

## Actor-Network Theory and Stakeholder Collaboration: The Case of Slovenia

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### Abstract

*This paper aims to reveal the impact of collaborative networking on the tourist satisfaction with integral tourism products. We used exploratory factor analysis and general regression model to test the effects of collaboration between stakeholders on Slovenian tourist destination on the satisfaction of tourists with the integral tourist products. Despite intensive research in this field, there is still a gap in the knowledge about the collaboration between local, regional and national stakeholders in the process of creating integral products. This paper contributes to the debate by investigating the collaborative behavior patterns of stakeholders during the conceptualization of the large project on the planning of comprehensive tourism products. The research shows that collaborative networking, competencies, and leadership facilitate the satisfaction of tourists with comprehensive tourist product on the destination Slovenia. Paper offers the applications for steering committees, marketers and consortia coordinators.*

**Keywords:** actor-network theory, collaboration, networking, leadership, competencies, integral products

### 1. Introduction

Tourism has the most growing potential of all industries in the world and is always changing. New generations of tourists have new desires, expectations, and goals. Further, modern tourists anticipate innovative and diverse products and services. As a result, the changing of the tourism product landscape demands new approaches to market and marketing (Richards and Wilson, 2008:7). Emerging trends of de-differentiation of tourism goods and services in tourism cover greater range of tourism resources as ever before. New trends include all the goods, even the ones that originally are not tourism products like lifestyle of the tourists and atmosphere on the tourist destination. Increasing heterogeneity of tourism products installs service sectors at the core of the developing process of the making of integral tourism products. Innovation becomes the crucial factor of the firm's company competitiveness (Carvalho and Costa, 2001).

Stakeholder collaboration is a widely recognized as a principal approach to investigate the collaboration processes on the local level of tourism networking (Jamal and Getz, 1995). Number of studies elaborated tourism networking empirically and theoretically in the field of tourism planning (Arnaboldi and Spiller, 2011; Ambrož, 2006; Ambrož and Veljković, 2012).

Sautter and Leisen (1999) investigated the collaboration between the main players in sustainable tourism development. Their findings show that authorities proactively direct and consider the transaction against relationship orientations of key stakeholders. According to Byrd (2007), sustainable tourism development is possible when distinct groups like present visitors, future visitors, present host community, and future host community play stakeholder role in the process of development. Andereck and Vogt (2000:27) and Choi and Sirakaya, (2005) argue that without collective effort it is very difficult to develop a sustainable approach to tourism. De Araujo and Bramwell (1999) research show similar results. They argue that varied stakeholders participated in the planning process, but there was only limited participation by private sectors and NGOs. Garcia-Rosell (2013: 56) research shows that stakeholders that are independent and isolated market actors with clearly defined tasks and roles within the market context, which have more participative practices produce better results.

However, these contributions disregard the contents of the organizing process of collaboration of the stakeholders in integral tourism product planning. This lack of the thorough research on the micro-level of collaboration coordination

calls for further empirical investigations to support the principles of building and managing partnerships in the tourism system.

The present work seeks to fill this gap by empirically investigating the micro-level collaboration of stakeholders in the Slovenian tourism destination. In this paper, we will develop leadership – network perspective on tourism innovation practices that lead to the construction of the integral tourism products. More precisely, the paper focuses on the self-generating process of collaboration in a form of tourism marketing consortia (Fyall and Garrod, 2005:265). We will introduce an innovative organization perspective, which firstly rests on the satisfaction of tourists with integral products and services. Secondly, we will investigate how tourism stakeholders can develop innovative organization from the collaboration process developing of comprehensive tourism products and establishing the informal consortium structures. Further, we will argue that innovation in tourism means developing such kind of innovative organizing practices that allow for the realization of innovative practices through the integration of products and services and collaborating structures.

## 2. Literature Review

Innovation of products and services is a typical organizational pattern of modern and competitive organizations. Tourism actors and agencies develop innovative approaches in the process of making new tourism products for decades. Besides, tourism researchers show constant interest in the innovation of tangible tourism products.

