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**TOURISM
IN FUNCTION OF DEVELOPMENT
OF THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA**

**Tourism product as a factor of competitiveness of
the Serbian economy and experiences of other countries**



**THEMATIC
PROCEEDINGS**

II



**UNIVERSITY OF KRAGUJEVAC
FACULTY OF HOTEL MANAGEMENT
AND TOURISM IN VRNJAČKA BANJA**



KNOWLEDGE FOR TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract

Tourism is an important economic sector for many countries and regions around the world. In relation to the necessary resources, many countries have more than only attractive unpolluted areas on the international market of the demand, where in order to maintain and even enhance the level of expectations and the tourist offer, comes to population growth. For these destinations, it is vital to understand the procedures from which the modern tourism can take advantage of, the purpose of their needs and preserving the environment in which it operates and on which it depends. Therefore, tourism is one of the priority sectors of each country. In the strategies which are prepared by the countries, the tourism sector has a special significance. This is certainly not accidental: the development of tourism has an impact on both the social and political and socio-economic relations in society. It is reasonable to consider tourism as an area that assimilates total domestic commercial surpluses and integrates local, regional and international stakeholders and resources.

Industry without chimneys can produce growth and development without precedent. It all depends on resources, tradition, habits. Today we live in a world of globalization and highly developed management strategies. However, such a development and use is impossible in today's world of offer of the tourist destinations, which as a tourist option existed for decades. In the sense of improvement and tourism development, the most successful tourist destinations are increasingly oriented towards knowledge. Without knowledge, as the strongest resource, none of the economic branches, including tourism in the global society stand any chance. They can only survive as marginalized offers or supplements to other bigger and more experienced traditionally proven and successful destinations.

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This indicates the intention that the knowledge as a resource and especially as a special practice must be used. Knowledge management in the tourism business is not only winning need, but it is also the essential need. Knowledge management is inextricably linked to the man as a unique resource in the world of the global economy, as the most important driver of any economic development and tourism.

