

ADVANCES IN HOSPITALITY AND LEISURE

Edited by Joseph S. Chen

ADVANCES IN HOSPITALITY
AND LEISURE

VOLUME 16

**ADVANCES IN HOSPITALITY AND
LEISURE**

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EDITED BY

JOSEPH S. CHEN

Indiana University Bloomington, USA



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AIMS AND SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

Advances in Hospitality and Leisure (AHL), a double-blind peer view journal published annually since 2004, attempts to promote seminal and innovative research outputs about hospitality, leisure, tourism, and lifestyle. Specifically, this journal encourages researchers to investigate new research issues and problems that are critical but have been largely ignored while providing a forum to disseminate singular thoughts and advance empirical undertakings theoretically and methodologically.

This 16th annual volume includes eight full papers and two research notes. As for data collection, most articles deploy either a quantitative or qualitative approach, while one presents a conceptual model. The contributors to the present issue come from eight nations entailing Australia, Iran, Germany, Ghana, the Netherlands, Pakistan, Taiwan, and the United States of America.

For submission to future issues, please review the following guidelines.

Manuscript's Originality: It should represent an original work that has never been published elsewhere or is considering publication elsewhere.

Style and Length of Manuscript: 12 pt Times Roman font; double spacing; APA; 7,000 words (Full Paper) or 4,000 words (Research Note).

Layout of Manuscript: First page: title of paper and author contact information; second page: title of paper, an abstract of 120–140 words, and keywords; third page and beyond: main text, appendix, references, figures, and tables.

Text of Manuscript: For literature review articles, please include an introduction, critical literature review, problems in past research, and suggestions for future research. For empirical research papers, please include an introduction, methods, findings and discussions, and a conclusion.

AHL requires electronic submission. Please send an email attachment with a Word format to the editor Dr. Joseph Chen (joechen@indiana.edu) or send a CD to Tourism, Hospitality and Event Management, Department of Recreation Park and Tourism Studies, School of Public Health Building #133, Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana 47405-7109, USA.

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FULL PAPERS

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DEVELOPING TOURISM IN REMOTE COMMUNITIES: AN OPEN ARCHITECTURE APPROACH

Bruce Prideaux and Michelle Thompson

ABSTRACT

Remote communities often face a range of problems related to distance, service provision, high costs, and economic uncertainty. Many of these problems are structural and a direct result of their location on a periphery. In recent decades many remote settlements have looked to the tourism sector to supplement existing local economies. Numerous tools variously described in the literature as theories, models, and frameworks have been suggested as approaches for assisting local economies develop tourism. In searching for solutions, it is not unusual for researchers to advocate a standalone theory, model, or framework as a preferred approach. However, this method ignores the complexity of the real world and that solutions usually require a multi-dimensional approach based on combining various theoretical tools. This paper proposes an open architecture approach that utilizes a number of theories and models that can be selectively and collectively used to assist remote settlements develop a tourism sector. This approach was tested in Cooktown, Australia. One outcome was the identification of a range of deficiencies in the strategies currently used by the destination.

Keywords: Remote communities; periphery; tourism; Cooktown; models; barriers; open architecture approach

INTRODUCTION

Many remote settlements encounter problems in providing services to residents and attracting investment in the local economy (Schmallegger & Carson, 2010). Problems of this nature may arise from poor or limited access to national

transport networks, inadequate communications systems, high cost of imported goods and services, skills shortages, and service standards that may not meet those normally accepted in larger centers. The structure of the local economy may also pose problems particularly where the community's principle economic sectors are subject to the vagaries of domestic and international market forces. Cooktown, Australia, is an example of one such settlement. In recent decades many remote settlements have looked to the tourism sector to supplement existing local economies. However, this requires these communities to adopt strategies that support tourism development. [Huskey and Morehouse \(1991\)](#) observed that development in remote areas is a process of overcoming obstacles that may include conflicting social, economic, and political objectives often compounded by differences between the objectives of the community and the external agencies they rely on.