Recently, researchers shifted their attention to other sectors (Carvalho and Costa, 2001; Hjalager, 2002; Carvalho, 2008, and Miles 2005). According to Duim (2008:13) innovation in tourism means developing the ability to make tourism landscapes work differently in an innovative way. He argues that actors can foster changes if they reconfigure the *collective* of actors. Actors have to change the structure of the group in that way that they add new people and new things and integrate them in new products. Asheim and Isaksen (2003) emphasize that participating in clusters and networks provides new potential for innovations and strengthens competitive advantage of organizations and tourism stakeholders. It is important to note in this context that the structure of the tourism industry influences innovation performance (Cano, 2008).

### 2.1 Innovative potential of tourism products

Researchers saw the structure of the organization and the management of the organization as fundamental factors to enhance innovation activity on the organizational level (Jensen et al., 2007). Leadership has a significant role in this process attempting to increase linkages to other sectors. Besides, leadership promotes the exploitation of innovative potential in the tourism industry parallel to the promotion of authenticity of tourism products (Haven-Tang and Jones, 2012).

According to Johannesson (2005), Actor-network theory (ANT) is a very appropriate tool to explain the collaborative patterns of tourism stakeholders. ANT is a concept of translation that highlights the network practices of different actors. Besides, ANT grasps multiple relational orderings and can draw diverse forms of tourism spatially into analysis. Actor–Network Theory enables a radical new way of describing the travel by critically investigating its ontological conditions (Duim et al., 2013).

Duim (2008: 11) argues that from the actor-network perspective, every innovation involves the reconfiguration of the group of actor in a tourism destination. The changes can occur through the building of transformative ties and through the collaboration of tourism stakeholders in the process of developing of integral tourism products. Latour (2005) argues that not every situation for example making the innovative comprehensive tourism products predetermines some action. Arnaboldi and Spiller (2011) emphasize the coupling of human and non-human form and participate in networks where they can make and innovate integral tourism products.

We can find many works of tourism literature that emphasize the importance of the network approach to the integration of tourism chains (d'Angella & Go, 2009). Dimanche et al. (2010) show how we can reconfigure the existing resources to create unique and innovative products.

Beaumont and Dredge (2010) show how different approaches to tourism governance on a local level contribute to the active collaboration of tourism stakeholders. The collaborative cultures based on constructive communication in the community that actively engages in a networking process lead to convergence, independence and empowerment of the shared interests. Van der Duim (2007) implies that innovation is a kind of translation or change. We can assume change as a rational and predictable achievement. Or we can see it differently as a flow or process in the form of reading. Reading enables flow of ideas, seeking of allies and support of the stakeholder that make innovation happen. Reading follows to translation that works upon three rules: (1) enrolling stakeholders with leadership actions; (2) building

competencies; (3) and circulating collaborative networking. Thapa (2011) explored in his research how a social activist initiates changes to facilitate projects in the field of healthcare. He found out that passing on information is critical in sharing information especially when information enters an extensive network. Paget et al. (2010) for example examined the innovations of a tourism company in the particular context of French ski resorts. His research findings show that leader translator helped the company to manage interests and enrolled actors to its projects. ANT is a practical concept that follows the Foucault (1970) notion of society and social relations. Foucault's (1970) points out that people construct social relations through practice.