Key words: *Tourism, development, knowledge management.*

JEL classification: Z32

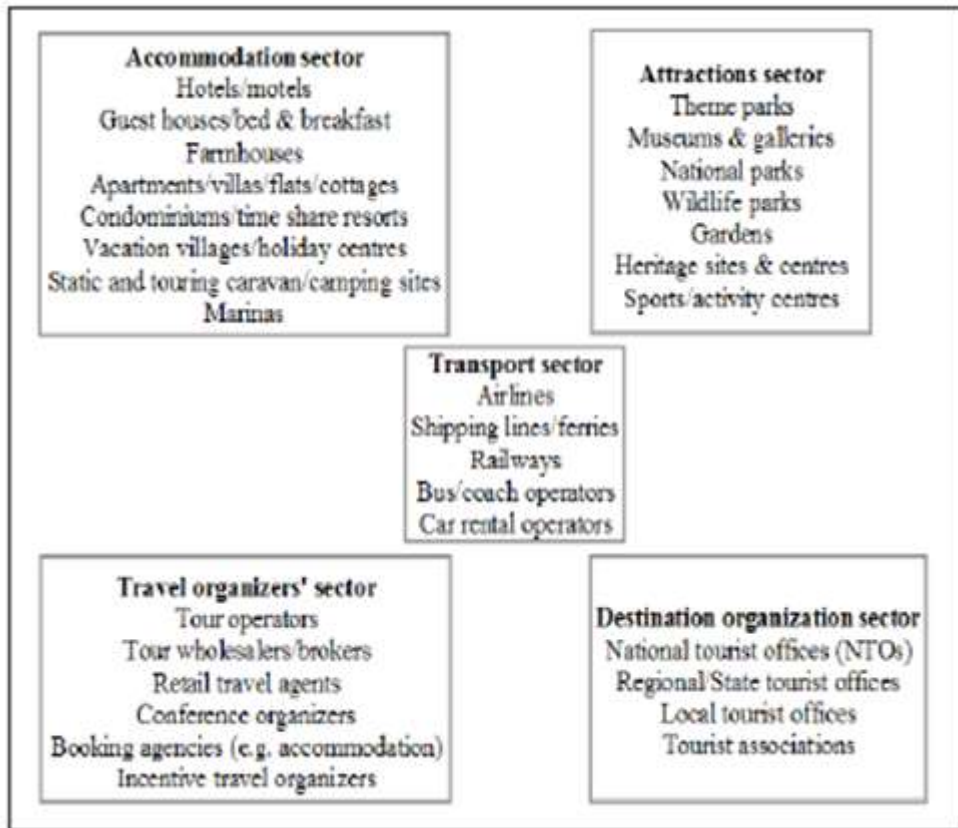
Tourism in modern context

The fact that the tourism is an economic sector from which many countries, economically speaking, survive, and even develop, is an irrefutable fact since ancient times. Many of the touristic-developed countries are highly developed and have utilized the existing resources. On the other hand, there are countries which can even create touristic conditions which are not natural and given – they create something they do not have. In the modern global society, the scope of tourism is equal or sometimes higher than the scope of oil production, food production, automobile industry or the production of technology. Tourism is one of the major players in the international trade and is one of the main sources of income for many developing countries. Such growth (diversification and competition between destinations) facilitates strengthening of tourism as a global process, which was used by the developed and industrial countries for employment in many related sectors. From construction to agriculture and telecommunications, the importance of tourism in economic development and prosperity depends on the quality and revenues of the tourist supply. The United Nations and the World Tourism Organization help tourist destinations to create sustainable development of the domestic and international market. This is especially oriented towards developing countries. However, the path towards green economy does not end only by the desire and help. Although developing countries are prepared and willing to use the enormous potential and are prepared for lifelong learning, use of new skills and competences, yet they face limited budgets and lack of abilities of the professional management in order to take advantage of its benefits.

Since the end of the last century (Middleton, 1998), it was clear to everyone that tourism is already an important economic sector in many countries and regions around the world. The five most important sectors

of the travelling and tourism industry (Middleton, Victor T.C., 1998) are presented in Figure 1.

Figure 1: *Five most important sectors of travelling and tourism industry*



Source: Middleton, Victor T.C., 1998

In the past decade, it is more than clear that the role of the quality of the education in tourism is more than important. For the tourist experts it is more than clear (theoretically and practically) that the quality education creates professionals in the field of tourism. Their awareness and satisfaction, their guest orientation in the wish to fulfill the high expectations of the guests and, first of all good management, are some of the most important conditions in the touristic successfulness. The changes that occur and the willingness to face them and incorporate them, using resources, is another in a series of indications of development.

The concept of the modern tourism is undoubtedly oriented towards the modern tendencies and in this way in the foreground emphasizes the need to be dedicated to a process, not to a need or destination. In this sense, helping all employees on all different organizational levels (sometimes even all the stakeholders, such as the suppliers and customers) to understand the knowledge as a basis for better performances and successful world is a key factor for improvement of the effects of the business (tourism).

The actualization of the knowledge and especially its management is a process which is constantly developing. Its strengthening with all its attributes of the serious practice and discipline come at different times. From here comes the perception and the reality for the knowledge management and its infiltration in the entire society. The articulation of the knowledge in the institutions is a different story. Given the conditions, trends and strategies for the development of the tourism, the need for coordination is strongly emphasized, because knowledge management is one of the essential fields which provide competitive advantage. Knowledge management in the context of practicing knowledge is an option which brings success, when oriented towards future.

Management

There are countless perceptions about management, and based on this statement, countless definitions. Every single definition about management takes place in the diapason of pejorative to mystification. From Taylor and Fayol, to Drucker and Senge, every one of them (including consultants as well, who have given enormous contribution to the development of management) have created a mosaic of cells in scientific and professional values and have enriched and upgraded the process of management. We undoubtedly find management in every institution and without management we cannot even imagine that we can achieve anything. The processes of management from practice and theory have been transformed into a philosophy, or even art, in the field of results. The space of management is wider and stronger every day, trying to define policies, strategies, structures, processes and organizational objectives which are used as directions for better organization and homogenous creation from heterogeneous resources. The articulation of people (personnel and organization) as the sole creator of the new values is a task of the management and from its professional assessment,

orientation and performance come the results and prolific work, which are tightly related to tourism.