The aim of this chapter is to examine how existing theoretical tools can be used to assist remote communities develop a tourism sector. The premise underpinning this approach is that tourism development is based on the interplay of three key concepts:

Supply—a realistic assessment of a destinations' ability to provide appealing tourism resources within the context of its location and access to potential generating regions and tourist segments.

Tourist experience—the range of tourist experiences and supporting services able to be offered by the destination.

Demand—the ability of the experiences offered in the destination to attract tourists.

Many of the available theoretical tools offer a narrow rather than broad holistic approach to understanding the interplay of supply, demand, and the tourist experience.

Models and theories that relate to aspects of destination development were reviewed to identify those that assisted in developing an understanding of the factors, processes, and relationships that affect supply, tourist experience, and demand in remote communities. Selected models and theories were incorporated into an open architecture framework illustrated in [Fig. 1](#). For the purposes of this chapter, open architecture is described as an approach that enables models and theories to be used singularly, collectively, in parallel, and/or sequentially to solve specific tourism planning issues. In computing and other industries, an open architecture system is one that allows the integration and/or interfacing of components, information systems, and programs from multiple suppliers into a single framework. A closed architecture approach does not allow integration of products and services from multiple suppliers. When applied in a tourism setting, the open architecture system recognizes that current theoretical tools explain various elements of the tourism development process rather than the process as a whole. Incorporating a range of theoretical tools into an open architecture framework allows them to be "plugged in" where and as required. Although applying this approach to a tourism setting is novel, it has the potential to make far better use of theoretical tools, including models and theories, than presently occurs by contributing to a more holistic understanding of problems and

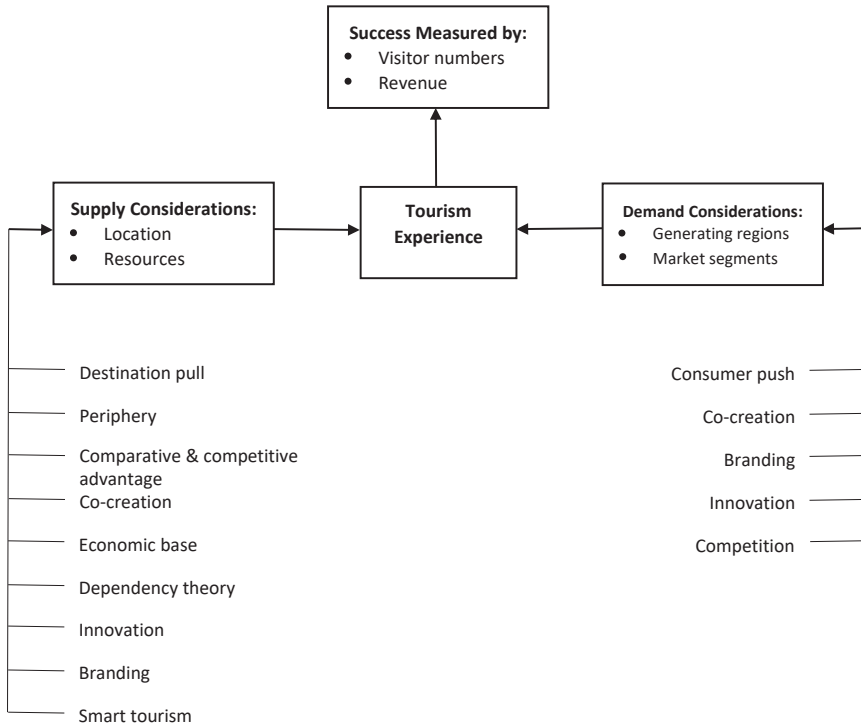


Fig. 1. Tourism Development Model. Source: Authors.

solutions. The framework was tested in Cooktown, a small remote community located in northern Australia. While the following discussion has a specific tourism focus, the role of other sectors in the local economy also need to be considered based on the significant level of interdependence between each sector.

