increase in tourist activities. In this stage, the number of tourists increases. Usually tourists have shorter length of stay but with higher number of tourists coming to one destination. Developers and different companies establish facilities and special tourist services. Motels and small hotels are locations for eating, providing guidance and small tourist activities. Some people provide one or two rooms for tourists in their houses. The number of tourists are enough to provide enough revenues and there are multiplier effects. Providing some facilities justifies other facilities, and attraction of more tourists. Tourism services are provided formally and society adjusts themselves gradually with the process of increase in the number of tourists.

3- Development Stage: The stage of rapid growth in tourism and dramatic changes in all dimensions of tourism occurs in one short period of time. This stage like other stages happens in transfer steps and not rapidly. Real growth rate of tourists and characteristics of growth depends on pull factors and tourism management attempts. Tourism destination enters an integrated system that consists of a system of non-local and international companies and tourism activity happens in an organized framework. Small hotels are converted to big hotels. In this stage, vision for tourism industry in destination is international.

4- Consolidation Stage: The rates of growth of the number of tourists are reduced while the actual number is increasing. At this stage, the number of tourist level is higher than environmental, economic and social carrying capacities of the destination. Tourism industry will be dominant on the economy of the region. The related activities will be specialized. In this stage the administrators of tourism industry and chain of hotels make the arrangement for tourist trips and destination becomes a part of an integrated system and tourism is dominant on the economy

of region. Existing attractions have specialized and not unique condition. The economy of the region is under the influence of seasonal character of tourism activities.

5- Stagnation: In recession stage, the development stage gets to saturation condition. There is a surplus of the facilities and carrying capacity is higher than demand and the condition of product deterioration. The solution suggested is to convert some hotels to self- caring or permanent apartments. The destination might have high level of tourist facilities but the number of tourists might not increase but some tourists might have frequent trips to one destination.

6- In Batler model, after stagnation three conditions might occur: (1) Rejuvenation: Increase in the number of tourists, or (2) Reduction in the number of tourists. (3) Continuation of stagnation. Reduction exist when the number of existing tourists for a destination declines because of people's behavior toward tourists or deteriorating conditions of facilities or the competition (intervening opportunities) of other new destinations.

Batler suggests that to solve the problem, some hotels are converted to health centers and other suitable uses for tourism industry.

In rejuvenation stage, new and unique products are provided for tourists. Through a planned and deliberate process and using suitable strategies rejuvenation stage starts. Batler suggests that one fundamental strategy is developing a comprehensive development plan. Then, in next stage, strategies to achieve the development plan's goals are defined.

### **Matrix Model of Life Cycle Trigger Factor**

The evolution of tourism development process is described in a two by two matrix:

1- Internal-Intentional: The driving factors are internal. Some factors such

As upgrading the infrastructure, effective marketing by local tourist organizations ends to the industry's growth.

2- Internal-unintentional: Factors such as high entrance price tickets, unsafe environments would end to decrease in the number of tourists.

3- External-intentional: In this case, the destination has little impact, but adjusted strategies might be used. For example, the exchange rate between countries.

4- External-unintentional: In this case, the destination has no impact and affecting factors are beyond destination.

Beyond the above theories, theories of spatial diffusion, economic theories related to tourism activities are explained in this paper. The conclusions of this paper. The conclusions of this paper are as follows:

- 1- Considering Butler's theory, the stage of development of tourism in a country should be considered. Tourism planning does not do anything about it.
- 2- There is an association between the development stage and degree of decentralization of investments in tourism activities.
- 3- Considering the existing literature, centralization in investments related to tourism activities in the stage of development is recommended.
- 4- The assumption is that depending on the stage of development, diffusion stage of development, diffusion stage will happen.

### **Planning Theories**

The next step is determining theories that are guide for planning action.

#### **A: Growth Pole Theory:**

One of theories is "Growth Pole Theory" which is introduced as a policy. This policy recommends the concentration of facilities in determined centers that are suitable for the development of tourism and economic development. The hierarchy is as follows:

- 1- Selection of a suitable location by government(growth pole) by government. Usually in a region with suitable economic situation and potentials is chosen for development of tourism facilities.
- 2- Government investments and providing incentives: governmental and private sector investment is injected into the region. The investment can be made for constructing infrastructure as subsidy.
- 3- Individual Investment: Support services and infrastructure investment attracts other investments. Other incentives can be provided by governmental sector.
- 4- Economic Growth: Occurs independent and self-sufficient from tourism industry. When a local market is established as a result of tourism, new investments happens. Then, economic advantages are trickled downed from growth poles to surrounding areas. When the planning for

tourism is destination-oriented, growth poles policy can be used. When the local patterns of tourism industry are studied, some big urban centers are adjacent to tourist attractions. To explain how these patterns are created and evolve through time, understanding the following concepts are necessary. “Spatial Distribution” is the process of (1) Hierarchical diffusion of innovation, (2) Contagious Diffusion (Getis and Fellman, 1996). Hierarchical diffusion is building infrastructure and communication network in a hierarchy of largest cities to smallest cities. This is observed in different countries that tourist activities are first concentrated in largest cities (such as London, Paris, Tokyo, New York and Sidney). Because of the dominant role of these cities, they function at international level and they are center of internal and international attractions. With the evolving trend of the cities hierarchy, there is integration between the components of the system. However, in some cases, tourism industry might be the cause of the development of urban hierarchical network.