We can find management everywhere, and the need for management in tourism is more than evident. If tourism articulates a set of resources in a certain area or society, then management is in charge to harmonize the resources in the best way possible. The results of the tourism are the effects of the successful management. There is no good touristic offer, destination or success without a good manager/management. These two factors are highly connected and related.

There exist more ways to manage, but related to knowledge, there are three ways of management:

1. Logical management
2. Knowledge management
3. Only knowledge.

The time which we live in and the accessibility to everything is inevitably pushing us towards knowledge and its exploration; however, knowing what, how, when to use it and how to use it is more than necessary. This is an imperative for the global society. Additionally, the intuition is also present, which implies the managerial specifics of the personality, and intuition is used just about every decision. The intuitive decision making and the possibilities of the creator and its invention and creations are qualitative and already defined predispositions of the modern manager. All this, upgraded with knowledge and acquired abilities, with use of the human potential (capital) created predispositions for success in the practice of the knowledge management. Tourism certainly is not excluded from this.

Knowledge

Knowledge begins as a set of data, which contains raw facts and figures. Furthermore, information is data put in a specific context, which are related to the field of our interest. Not every data becomes information.

Only when the information in combination with the experience is seen as something that is necessary for a given area of interest, it can be transformed into knowledge. According to Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English, knowledge is defined as “facts, skills and understanding which are gained through learning or experiences”. It includes insight of the workers, as well as wisdom. When people gain

knowledge, they can use it for work and decision making. Defined like this, it looks like a process that goes easily. Still, it is an area that is in the center of many interests (Lobanova & Shunin, 2008; Light & Cox, 2005).

So, research data are particularly important from the point of view of the development of future specialists and their "personal and creative quality, key and professionally-oriented competencies which produce graduates with better chances for a successful adaptation and self-realisation in terms of new information technologies, lifelong learning and personal development" (Lobanova & Shunin, 2008).

The knowledge (as a management process) as a totality of accumulated information, facts, and values has acquired its necessity especially in the last three decades.

It is evident that the awareness of the need for knowledge has not yet been raised everywhere on the respectful level; however, in the developed countries many efforts are made especially in that direction. So, the beginning of the 21st century promotes the knowledge as a unique resource in the world of the global competence. The knowledge will remain the only resource by which the organizations will be distinguished. The information society (its actuality has already finished at the beginning of this century) evidently leaves space for the society based on knowledge, same as the industrial society has left space to the information society.

Management and knowledge

In the modern society in which we live in, knowledge management is already into the spotlight. The companies are struggling in order to save knowledge whenever possible, in the processes of a possible change in the global world. The need to rush towards adaptation of the future and the possible knowledge becomes an imperative. The organizations, faced with the challenges of the topical issues in short term, must be trained so that they can accumulate more organizational knowledge, creating new visions and experiences, having in view the challenges and the possibilities of doing business as soon as possible than ever before. The knowledge management (which started as a concept in the 80ties in the last century) and is treated as maximization of the use of the knowledge in the companies, identifying useful information, knowledge, vision and documents (Barth, 2002).

Nowadays, in practice as well as in theory, it is told that the knowledge must be shared and multiplied (Allee, 2002). The knowledge management can be defined as creation, retention and transfer of knowledge in the organizations (Argote et al., 2003). Knowledge management is usually seen as a tool or a way to understand better the company's mission, the environment, the performance or creation of values on the basis of existing accumulated knowledge in the company. As a process, it usually includes the range, storage and sharing between employees, sectors and/or other companies, including activities and supplies created in the past years (Santosus & Surmacz, 2002). All these approaches are closely connected and close to the tourism sector.

The situation now is such that, "every business is a business of knowledge and every worker is a knowledge worker" (Allee, 2002). The knowledge management is focused on two main directions:

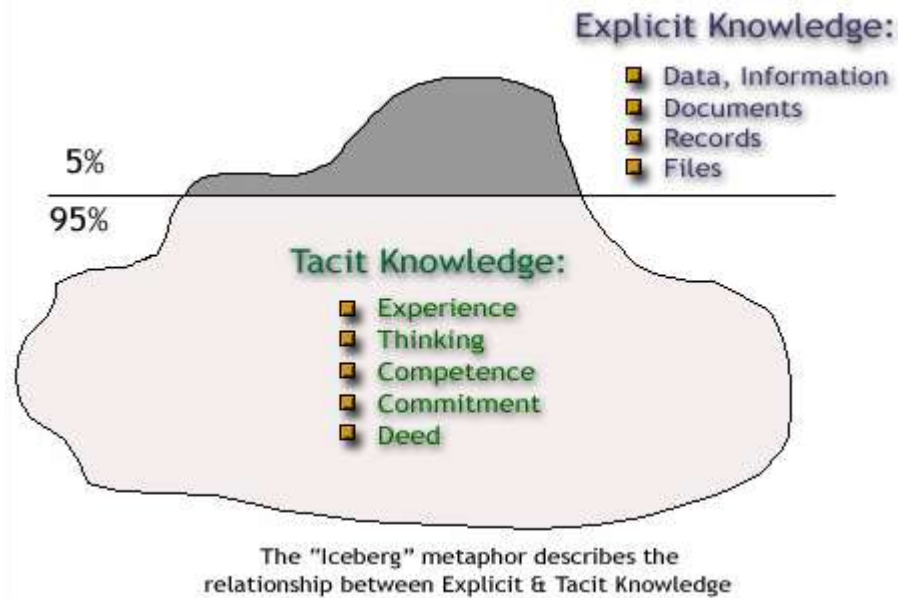
- Knowledge management oriented towards information (late 1980s);

Knowledge management oriented towards people (Sveiby, 2001). The logic of both concepts is very obvious and very important for the tourism as an important, specific business sector. Realizing that the people and its tacit knowledge represent a special competitive advantage in the new tourism industry, the application of the knowledge becomes a top concern. Knowledge management oriented towards people is more and more focused on adoption, change and improvement of the people's abilities and their individual behavior.

This type of management is much closer to the new way and relation to tourism as complementary activities, with evident success to the learning organizations, promoting the organizational culture and investment in human potential and the process of recruitment. The benefits of the knowledge management through use and sharing knowledge (especially tacit knowledge) have 6 categories: (Kaplan, 2002).

1. Fast innovations, encouraged by the fast flow of ideas;
2. Improvement of the services through reduction of the operating time;
3. Increase of the income, derived from the faster market;
4. Better performances (thus better income) for the companies, coming from keeping and constant rewarding the loyalty of the employees;
5. Original operations and reduce of the costs, through elimination of the redundancy;
6. Reduce of the training time.

Picture 2: *Classification of knowledge*



Source: *Polany, 1966*

Starting from there, when we talk about knowledge management in modern conditions, probably the most important are the following facts:

- the total work of the companies is based on useful information, in most cases;
- the organizational competence of the company on the market is based on knowledge;
- all products and services are more complex and contain more information;
- the need for constant learning and promotion is real, constant and obvious;
- formulation and implementation of development strategies;
- acquiring and applying knowledge;
- improvement of the business processes through knowledge development;
- monitoring and evaluation of activities arising from the use of knowledge;
- monitoring and evaluation of the activities regarding the management of knowledge, its development and application.

Management, knowledge and tourism

Organizations do not work in an imaginary environment. The organizational environment enables the working conditions, which are more than needed. Additionally, in the era of knowledge, the internal factors from the organizational environment must be on an exclusively high level. Therefore, this process is one of the most important. This, furthermore, means that there must be an adequate level. By definition, only leaders have the capacity to lead – that is why they are leaders. They create guidelines based on their feelings for doing business, and of course, higher level of knowledge than the people they lead.

The knowledge management nowadays is a key component of every business (touristic offers included). The competencies have to be defined and measured by the supplier of the service, and valued by the user of the service or the product. Over time, the workers become increasingly close to the business, adopting new knowledge and having more and more opportunities for promotion. This way, they become more responsible towards themselves, their knowledge and the users of their services. Like other businesses, tourism has a rare opportunity to promote everyone included in it. However, exclusively management is responsible for all that: the intensity, the quantity, when, how and in what way will be able to understand the need of knowledge management will define the level of its integration and positioning in the society. In practice, it is evident the mere declaration and pragmatism in the realization of real activities. All this is directly related to the styles of management and the meaning of management in the field of tourism. The new logic shall be created as a competitive discourse in the new formula of touristic activities.