Models and Theories

A review of the literature indicates a propensity for researchers to focus on one or occasionally several models or theories to explain issues related to the development of remote or isolated communities. Models are generally created to explain complex problems (Getz, 1986) but with the realization that they represent an aspect of reality, not reality itself. A key element of successful model building is the reduction of complex sets of cause and effect into a simplified set of relationships that explain why certain sets of factors affect other sets of factors under specific conditions. Theory also provides explanation but from a different perspective. According to Dann, Nash, and Pearce (1988, p. 4), theory can be described as a body of logically interconnected propositions that provide an interpretive basis for understanding phenomena.

McKercher (1999) observed that reality is complex, even chaotic. By simplifying the vast range of factors that may affect a particular set of relationships, models and theories can assist in reducing complexity and identify key drivers, but the process of simplification may not capture the entirety of the processes that are operating. A major criticism of models and theories is that by simplifying complex relationships, important cause and effect factors may be overlooked. Another significant criticism is that there is a tendency to use a single model and theory when the complexity of the factors being investigated is such that multiple models may be required. In a review of four models used to explain aspects of tourism development on the Gold Coast, Australia, Prideaux (2009, p. 31) observed that “while each model in isolation appears to offer a satisfactory analysis... other factors that were not identified also offer valid explanation.” In some cases, there may be overlaps between models where similar factors are viewed from different perspectives. A more appropriate approach to using models and theories is to assemble “the findings of a number of models (and theories) to enable a more holistic view of the development processes (that are occurring) (p. 31).” This approach is adopted in this chapter.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Models and theories are widely used in the tourism literature to discuss a range of issues related to remoteness. Examples include periphery, staples theory, economic base theory, comparative and competitive advantage, push-pull, co-creation, innovation, dependency theory, marketing theory, and the principles of smart tourism. The following discussion reviews a range of models and theories that have been used to understand problems associated with tourism development in remote areas. Space limitations preclude a more detailed discussion of the following models and theories.

Periphery is an example of a theory often employed to examine issues related to remoteness. From a tourism perspective (Harrison, 2015; Wall, 2015; Weaver, 2015), periphery refers to the relationship between major tourism generating regions and remote destinations. Discussions on the impact of periphery on tourism demand usually include analyses of measurable factors including actual distance, perceived distance, scale, cost, and occasionally time. In reality, complex sets of factors affect distance relationships, including competitive advantage, uniqueness of attractions, governance, economic factors, and personal preferences. Wall (2015, p. 180) observed that

...periphery should be seen as being primarily a spatial concept, albeit one that can be linked to other concepts such as population density, economic structure, level and type of development, modernization, economic structure, and globalisation.

Wall (2015) also observed that peripheries include relationships between centers and edges and that there are some arguments that development can “trickle down” from the core to the periphery.

From a different perspective, [Chaperon and Bramwell \(2013\)](#) observed that periphery is a function of the location of a destination and its key source markets, and the difficulty of travel between the destination and its source markets where travel is measured in terms of cost, time, and inconvenience. A peripheral location need not be a major impediment for a destination if its key tourism assets are sufficiently unique or novel that the strength of the destination's pull factors is enough to overcome constraints imposed by the length of time taken to reach the destination and the cost of that travel ([Prideaux, 2002](#)). Where uniqueness provides tourists with a rewarding experience, the additional cost of travel may be offset by an enhanced level of enjoyment of their touristic experience ([Prideaux, 2013](#)). The significance of uniqueness is apparent in the Maldives, which while remote has been able to build a premium tourism experience based on unique island experiences and remoteness ([Scheyvens, 2011](#)). Remoteness together with uniqueness have become key selling points for the Maldives.

However, a peripheral location is not the only factor that influences the success or otherwise of remote destinations. In their classic analysis of comparative and competitive advantage, [Ritchie and Crouch \(2003, p. 23\)](#) state that "comparative advantages involve the resources available to a destination, competitive advantages relate to the destination's ability to use these resources effectively over the long term." [Ritchie and Crouch's \(2003\)](#) conceptual framework is useful for assessing the tourism potential of destinations and provides examples of comparative advantage including built and natural resources, human resources, capital resources, and knowledge resources.