Contagious diffusion can occur in two ways: (1) with the growth of the cities, tourism local market grows and this ends to the development of the recreational activities around these cities. (2) Second type of contagious diffusion is the development of tourist activities in areas that are in one day distance to the major tourist attractions. There are barriers for the diffusion of tourism industry. One of the most obvious barriers for the development of tourism activities is lack of tourism attractions. Community acceptance, political barriers, climate barriers. On the opposite, factors can be attraction or increase diffusion process. For example, a range of tourist potentials such as beaches, beautiful valleys, and good transportation network. Transportation networks facilitates contagious diffusion while air transportation network facilitates hierarchical network.

### **B: Trickle Down Theory**

Some of the economists believe that economic progress is transferred to lower levels. Those who live in more developed areas spend their money in local economy and this ends to “multiplier effects”. Multiplier effects increase the production activities and income for the poorer sectors of the society. It should be mentioned that economic growth might exist without economic development. If the revenue gained from increase in production is spent on providing basic services and basic goods, the life condition of poorer sectors of population will improve (Standish, Barry, ).



### C: Theories Explaining Economic Efficiencies

One of the discussions pro privatization is that privatization ends to progress in economic efficiency. There are distinctions between two types of economic efficiencies (Sullivan, 2003).

1- Production Efficiency: When a production unit functions efficiently, the production activities are organized in a way that the average production cost reaches lowest level and production units enjoy their specialization benefits and maximum output, when “economies of scale” exist and all factors of production are adjusted and changed to have maximum output.

2- Allocative Efficiency: With the increase in competition activities in the market, the allocation efficiency happens. The need for competition prevents price increase. It is important that production factors are used efficiently. In competitive markets, prices will be kept at lowest level. Reduction of regulations and prevailing privatization increases competition level and keeps the prices low (Markovitz, 1887).

### D: Neo-classical Theories

This theory is on the basis of this belief that lack of development is the result of lack of applying resources efficiently by government and interference of government in market forces. Neoclassical economists support following strategies:

- Free competitive markets.
- Privatization of governmental industries.
- Moving from closed economy to open economy.
- Opening local economy through encouraging free trade and direct international investment, higher output and higher saving.

### E: Theory of Linear Stages of Economic Growth (1960)

This theory consists of two parts:

1- Theory of Stages of Growth: Societies pass steps or phases of growth and development. On the basis this ideas of Rostow, Benjamin Hekins and other group of economists after Second

World War. It is on the basis of this belief that societies through the time pass different stages of growth and development to reach a culture that above industrialization.

2- Linear Theory: It is combined with theory of stages of growth to show that capital inputs are gained through local investments or international investments that are increased incrementally and gain importance. Linear Theory discusses that when industrialization occurs, one country gets more dependent on international investment to increase its capital assets. Investments in different socio-economic environments has different results. One of the conclusions of linear theory is that more investment would lead to more output and Gross Domestic Products. On the basis of new theories of growth, growth can happen as a result of investment in human resources (including education and training of current and future personnel). “Learning by doing” and the “empowerment of labor force” are another type of investment in human resources. Research and development are important determinants of growth. Through the quality of products supplied, production distinctions are created.

### 3- New Theory of Growth

This theory in 1990 was very popular. The theory is on the basis of this assumption that sustainable economic growth or endogenous growth in a society is determined by the systems governing the production process. This theory is on the basis of this assumption that with the increase in the scale of investment, total output increases. While evaluating the outputs of the investments, the impact of external factors are considered (Romer, 1991). Some theorists write that international investment in poor countries increases the gap between wealthy and rich. Projects do not increase the skills and wages. Opposite of this view, there are evidences that suggest wages increases as soon as there is an increase in investment. The belief is that the production system should change to enable the increase in wages. The new growth theory is in contradictory with the claims of “Linear Process Theory”. Linear Process Theory considers internal and external investment necessary for endogenous growth to happen. This theory tests the incentives that can encourage international investment and emphasizes that some of investment projects might have less desirability. This theory suggests that investments that have two goals: (1) Economic Income Production, (2) Economic Growth and are the best in long term and might have best chance for the success in long term.