The question of modern tourism management is not accidental – it has a meaningful dimension. The tourism, as a business sector and modern industry, shall not only protect, but it has to promote the knowledge management because the user of the touristic offer in a certain moment of use of the service expects to receive a certain relation in that exact moment and in an adequate way. If the user does not receive the expected service, it is expected dissatisfaction to appear, which implies the need for finding satisfaction on another place. Because of this, tourism shall not only synchronize the working process, but it should implement knowledge management in the process, as a scientific discipline. The knowledge management should be practiced transparently, clearly, without waiting for a period of evaluation, after which comes correction.

In the 21st century, the touristic destinations have an imperative to innovate and to remain competent in the world of global competence. The main prerequisite for innovation is understanding the destination as a source, action, and first of all, use of knowledge.

However, the biggest part of the literature and the applications for knowledge management elaborate individual organizations, and not complex organizations, which is a main characteristic of the tourist destinations. Of course, the focus on individual organizations can be applied to the tourism corporate companies, the management processes in the organization and the destinations.

On the other side, if we consider the knowledge management to be efficient mean for implementing innovations in the tourism sector, then we have to consider how this can be useful at the level of organizational destination. Because of this, we should understand the nature of the connection, the possibility and the use of knowledge and innovation as a possibility to assure bigger competence at the global market. Therefore, the researches and analyses in this field would certainly be useful for the tourist organizations in the future, showing the usefulness and function of these approaches for understanding the touristic destinations.

The touristic sector creates new working posts for the local residents and increases the income of the other companies which obtain supplies for the tourist industry. In this way, the green economy shows that this is something more than only an environment. The implementation of its main principles requires exceptional human creativity, knowledge and participation of all. The green economy is a way to solve the dilemma about development and impact on the environment (Gundega & Dzintra, 2013).

In a society that is customed to the values of knowledge, the main dilemma is whether we talk about management of knowledge or managing with knowledge. The corporativity as an approach with application of appropriate strategies in the way of realization and achievement of the mission and accomplishment of the vision is one of the prerequisites of a healthy touristic supply. Of course, the direction and the focus are determined by various factors. So, probably, the most important factors will be: government regulations, organizational regulations, professional regulations, management, and of course, the competition. These 5 factors are amended and the following factors are

added: tradition, competition and its relations created, the types of government regulations, the types and forms of academic leadership, types of management, etc. these factors define the modern touristic supply, as well.

The role of the leadership and management in tourism in the environment can be situated more in the field of intuitive, but structured knowledge management. The situation is as it is, not only because the relations and the work in the tourism are such – the relations are the same in the whole environment. It is surprising that after many years of education and profiling of academic education in the field of tourism in the tourist institutions (with exceptions, of course), the situation generally is not satisfactory.

The relation to the existing touristic factors for education and knowledge should be seen as a defined system. When I talk about this, I include the formal, but also the non-formal education. The clear rejection of the non-formal education is highly expressed, and we can freely say that the non-formal education is hardly defined as existing. The system of lifelong learning has moderate dimensions. Probably the worst thing that is happening in the touristic activities is the current strategy. From all strategies known in the economic theory and practice, only the reactive strategies are used (instead of proactive). Worldwide, in the world of the picky user of the touristic services, there is no chance for a second impression. People, who are willing to spend money, expect that the service they receive is compatible to the sum of money spent. People expect a service which always offers something new. It is noticeable that the private initiative makes some efforts in this sector, but often is slowed down by administrative barriers and weak sustainability.

There are many things missing in tourism: skills for a practical use of foreign languages in one of them, intercultural communication, providing services for the user, even the simplest communication. In the dynamic global society the needs in the field of security and health are even more expressed. In the field of knowledge, as an insufficiency we can list the customer service, geography, ethics, and use of modern ICT, use of data bases, business planning and organization of the work posts. There are still no sufficient confirmed information about the employed in the field of rural tourism and eco-tourism.

We can conclude that the organized approach lacks. Knowledge lacks. Knowledge management lacks. Functional education lacks. Care and investment in human resources, responsibility for the human capital also lack. If in practice the awareness for knowledge management is so low, then it is clear that knowledge management is not in some advanced stage, especially in the Balkan countries. The existing conditions clearly show that the focus is already towards information management, not knowledge management. This means that the world is oriented towards the past (1980s), in the era of information and information revolution. This is why we can see only reactive strategies – not proactive. When we realize that we live in a knowledge-based society and the main focus shall be placed on the knowledge (not data, information or ICT), maybe the companies will start to implement proactive strategies.