## 2.2 Satisfaction of tourism customers

According to Güler and Crowther (2012), the overall level of tourist satisfaction depends on the total standard of the tourist destination product. The role of accommodation providers on the tourist destination is to understand motivators and expectations of their target audiences (Williams and Uysal, 2004). It is not new that tourism stakeholders continuously try to integrate places, people, and things, build the coherent actor-network, and try to maintain its stability (van der Duim, 2008: 15). This integration results in customer satisfaction, which has the central role in tourism service and marketing literature. Satisfaction of tourists is vital for the tourist destination. It is the tool for measurement of their expectations comparing to the service performance. Collaborative practices of tourism stakeholders depend on the tourist satisfaction. Tourists measure their satisfaction emotionally and link it to the fulfillment of their needs and expectations and the quality of integral tourism products (Janković et al., 2011). Comprehensive products are paramount because they satisfy the vast range of the wishes and needs of tourists that visit a particular destination. For example Koutoulas (2004) defines comprehensive tourism products as total tourist products that form a bundle of tangible and intangible components. Koutoulas (2004: 4) argues that tourist products need to satisfy the tourist's needs.

## 2.3 Networking competences

Cornellisen (2011) develops the concept where the combinations of the regime of accumulation or the organization and process of production and consumption stabilize the regime of accumulation. Collection becomes stable and guarantees its reproduction. He speaks of the shift from the Fordism mass production of tourism products to the Postfordist that emphasizes small-scale firms offering tailored packages focusing on niche tourism products. Tailoring is only one-step away from the making of integral tourism products (Campos, 2014) where several stakeholders collaborate and continuously innovate new comprehensive products. Networked-core competencies have an important role in tourism development. Denicolai et al. (2010) explore the relationship between the networking approach and tourism firms and development of tourism core-competences. These competencies play a significant role in tourism development and provide a development path for policymaker actions. Tourism is a service and bases for the actions of people that collaborate to make products that satisfy tourists. Nagarjuna and Kallarakal (2014) point out that human capital is the essential means for the development and growth of the tourism sector. Dimmok et al (2003) hold the notion that the tourism works globally, nationally and locally and stakeholders who work in tourism must develop right competencies. They need the knowledge to establish efficient organization, which bases on close collaboration.

## 2.4 Collaborative networking

Postmodern approaches to tourism development emphasize the development of the community rather the development of the tourism industry (Scheyvens, 2002; Ambrož, 2008).

Van der Duim (2008: 14) uses the concept of tourism landscapes to build an alternative way of looking at and researching tourism. He bases his construct on the actor-network theory, which considers the actor-networks as *collectives* that connect all kind of tourism products like transport, people, technologies, places, facilities, tourism resources, and organizations. His concept integrates and relates people and things in tourism time and space. As a consequence of integration new and specific patterns emerge, and a particular effect of ordering takes place. Van der Duim (2008) sees these tourism landscapes as networks that materialize through time. It is important to note that these systems are conditional, change and never achieve the state of equilibrium. Arnaboldi and Spiller (2011) integrate tourism and culture on the micro level interactions among stakeholders. Their research shows that the actor-network theory approach conceptualizes by deploying enrolling actors, fact-building and circulating translations. Authors use these rules to define the "conditional path" that activate specific actions and controversies.

Tourism stakeholders collaborate, when they can share common goals leading to the successful marketing of

tourism products on a tourism destination. The competition on a tourism market is severe, and it is highly unlikely that only one stakeholder can achieve marketing objectives. The forming of a collective structure in the form of consortium is a very acceptable idea (Hastings, 2008: 43). According to Fyall and Garrod (2005: 264) consortium provides an independent way of acting of stakeholders in making of integral tourism products. Further, consortium can foster interdependence of multi-stakeholder collectives, constructive maintaining of differences besides, it directs future vision and mission of stakeholders, and enables joint decision-making. Morrison (1998) sees the consortia as networking opportunity and as economies of scale. According to his belief, stakeholders can share marketing expertise, use distribution networks, education, training, and the use of financial resources.