#### F: Existing Theories Pro Privatization

Privatization is an approach for the increase in “supply sector”. Economists that are pro increase in the supply sector, use micro-economic policies to increase the production of commodities and services. Through increase in the efficiency of data in the process of production, outputs should be increased. This ends to an increase in supply and increase in the level of output. Economists have different views about the transfer of governmental organizations to private organizations.

- Open and free production and consumption by market forces cause increase in competition, economic efficiency and increase in consumer choice.
- Breaking exclusive forces of the market creates a competitive industry in the market of commodities, and enables private companies to compete for earning financial right and receiving private capitals in the country and outside.
- To ensure that these commercial units are administered on the basis of trade principles rather than political fields.
- It reduces the pressure on the governmental assets (supporting national industry) and industry is supported by the private sector.
- The process of “privatization” and reduction of governmental regulations increases the competition level (Haller, 1999).

#### B: HarrodDomar Planning Model

Domar model assumes the relation between change in capital stocks and change in output. In “Linear Process Theory” and “New Growth Theory”, investment for capital stock should be external and then internal investments. Here, capital stocks consists the functional assets of a project consisting infrastructure facilities, software and hardware facilities such as education, communication, technology, roads, energy and other facilities. Two other variables enter into the model:

- 1- Population: The belief is that high population growth causes low economic growth.
- 2- The model suggests that a society should save a particular percentage of national income in new capital stocks to enable economic growth. More saving, more investments and faster economic growth. Real growth rate depends on the proportion of capital to output.

**C: Harod Model**

The model was suggested in 1959. The model suggests that savings provide capitals with the purpose of investment and economic growth rate depends on two following factors:

- Economic growth depends on the number of labor and capital.
- Less developed countries have the surplus of labor but shortage of physical assets that keeps the economic growth and development behind.
- Physical assets creates economic growth.
- Net investment ends to more capital accumulation, more output and more income.
- Higher income makes higher investment possible.

Totally, the following conclusion can be made that the key for economic growth is the expansion of level of investment in “fixed Capital” and “human capitals”. To achieve economic growth, there is a need for policies that ends to technological progresses that enables production units to produce more output using less capital.

**G: Anthropological Theories**

Anthropological theories in relation with tourism examine numerous social theories especially theories that consider cultural forms and actions defining tourism experiences. Tourism are seen as activities that define tourists’ experiences. Tourism is attached to the culture of its consumers, to national people movements and commodities and is dependent on world capital (Wallace, 2005). Tourism has high relation with strong policies, national identities and what is modern or traditional, cultural or non-cultural, personal or impersonal (Lanfant, 1995).

**National Development Tourism Considering presented Theories**

Tourism development model applies two principles of “Hierarchical Diffusion” and “Contagious Diffusion”. The impacts of these two principles in relation with tourism industry are:

1- Hierarchical Diffusion Impacts: The concentration of tourism activity in urban areas can be observed in hierarchical diffusion type. The observations show that biggest city in a country usually functions as primary gates for the absorption of tourists. Because of its dominant function, the largest city has locations and events that are interesting for tourists. The dominant city is usually the first location for hosting international tourism. Also, the largest city functions

like a magnet for national tourists within a country. With the evolving of the urban hierarchy, tourist attractions are transferred to lower levels. The process that would be faster by the progress in transportation system which makes the urban hierarchy more integrated. Tourism activity as a “Propulsive Industry” helps urban hierarchy expansion and urban development (Krakover, 2002).

2- Contagious Diffusion Impacts: Contagious impacts following hierarchical diffusions are created in two ways: (A) Local tourist markets grows. As a result hinterland recreational fields are created. With the growth of cities, suburban recreational areas expand too. (B) Second type of contagious diffusion happens when tourist trips including daily trips to surrounding areas.

Totally, when a community becomes tourist-oriented, close communities go through similar process. The experiences show that ground lanes facilitate contagious diffusion and air transportation facilitates hierarchical diffusion. Tourism industry goes through an evolving process:

A: Time zero: Is the first step in the process of evolvement of tourism industry. There are a number of national and local tourists and shows the stage of “Involvement” of tourism activities in capital and in main gate.

B: Time 1: In this stage, recreational hinterlands are formed. Type of activities depends on the capital’s potentials or the result of one deliberate strategy of growth pole.

C: Time 2: Urban hinterland usually expands through contagious diffusion. Tourism industry is considered as a major activity and in secondary cities, it expands hierarchically.

D: Time 3: The known pattern in time 2 continues. Recreational hinterland expands and new locations are known as next level tourist activities.

E: Time 4: Expansion continues. Development continues along transportation corridors (Krakover, 2002).

## Conclusion

There is correlation between degree of development and degree of decentralization in investment. In the primary stages of development, concentration is recommended, and depending on the degree of progress, decentralization in investment for tourism activities is recommended.

The assumption is that depending on the degree of development of tourism industry, diffusion process happens. Investment in infrastructure especially transportation has been emphasized a lot. National and cultural policies have significant importance.

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