Social Innovation in Tourism: Analysing processes, actors, and tipping points

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Monika Bandi, Heike Mayer
GEGC Dublin, 07.06.2022
Innovation in Tourism

Technological understanding of innovation

Problems to innovate (in a technological sense)
• Small-scale structure of the enterprises
• High intensity of labour in daily business
• Low R&D

Weidenfeld (2013)
Innovation in Tourism

- Social networks (Sørensen, 2007)
- Co-evolutionary process (Gomezeli, 2016)

- Drivers of innovation: (Trunfio & Campana 2019)
  - Political-institutional actors
  - Local firms
  - Local community
  - DMO
Definition Social Innovation

“A social innovation consists of new forms of cooperation of individuals or organizations that lead to new ideas, of which the implementation is at least considered. In regional development, such innovations can have a positive impact on society, improve the quality of life and/or change social or power relations.”

(Ayob et al. 2016)
Research Question

How do social innovations in tourism develop and overpass a tipping point?

Who are the actors involved in tourism social innovation processes?
Social Innovation process

Phases:
I, Problematisation Phase
II, Implementation Phase
III, Operating Phase

(Own figure)
## Results

### Problematisation Phase

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phases:</th>
<th>I, Problematisation Phase</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Key actors:</td>
<td>Developers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Key characteristic:</td>
<td>Problem &amp; Solution</td>
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#### Problems:
- Regional/local problem
- Actor specific problem

#### Developers
- Private individuals
Results

Implementation Phase

Reason for participating:
- Elusive, non-measurable benefit
- Suited the own day-to-day business
- Personal interests and enthusiasm

Supporters
- Private individuals
- Local firms
Results

Operating Phase

Tipping point:
- C: Succeeded, began to spread
- B: Failed
- A: Did not overcome the tipping point (yet)

Promoters
- Public actors or public legal partnerships
  - Provided financial guarantees, political power, manpower, networks and/or knowledge
Conclusion

- Promoters are key actors when it comes to scaling
- The promoters were public actors and/or public legal partnerships

**Commonalities:**
- The social innovations were accepted in the region and among the involved actors
- All involved actors had individual benefits from the social innovation
Thank you!

Questions?

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Literature


Surviving without growing
How small and medium enterprises in the construction industry manage to be growth-independent

Andrea Winiger – University of Bern, WSL

Heike Mayer (University of Bern, CRED)

Irmi Seidl – (WSL Birmensdorf)

GCEG, 09.06.2022, Dublin
3 (possibly surprising) **Surviving Strategies**

1. **Cooperate with competitors**

   - Share employees = flexible capacities
   - Produce building components = flexible capacities
   - Create purchasing group = reduce costs
   - Share infrastructure / machinery = reduce costs
3 (possibly surprising) Surviving Strategies

2 “Manage” competitive pressure

- Offer wide range of products
  - = flexibility in the market

- Vertical integration – value chain
  - = increase price margin

- Focus on private customers
  - = less price pressure

- Choosing renovation segment
  - = less competitive pressure / cross-subsidies
3 (possibly surprising) Surviving Strategies

3 Shrinking and/or staying small

Staying small
= focus on renovation & private customers

Reduce enterprise size
= focus on renovation & private customers
How did we find out?

Context

Mountain region (Switzerland)

250 SMEs (e.g. electrical & sanitary installation, painting service)

Approach

Can construction SMEs subsist without growing? What strategies do they use?

Selected 50 SMEs (stratified according to size)

21 Interviews - SMEs directors (1-85 Employees)

Identified growth-independent SMEs

Analysis of strategies (content analysis)
Why is it relevant?

‘grow or die’
(Fagerberg, 2013)

BUT
12 out of the 21 analysed SMEs:
- Do not grow (or even shrink)
- Do not want to grow
- Good economic situation

Can subsist in the long run without growing
= growth-independent
Why is it relevant?

For the construction industry?

Limits to growth at industry level (especially in mountain regions)

(Building) land as finite resource

Market saturation

Restrictions of second home construction
Why is it relevant?

For regional development?

Current focus on growth & innovation = increasingly criticized

Neglecting social & economic inequality
(Martin, 2021)

Impact on environment and resources
(Gibbs & O’Neill 2017)

Neglection of local economy /enterprises
(Segessemann & Crevoisier, 2016)
Growth-independent regional development

New development paradigm?

Challenge: institutions / actors are existentially dependent on economic growth (Seidl & Zahrnt, 2010, 2021)

Growth-Independence:

- New forms of social & economic organisation
- Focus on
  - Economic stability
  - Human-wellbeing and needs
  - Staying within planetary boundaries

(Asara et al., 2015; D’Alisa et al., 2015; Fournier, 2008; Jackson, 2009; Schmelzer & Vetter, 2019)

→ Need for growth-independent economic actors (and institutions) (Seidl & Zahrnt, 2010, 2021)
## Take Home Message

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<tr>
<td><strong>1</strong></td>
<td>Growth-independent enterprises exist</td>
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<td><strong>2</strong></td>
<td>They apply a variety of strategies to survive</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>3</strong></td>
<td>Growth-independent actors are relevant for future regional development beyond growth orientation</td>
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How does co-creation influence regulations?
An analysis of co-creation in health care social innovations

Pascal Tschumi and Heike Mayer
University of Bern
Institute of Geography
Center for Regional Economic Development
GCEG Dublin       June 10, 2022
Social innovations for health care challenges

Health care challenges (Broerse et al. 2017):
- rising costs and demographic change

Social innovations as solutions (Neumeier 2012; Bock 2016)

Social innovations = new solutions to a social problem or societal challenge involving new or established forms of cooperation between individuals and/or organisations
Co-creation in social innovations

Co-creation is one of the main features and success factors of social innovation (Eckhardt et al., 2021; Kumari et al., 2020)

Co-creation = collaboration of actors with the aim of creating an innovative solution to a societal problem or challenge
Social innovations

Co-creation
In which ways does co-creation affect social innovation actors’ activities to influence regulations?
Methods

• 3 social innovation case studies
  • First Responder Bern (lay paramedics)
  • Birth center
  • Integrated health care network

• Innovation biographies

• Semi-structured interviews

Map: https://swisskarte.ch/en/
Picture: H. Mayer (2019)
In which ways can co-creation influence regulations?

Social innovation actors...

...induced other actors to start the process of changing regulations.

...made propositions about concrete changes/adjustments.
In which ways can co-creation influence regulations?

Social innovation actors learn knowledge and skills in co-creation, which are important to influence regulations

• Operative processes in health care institutions & basic medical procedures

• Economic and social circumstances of the locality or region
Circumstances related to the actors that facilitated regulation changes/adjustments

• **Network**: Actors have access to actors with formal authority

• Actors are **skilled in persuading** others
Conclusions

• Co-creation in health care related social innovations helped social innovation actors in their efforts to influence health care regulations.

• Actors’ preconditions unrelated to co-creation were at least as important to influence regulations.

• Co-creation can support social innovation actors in influencing formal institutions, but by itself is not enough to influence regulations.
Thank you!

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Research funded by:
References


References