The key to transforming comparative advantages into competitive advantages requires identification of barriers and capitalizing on identified drivers. Barriers are described as factors that inhibit transformation and may include aspects of the external environment within which transformation occurs including economic, environmental, legislative, and sociocultural ([Thompson, 2015](#)). Drivers, described as factors that facilitate transformation, include geography, innovation, networks, branding, people, and culture, may be internal as well as external. The presence of barriers and drivers directly affects opportunities for transformation ([Thompson, 2015](#)). Successful transformation enables the development of appealing touristic experiences and products that enhance a destination's competitiveness. As [Ritchie and Crouch \(2003\)](#) state, the most efficient method of achieving successful transformation is to understand the market and what the destination can provide.

The push-pull model provides further insights into how remote destinations should consider both their supply side, based on comparative and competitive advantages, and demand side, based on the needs and expectations of existing and potential visitors. Pull factors ([Crompton, 1979](#); [Prayag & Ryan, 2011](#)) are described as those factors that make a destination an attractive proposition for tourists if they match tourists' push factors. [Crompton \(1979\)](#) and [Dann \(1977\)](#) describe push factors as the key drivers that propel individuals to go on holidays and include the need for rest and relaxation, adventure, value for money, prestige, and social interaction. Where there is a mismatch between tourists'

expectations (measured as push factors) and destinations' pull factors, the opportunity for destinations to maximize their competitive advantages is minimized.

Recent research that has moved beyond considerations of location and comparative advantage has described destinations as a set of products and services that tourists purchase based on their holiday needs and expectations. As [Pellegrin-Romeggio and Leszczynska \(2013\)](#) observed, this process enables the modular bundling of products and services to match individual tourist's budget and timetable. Two factors central to this process are the tourism supply chain and the willingness of firms and destinations to adopt strategies that involve co-creation. The tourist supply chain includes distribution channels, transport networks, and supporting ICT infrastructure. Co-creation is the production of experiences that enhance customer satisfaction by providing customers with the opportunity to individually tailor their experiences ([Campos, Mendes, Oom do Valle, & Scott, 2018](#)). By offering opportunities for co-creation and using ICT to strengthen the tourism supply chain, remote communities can overcome some of the barriers imposed by distance.

Economic base theory ([Richardson, 1985](#)) and staples theory ([Schmallegger & Carson, 2010](#)) provide further insights into understanding how the economies of small remote settlements operate. Economic base theory ([Isserman, 1977](#)) separates a region's economy into an export sector that responds to external demand and an import sector that responds to local demand. If the demand for exports falls, the local economy will suffer and possibly contract. Staples theory ([Schmallegger & Carson, 2010](#)) also focuses on resources and suggests if the key resources are depleted, the settlement may decline unless a replacement resource is identified. Tourism can assist in filling the gap created by industries in decline if there are resources able to attract visitors.

Dependency theory may also be used to illustrate aspects of the economic problems faced by remote settlements. [Chaperon and Bramwell \(2013\)](#) describe dependency as a situation where a peripheral location depends on the core (in most cases a metropolitan city or cities that exercise economic and administrative power over the core and surrounding hinterlands) for economic and administrative leadership. Where there is a high level of dependency, communities located in the periphery may encounter problems whereby the core does not recognize local problems, resourcing, and devolvement of decision-making powers.

[Carson, Carson, and Hodge \(2014\)](#) observed that in many small peripheral communities, innovation is a key factor in their ability to attract new experiences or fund the rejuvenation of existing tourism experiences within networks that ideally extend beyond community and local government boundaries. The ability to implement innovation requires a systematic examination of the capacity for local innovation. Barriers to innovation that may be encountered include lack of leadership, the age of key players, limited access to investment capital, and in some cases a lack of cooperation with adjoining Local Government Authorities. In a note of caution in relation to innovation in regional areas, [Gannon \(1994, p. 53\)](#) warns that while