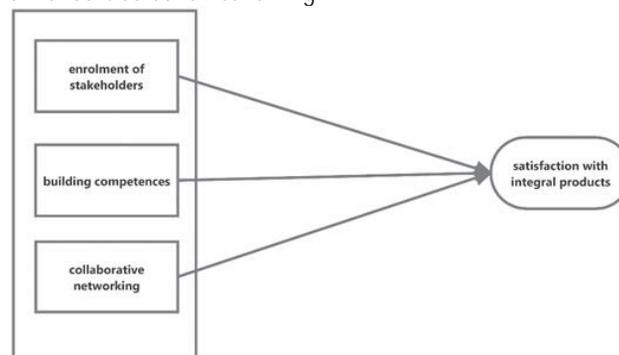
According to theoretical issues we propose the conceptual framework (Figure 1), and hypotheses, which base on the previous research findings of actor-networking means of collaboration in tourism:

H1: Leadership style has a positive effect on the tourist satisfaction with integral tourism products.

H2: Competences of tourism stakeholders generate tourist satisfaction with comprehensive tourism products.

H3: Collaborative practices of tourism stakeholders result in the satisfaction of tourists with comprehensive tourism products.

**Figure 1:** Conceptual framework of collaborative networking



### 3. Methodology

#### 3.1 Instrument design

We conducted self-administered questionnaire to test the hypotheses of the conceptual framework. We used the principles of the Actor-network Theory to build the items in the questionnaire. We constructed 19 items to measure leadership, 14 item to measure satisfaction with integral products, 15 items to measure competencies and 11 to measure collaborative networking.

#### 3.2 Collection of the data

We distributed the questionnaire with the interval scale from one to five. One on the scale is total negative inclination to the attitude and five means total definite inclination to the attitude to 222 representatives of all level tourism structures and companies in Slovenia. The final sample of respondents consists 222 usable questionnaires with the response rate 100%.

### 4. Data Analysis and Results

The sample in our study consists of 17, 12% individual entrepreneurs, 9,01% supplement activities leaders, 34,68% small enterprises managers, 13,69% middle enterprises managers, 2,25% large enterprise managers, and 22,95% micro enterprises.

#### 4.1 Factor analysis

We used exploratory factor analysis to reduce data and to find latent factors of the collaboration of the tourism stakeholders in the making and marketing of tourism products. Factor analysis is a statistical tool we can use to reduce a

set of observable variables to a smaller number of latent factors. According to factor analysis, we can assume that there are a number of potential factors. These factors account for the correlations among observed variables. We present the results of the factor analysis in Table 1. All items that we included in the factor analysis have high commonalities with moderate or high correlations. We included all elements in the factors. Results of the factor analysis support the actor-network theory and yields four factors. Factor Leadership that accounts for 34% of total variance, factor Tourist satisfaction that accounts for 12% of total variance, factor Competences that accounts for 7% of total variance, and factor Collaborative networking that accounts for 5% of total variance.

**Table 1:** Reliability of factors in factors analysis

Framework constructs	Number of items	Standardized Cronbach's Alpha
Leadership	19	0,954
Satisfaction of tourists	14	0,957
Competences	15	0,955
Collaborative networking	11	0,865

Cronbach's alpha coefficient shows very high factors reliability. Average correlation among the variables in the factors is very high, from 0,865 to 0,957.

**Table 2:** Exploratory factor analysis with Principal components extractions (Varimax Normalized) Loadings are >, 400000

