

Developing community based tourism from scratch: perceptions of organisational challenges

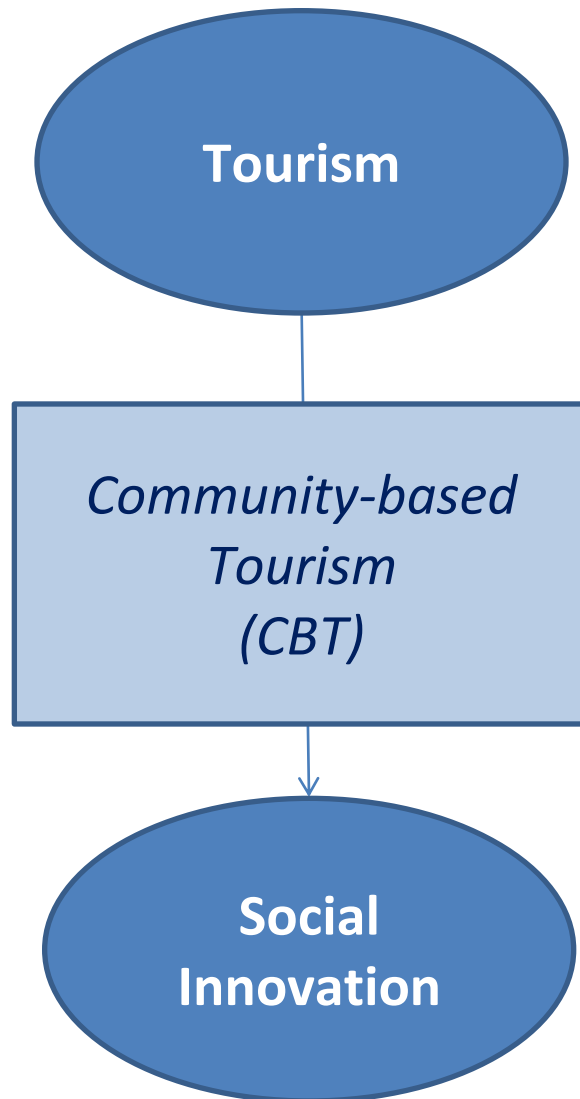
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Social Innovation and Tourism



Findings of the previous research

- local tourism service providers display caution and difficulty to make a decision to cooperate with other stakeholders within the destination (Beritelli 2011)
- negative attitude towards and negative perception of the activities of the public sector in tourism, i.e. local government and tourist board (Jamal and Getz 1995)
- different perceptions of individual and common benefits from tourism, as well as benefits for the community (Mavondo and Rodrigo, 2001; Rodriguez and Wilson, 2002)
- lack of collective action and inertia of local residents (Toro and Claiborne 2010).

Establishing CBT: 2 presumptions

- Potential bearers of change: local inhabitants already engaged in tourism activities (local providers of tourist services)
- Need for new organisational structure oriented on gathering various stakeholders of community and tourism development for the purpose of sustainable planning and implementation of community based tourism initiatives

Methodology

- 3 local communities in Croatia (A, B, C):
- A – mature destination with longstanding tourism tradition (sun & sea)
- B – community close to the seaside destinations, significant cultural heritage, large increase in tourist offer in the past 2 years
- C – community situated in under-developed mountain region; great tourism potential, slow development of tourist offer

- 46 local providers of tourism services
- Personal in-depth semi-structured interviews

Research sample structure: Local providers of tourism services

| | A | B | C |
|--|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Providers of integrated accommodation and food services | 2 | 2 | 3 |
| Catering service providers (café and restaurant owners) | 2 | 3 | 1 |
| "Small" providers of accommodation services (1 or 2 accommodation units) | 4 | 4 | 4 |
| "Large" providers of accommodation services (3 or more accommodation units and holiday houses) | 5 | 3 | 4 |
| Providers of other tourist facilities/activities (recreation, visits, souvenirs...) | 3 | 2 | 4 |
| TOTAL | 16 | 14 | 16 |

6 main discussion topics

Vision of local
tourism and its
current
organisation

Perception of local
relationships and
attitudes towards
tourism

Relationships and
cooperation among
local stakeholders

*Creating new
organisation:
structure and
participation*

*Personal support
and participation in
the new
organisation*

Overall results and findings

Vision of local tourism and its current organisation

- Difference in interests of tourist services providers
- The feeling of being neglected and insufficiently acknowledged by local decision-makers
- Lack of authentic offer (food & souvenirs)
- Lots of unused potentials within the communities

Perception of local relationships and attitudes towards tourism

- Lack of comprehension for merging public and private interests in the field of tourism
- Non-transparent usage of public goods for tourism purposes
- Non enough collective and individual effort in actions that would improve the appearance of public and private areas
- **Strong need for cooperation in creating new attractive tourist offer**

Relationships and cooperation among local stakeholders

- Mixing private and business relationships
- Preferring to work individually
- Insufficient communication and gathering of all community members
- Issues related to the decisions on spending the public money in the communities

Creating new organisation: structure and participation

- Confirmed the need for the new organisation
- Planning and control of tourism development, creating innovative touris offer and sustainable usage of existing resources
- Democratic approach to certain extent
- Public & private stakeholders
- Strong leadership, division of labour and professional management
- Transparency & communication
- **Who shall lead?**

Personal support and participation in the new organisation

- Caution and hesitation
- Interest in centralisation of the activities such as marketing and promotion within the new organisation
- Decision making versus implementation of activities
- Profit making or not - distribution of benefits
- Trust issues / bad previous experiences

Instead of conclusion

- Influencing on the appearance of new CBT oriented initiatives: path to social innovation
- Different stakeholders- different interests: building sense of community and social capital
- Any type of new organisational model need awareness-raising activities prior to the launch
- Fighting trust issues with „neutral“ staff managing the organisation (?)
- Clear rules and transparent communication
- Sharing benefits from tourism, as well as risks among community members
- *Limitations: sample size, contextual restraints*
- *New research lines: inclusion of other stakeholder groups, creation of business model proposal for new organisation*

Thank you for your attention !

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