

## **The Evolution of Marketing in Tourism Studies – Characteristics of the Theoretical Evolution in Tourism.**

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The objective of this paper is to clarify the characteristics of the theoretical evolution of marketing in the context of tourism. The research on tourism has expanded in recent years but it is said that the fundamental framework, particularly that of marketing in tourism, is not making significant progress. This paper utilizes theoretical evolution model based on Karl Popper's ideas to divide the criticisms made in the course of theoretical evolution into two phases and test them. The first is the tourism marketing theory of Krippendorff, and the second is the tourism marketing theory of Wahab et al.

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

In the tourism industry, as globalization advances and competition intensifies, destination marketing which focuses on destination as the core marketing concept is drawing attention (UNWTO, 2011). There is no clear answer, however, as to what actually constitutes destination marketing. There are of course numerous studies on destination marketing, yet little progress has been made in research into the concept of destination marketing or in a fundamental framework that captures it in its entirety (Pike and Page, 2014).

This paper therefore presents an analysis focused on the discussion of the process of theoretical evolution in which marketing was applied to tourism, in order to promote research on fundamental frameworks of marketing in the context of tourism. We then proceed to identify the characteristics of theoretical evolution in tourism studies.

### **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

In preceding literature, there are two perspectives for analyzing the distinguishing characteristics of marketing in tourism. The first involves depicting transitions by means of article reviews (Pike and Page, 2014). The other involves comparing the views of various researchers with a focus on definitions (Fujita, 2016). Both approaches

concern themselves primarily with the organization and categorization of theories.

Notwithstanding the accumulation of previous studies, however, there has been scant progress on foundational frameworks to reach any conclusion (Pike and Page, 2014). One reason that can be cited is that mere organization and categorization of theories cannot fully explain the evolution of theory, and they simply fall into "arguments over definitions". To correctly understand the characteristics of a particular theory requires not just categorizing and organizing but theoretical analysis, according to Nagano (2015, 2020).

In this paper we make use of a cognitive progress model as asserted in critical rationalism as a way to explain the evolution of theory. This model is predicated on Karl Popper's notion of "conjectures and refutations". In this model, according to Nagano (2020, 2015), a first problem ( $P_1$ ) to be solved is established, against which a temporary theory ( $TT_1$ ) is given. Then critical error elimination ( $EE_1$ ) is made against this temporary theory ( $TT_1$ ). In response to this, a new problem ( $P_2$ ) is established, against which a new temporary theory ( $TT_2$ ) is given, and knowledge evolves according to this process (Nagano, 2015).

The use of this model is well-suited to achieving our objectives here. The reason is that tourism marketing theory is born from a criticism of marketing theory, and it is by virtue of that criticism that the concept has progressed. The evolution of tourism marketing can be broadly

divided into two phases. The first phase involves the criticism of marketing by Krippendorf, the originator of tourism marketing. The second phase is the criticism of Krippendorf's tourism marketing by Wahab et al. Denoting marketing theory as Tm, Krippendorf's theory as Tk, Wahab et al.'s theory as Tw, and criticism of theory as R, and integrating them to the above model, the theoretical evolution can be shown as in the figure below.

Fig. 1. Theoretical evolution up to marketing theory

First phase  $Tm \rightarrow R_1 \rightarrow P_1 \rightarrow Tk$

Second phase  $Tk \rightarrow R_2 \rightarrow P_2 \rightarrow Tw$

Prepared by author based on Nagano (2015)

In this paper we analyze the logic and criticism of the theoretical evolution in each phase of Fig. 1.