Variables	Leadership	Satisfaction of tourists	Competences	Collaborative networking
<b>Leader:</b>				
Cooperates efficiently with employees, co-workers, business partners and other stakeholders in complex projects.	<b>0,670</b>	0,180	0,342	-0,130
Self-critically estimates his or her actions and the actions of other stakeholders.	<b>0,672</b>	0,154	0,213	-0,138
Creates long-term vision of an organization and follows its vision.	<b>0,733</b>	0,204	0,238	-0,058
Holds and follows the long-term vision of the organization.	<b>0,732</b>	0,192	0,279	-0,059
Uses different competencies and leadership styles, communicates effectively, holds proper values and integrates employees and stakeholders on various projects.	<b>0,696</b>	0,119	0,305	-0,000
Efficiently solves and directs conflicts.	<b>0,714</b>	0,142	0,202	0,124
Stimulates and directs teamwork.	<b>0,747</b>	0,221	0,174	0,000
Listens actively.	<b>0,741</b>	0,208	0,103	0,047
Persuades others to follow his or her vision.	<b>0,730</b>	0,149	0,102	0,085
Efficiently operates in a multi-cultural environment.	<b>0,747</b>	0,230	0,186	0,159
Acts innovatively and stimulates others to act innovatively.	<b>0,684</b>	0,071	0,269	0,186
He or she is always learning.	<b>0,691</b>	0,045	0,148	0,049
He or she is a marvelous speaker.	<b>0,593</b>	0,082	0,230	0,204
Efficiently solves complex problems.	<b>0,780</b>	0,080	0,179	0,036
Cogitates in abstract terms and creates the concepts of future actions of the organization.	<b>0,682</b>	0,098	0,236	0,050
He or she is capable of using information in various circumstances.	<b>0,746</b>	0,127	0,331	0,108
He or she is skillful in communication with others.	<b>0,671</b>	0,037	0,222	0,170
Behaves in an economy way.	<b>0,648</b>	0,051	0,189	0,191
He or she communicates in different languages.	<b>0,515</b>	-0,064	0,286	0,147
Fosters faithfulness of a tourist.	0,208	<b>0,703</b>	0,082	0,072
Works to provide more tourists on destination.	0,196	<b>0,769</b>	0,127	0,080
A number of tourists regularly increases.	0,092	<b>0,673</b>	0,245	0,145
Stimulates better recognition of tourist destination.	0,118	<b>0,709</b>	0,226	0,163
Destination praise and recognition of tourists.	0,138	<b>0,759</b>	0,226	0,151
Is enthusiastic about the integral offer of tourism products on a destination.	0,181	<b>0,754</b>	0,172	0,172
Is enthusiastic about accessibility and wholeness of tourism products offer.	0,100	<b>0,767</b>	0,160	0,219
Is enthusiastic for the making of individualized tourist products.	0,124	<b>0,757</b>	0,181	0,294
Is enthusiastic about the authenticity of integral tourism products.	0,136	<b>0,801</b>	0,114	0,290
Is enthusiastic about the aligning of the tourism products to the lifestyle of a tourist.	0,155	<b>0,720</b>	0,177	0,308
Is enthusiastic about the choice to select alternative tourism products within the integral tourism products offer.	0,117	<b>0,825</b>	0,076	0,233
Is enthusiastic about the possibility to use integral information system that enables the usage of comprehensive tourism products.	0,141	<b>0,723</b>	0,039	0,264
Is enthusiastic about the awareness consumerism: authentic products, live experience, learning and cultural heritage.	0,063	<b>0,764</b>	0,147	0,250