### 3. ANALYSIS

#### 3.1. Refutation of marketing theory and establishment of problem

Krippendorf (1971) divided economic development into three stages. In the first stage of economic development, demand constantly outstripped supply, and shortages were well below the saturation level. The imperative for businesses was thus to maximize production and distribution. In the second phase of economic development, which included 1971, the year in which the paper in question was published, the situation is one of continuously increasing productivity, primarily as a response to technological progress. In this phase production has already exceeded demand in many sectors, resulting in businesses starting to face the problem of reductions in sales. In the third phase of economic development then predicted to occur in the future, the situation of the second phase would further accelerate. The change to the third phase would start with the general goods produced by the manufacturing industry, and then would expand in stepwise fashion to all industries, including tourism. He then pointed out that growing competition to capture customers would occur, along with associated difficulties in sales. To solve this problem, the important point would not be to take a production-oriented approach, but to become customer-oriented, the method for achieving which is marketing.

Krippendorf held that current marketing theories were not applicable to tourism in their extant form. The reason was that they targeted the market for general goods, which are different in nature from that for tourism. Shiota (1975) summarizes the fundamental difference between the general goods market and the tourism market as they are viewed by Krippendorf into the following two points. First, tourism businesses comprise a combination of goods and services, with services playing a primary role, and tourism consumption cannot happen without tourists visiting tourist locations. Second is the fact that tourism products are of a supplementary nature. The touristic needs that tourists look for in tourism are not a single service, but the entire experience of tourism, meaning that achieving customer satisfaction levels implies the need for partnerships that would compensate for what each business entity lacks. It is these two characteristics that give rise to the problem that marketing theories cannot be applied as they are to the tourism market.

#### 3.2. Krippendorf's theory of tourism marketing

Krippendorf argued that achieving customer satisfaction required packaging the tourism experience in order to solve this problem. To this end of meeting tourism needs, a variety of elements need to be aggregated, with resorts, regions, and the country as a whole thought of as a "group business". The various sections of his work cohere as an attempt to provide a perspective for the definition, role, objective, strategy, means, and decision-making relating to tourism marketing (Shiota, 1975).

One major aspect of tourism marketing that has been identified is that individual problems in the tourism economy have to date been addressed by individual businesses in unaligned fashion. Unlike a marketing theory assuming actions taken by individual businesses, tourism marketing held that they should be undertaken just like by a group business where each entity involved is aligned with the others.

#### 3.3. Refutation of tourism marketing theory and problem establishment

Wahab et al. (1976) criticized Krippendorf's tourism marketing theory and proposed a new conceptual framework of tourism theory. First, let us overview the concept of marketing of Wahab et al. Their observations divide the marketing concept in the tourism industry into historical,

modern, and future stages. Their thinking is shown in the table below.

Fig. 2. Three marketing approaches for tourism as proposed by Wahab et al.

Historical tourism marketing	Product oriented
Modern tourism marketing	Visitor oriented
Future tourism marketing	Destination oriented

Prepared by author based on Wahab et al. (1976)

Product-oriented tourism marketing is synonymous with the first stage of economic development as described by Krippendorf. Wahab et al. (1976) and Krippendorf are in agreement that the challenge therein is that the expansion of the tourism market results in supply exceeding demand, and businesses may not be able to remain competitive merely via advertising of their products\*1. Tourism marketing as conceived in this paper corresponds to the “modern tourism marketing” of the Wahab et al. marketing approach.

In its details, the tourism marketing of Wahab et al. follows Krippendorf’s discussion closely, arguing that marketing theory for markets in physical goods is not applicable as-is to the tourism market. In other words, they do not reject tourism marketing itself, but rather acknowledge its necessity.

The criticism of Krippendorf’s analysis by Wahab et al. is from two perspectives. The first is the claim that Krippendorf’s analysis falls short. For example, Krippendorf defines tourism marketing as alignment, which Wahab et al. criticize, saying that alignment is a means which in and of itself does not suffice to achieve customer satisfaction. The second is a criticism of direction. Wahab et al. argue that in the future, problems will arise that cannot be solved by visitor-oriented marketing alone. Carrying out tourism marketing increases customer satisfaction and beckons many tourists to destinations. The increase in tourists, however, has both positive and negative effects on the destination in the areas of the economy, politics, and the environment, requiring that the negative aspects be mitigated to the extent possible and the positive ones magnified. Customer-orientation

by itself cannot accurately take into consideration the impact on the destination, according to this criticism.