Is enthusiastic for the quality and excellence of the tourism offer.	0,144	<b>0,755</b>	0,112	0,226
Has competencies for efficient networking in tourism.	0,249	0,085	<b>0,732</b>	0,129
Has competencies for solving financial problems of tourism development.	0,200	0,132	<b>0,695</b>	0,043
Has competencies for planning of tourism projects.	0,274	0,154	<b>0,701</b>	0,063
Has competencies for the scenario planning in the field of tourism.	0,256	0,102	<b>0,763</b>	0,045
Has competencies for the recognition of the needs and wishes of consumers of tourist products.	0,148	0,135	<b>0,747</b>	0,052
Research competencies for the studies in the field of tourism.	0,160	0,114	<b>0,748</b>	0,191
Has competencies for the development of the tailor-made tourism products.	0,240	0,152	<b>0,765</b>	0,062
Has competencies for the usage of good practices in tourism development.	0,256	0,174	<b>0,749</b>	0,113
Has competencies for the development of the development of the sustainable oriented organizational culture.	0,294	0,109	<b>0,701</b>	0,063
Has competencies for the development of the development of the trademark tourism products.	0,300	0,127	<b>0,694</b>	0,046
Has competencies for the development of the employee – friendly organization.	0,293	0,107	<b>0,696</b>	0,115
Has competencies for the usage of information technology in production of the virtual tourism products.	0,293	0,218	<b>0,716</b>	0,141
Has competencies for the making of integral tourism products.	0,223	0,233	<b>0,774</b>	0,056
Has competencies for the education and training of the tourism actors.	0,233	0,105	<b>0,669</b>	0,012
Has competencies for the innovative agency in the field of tourism.	0,249	0,215	<b>0,742</b>	0,032
All stakeholder share shared vision about the creating and innovation of integral tourism products.	0,194	0,243	0,037	<b>0,680</b>
Stakeholder manage the projects of creation and making of integral tourism products flexible and adaptable.	0,037	0,186	0,013	<b>0,648</b>
Stakeholders use new ways of organizing patterns in the process of creation and making of integral tourism products.	0,224	0,210	-0,023	<b>0,626</b>
Stakeholders efficiently collaborate in the process of creation and making of integral tourism products.	0,112	0,251	0,063	<b>0,694</b>
Stakeholders share resources and information.	0,019	0,196	-0,018	<b>0,613</b>
Stakeholders link transformative across organizations in the process of innovation of integral tourism products.	0,135	0,091	0,093	<b>0,580</b>
Stakeholders link transformatively in the virtual environment in the process of innovation of integral tourism products.	0,045	0,174	0,168	<b>0,609</b>
Stakeholders work autonomously in the projects of creation and innovation for integral tourism products.	0,037	0,240	0,093	<b>0,593</b>
Stakeholders in tourism organizations work in several tourism agencies and enterprises in innovative processes of making integral tourism products.	0,141	0,244	0,149	<b>0,526</b>
Stakeholders in tourism organizations continuously enter and re-enter in the networks when creating innovating and marketing new integral tourism products.	-0,114	0,182	0,139	<b>0,505</b>
Stakeholders in tourism organizations collaborate on the equal basis and independently of the status of the innovative networks.	-0,063	0,072	0,039	<b>0,622</b>

#### 4.2 Regression analysis

We now proceed with the analysis of how the factors we included in the conceptual framework present Actor-Network Theory. We tested the proposed actor-network model with three factors. We regressed the predictors Collaborative networking, Competences and Leadership on Satisfaction of tourists with integral tourism products. We forecasted that enrolling stakeholders with leadership actions, building competencies and circulating collaborative networking, would produce satisfaction of the tourists with comprehensive tourism products. Results from the General Regression Model are in Table 3.

The R<sup>2</sup> statistics indicates that the model explains 62, 5% of the variability in Tourist satisfaction. The adjusted R-squared statistic, which is more suitable for comparing models with different numbers of independent variables, is 38, 3%. The model shows statistically significant results (F = 46,671; p = 0, 0000).

**Table 3:** Overall fit of the regression model

Overall fit of the model for Tourist satisfaction	Parameters
Multiple R	0,625
Multiple R <sup>2</sup>	0,391
Multiple R <sup>2</sup> adjusted	0,383
F	46,671
p	0, 0000

We further discuss the result with the factors of the actor-network theory, starting with the estimates of the regression model. The results show that all factors have a significant effect on the likelihood of tourists' satisfaction with integral tourism products. Three factors have highly significant effects.

**Table 4:** Parameter estimates for Tourist satisfaction – Sigma restricted parameterization

Predictors	Parameter	Standard error	t	p	Beta ( $\beta$ )	Standard error of $\beta$
Leadership	0,219	0,094	2,337	0,020	0,152	0,065
Competences	0,235	0,074	3,199	0,002	0,210	0,066
Collaborative networking	0,537	0,067	8,018	0,000	0,445	0,056

The strongest and highly significant effect has the factor Collaborative networking ( $\beta = 0,445$ ;  $p = 0,000$ ). Competences ( $\beta = 0,210$ ;  $p = 0,002$ ) and Leadership ( $\beta = 0,152$ ;  $p = 0,020$ ) also have clear, significant, but moderate to weak effects. These results are in line with our hypotheses and we can accept H1, H2, and H3 respectively.