3.4. The tourism marketing theory of Wahab et al. Wahab et al. argue that there are three directional concepts in tourism marketing, and criticized that of those Krippendorf addressed only up to customer-orientation. And they defined the ultimate objective of tourism as “achieving benefits for the destination and its residents”. They argued that effects on tourists, residents of other areas, and external investors are tolerated for the reason that benefits accrue to the destination and the residents. It then follows that the assessment of the impact of tourism marketing should be based on the criterion of whether the advantages outweigh the disadvantages for the destination. Persisting with customer-oriented marketing activities will give rise to this problem in the future, meaning that future tourism marketing must become destination-oriented, in this argument.

It is important to note the following two points, however, with regard to the arguments of Wahab et al. First is that they deny neither the need for nor the importance of tourism marketing. Second is that it is not at present but in the future that destination-oriented marketing should be carried out. Wahab et al. point out that at the time, in 1976, many destinations were still engaging in product-oriented marketing, and the substance of their 1976 paper was research relating to customer- oriented tourism marketing.

## 4. DISCUSSION

### 4.1. Common characteristics of criticisms

The target of the criticism of the evolution of theory in Phase 1 of Fig. 2 was the argument that the tourism market has a structure different from that envisioned by marketing theory. In other words, the claims about Phase 1 had as their objective to make it possible to use marketing theory in the tourism market. It was apparently a form of criticism to propose a methodology for pushing marketing theory into the tourism market.

The criticism of the evolution of theory in Phase 2, on the other hand, was that tourism marketing has three stages and that the analysis so far has extended only to stage 2. It was a form of criticism that does not reject tourism marketing itself but one that suggests a direction for the future. As described above, a common

characteristic of the criticisms of the evolution of theory from marketing theory to tourism marketing theory is that they do not reject existing theories.

#### 4.2.Features of the criticism of each phase

Let us now analyze the features of the criticism of each phase shown in Fig. 2. For Phase 1, the issue was the applicability of the theory and criticism was made on the issue of how marketing theory can be applied to the tourism market. For Phase 2, on the other hand, a new problem was raised that negative aspects from the perspective of the destination emerge once tourism marketing achieves a certain level of success. Here the problem was not one of applicability, but of the future of tourism marketing, revealing the intent for an original, new theory. In other words, the difference lies in the fact that in phase 1, the problem is the applicability of a theory of another field, whereas phase 2 attempts to establish a new theory.

### 5. CONCLUSION

Analyzing the criticisms of the evolution of theory from marketing theory to destination marketing theory has yielded the following insights. First, the debate was not rejecting marketing theory itself, but was rather moving toward applying it precisely to operate it in the tourism market. Second, it was revealed that when tourism research embraces theories from other fields, such theories will be established to the extent that they are applied, and that they will develop into new theories through the process of criticism.

In particular, Wahab et al.'s destination-oriented tourism marketing can be considered the seeds of a tourism-specific theory. This concept has now become a specific issue in the context of the concept of sustainable tourism, and is the topic of ongoing research. Back in 1976, Wahab et al., merely proposed this concept, without going so far as to develop a new theory, but served the role of raising tourism marketing from an application of marketing to a new theory.

Marketing in tourism would thereafter evolve into a separate theory specific to tourism, called destination marketing. This theoretical evolution is something we intend to address in a future paper.

### NOTES

- \*1. The expression “tourism marketing” has also been used in product-oriented contexts, but it has only been used to only discuss the issues of a time before marketing concepts were introduced to tourism, and no concepts specific to tourism have been introduced. It would be more appropriate to discuss it conceptually in terms of promotion and maximization of distribution.

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