According to the issues relevant to collaborative interaction of tourism stakeholders, we defined initial conceptual framework to conduct the research. We draw on the concept of the Actor-Network Theory (van der Duim, 2008; Arnaboldi and Spiller, 2011). We isolated three principles that direct our conceptual framework: leadership in enrolling the stakeholders, competencies to building facts, and the collaborative networking as a form of circulating translations. Initial framework shows no predetermination in developing the principles of collaboration to make integral tourism products. We presumed that all stakeholder want to participate in this process freely and autonomously.

First, results of the regression analysis support our hypothesis about the collaborative practices of tourism stakeholders lead to the satisfaction of tourists with integral tourism products. Tourists will more likely show satisfaction with comprehensive tourism products when tourism stakeholders efficiently collaborate in the making and marketing of such products. It seems that variables summoned in the factor about collaborative interaction between stakeholders captured the positive consequences of such kind of collaboration. Our results show that collaborative networking keeps the interested parties in the project. Complex projects of making of integral tourism products are complex, and the commitment of all interested parties in the project is a difficult task. Collaborative networking is efficient in certain conditions. The trust and willingness to collaborate in the innovation process is most essential prerequisite. Stakeholders must share the shared vision, and they have to adapt and be flexible in the implementation of the project. If they use innovative patterns of organizing, collaborate on an equal basis and work independently, their contribution is valuable.

Second, tourists will more likely show the satisfaction with integral tourism products when they feel they have the right competencies. Further, they must feel that they have innovative potential to make comprehensive tourism products. Good practices can help them to realize the goals of the project. It is crucial that they have the right information about the needs and wishes of the tourists about the nature of the integral tourism products. Stakeholders must have the vision and knowledge to innovate comprehensive products, to plan innovations and to avoid generation of unrealistic expectations about the financial gains.

Third, leadership as an outset of the conceptualisation is the weakest factor in our conceptual framework. Enrolling actors in our research through solving complex problems and stimulating and directing teamwork is the strongest link, especially when we consider different cultural lenses of collaboration. It seems that stakeholders in our research know how to use information about integral products in various circumstances. Additionally, our respondents think that the leader should create, maintain, and implement the long-term vision of establishing the comprehensive tourism products. His contribution is valuable in stimulating innovation, leading the stakeholders and communicating the vision.

## 5. Conclusions

The conceptual framework in this paper offers a novel perspective on the leadership of integral tourist products projects. Our research shows rather rigid sequential definition of steps because of the quantitative research method. We suggest that qualitative analysis would reveal more precise conditional path of innovating and marketing of integral tourism products. The results reveal that the initial phase of the project is rather weak. Enrolling of the stakeholders in the innovative process is not elaborated enough. These findings aim at future research that should confirm the actor-network approach in our study.

According to the literature and research projects, stakeholder collaboration is a difficult and complex task. Innovation in the form of integral tourism products is a complex and challenging task. Such a project involves many obstacles. It is crucial to note that the involvement of the stakeholders is paramount. It is the most important initial project step. The motivation, the selection and enrolment of stakeholders is crucial for the success of the project. Only stakeholders that collaborate can legitimate the project and use their innovative potential.

Innovation is always a difficult task. The willingness of the stakeholders to participate in such project is the first, and very important success factor. Even more important is to translate the innovative ideas to action and to establish the

link between the presentation and performance.

Involving stakeholders has another important effect. According to the results of our study, the stakeholders have a strong sense of collaborating. It is crucial that they have an opportunity to participate in several projects.

We conclude that results in the form of a network is useful for the planning of tourism development and the development of tourism destination. People who coordinate steering committees or consortia could find this model useful to plan complex actions to enroll and engage stakeholders in the process of planning, creating and marketing of integral tourism products.

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