Tourism and knowledge management

The basis of the improvement of the touristic success is the relation towards people and the human potential of the companies. There exist different circumstances which create and generate development of the human resources. Unfortunately, this happens rarely. In the theory, there are 6 key fields important for tourism:

- Importance of the training, with a new access to the training;
- Career development based on skills and abilities of the candidate;
- Change management;
- Showing initiative;
- Leadership development;
- Suppliers and users management.

These fields do not exclude one another. They represent the differences which may occur from one to another worker (which must be seen as a company's potential and main resource) and are focused on the factors which are important in the field of tourism, the touristic offer and the touristic demand. It can be said that the tourism also contains the following values:

1. Identification of the human resource management as an instrument of the corporate strategy;
2. Urgency of the implementation of a concept for knowledge management and its integration in the organizational practice;

Use of continuous development of the technology for logistics of the process of e-learning in the process of development of the human resources (Allen, 2002).

This trend, considered as a set of factors, can be a useful and has a strong impact for strengthening the corporate structure of the tourism and it can have a direct impact on its role in the organization. Sadly, not everywhere the tourism is actively included in the researches for the importance of the significance of the sectors for training and its role as a relationship between training, work performances and organizational objectives.

Challenges for tourism

There is none universally accepted definition or a structure, as well as universal mission of the knowledge in tourism. According to some authors, the importance of the knowledge in tourism can be seen through synchronized possibility and initiative for a corporate learning of the business strategies (using the individual development and increase of the level of the most important skills and competence). According to others, the most important objective is to provide the employees with unlimited possibilities for increase of their capacities and skills, using different existing methods.

To provide the right opportunities in the right time for the right people so that the environment can benefit from this in a way that it will be possible to use the educational technologies to acquire new knowledge is also one of the challenges. If we connect all the previous factors, undoubtedly we will encounter the questions about:

1. Possibilities for development and improvement of the learning processes;
2. Management of the human resources as a tool for learning and its implications in the short term and long term;
3. Knowledge management system in order to develop and increase the skills and competencies on an organizational level;
4. How to transform the experimental studies into a practice;
5. What is the best way to use knowledge management in order to improve and increase the quality of the product/service?

We have to emphasize that even just thinking about the use of knowledge can be considered as a positive change. The change can be done to an individual or a group basis. This means that employees will have to leave

their personal comfort and their individual values, and will have to accept the organizational shared values. The system of tourism in the process of transformation, beginning from the insufficiency in the society and environment, has to go through a few stages.

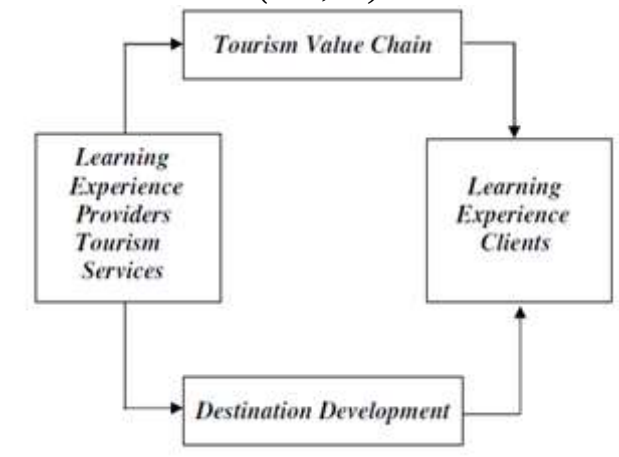
The employees who are successful and competent will re-define their positions first – they will enter the space of knowledge and its usage. The ones who are less ready to make some changes in their behavior will accept the knowledge through their own prism of creativity and will try to avoid the changes, without any real transfer of real values. Unfortunately, in the world there has always been place for everyone – not rarely, trusts are better positioned and more efficient than the queens. Luckily, first of all because of the pickiness of the touristic business and its clients, as well as the everyday “flood” of news in the tourism creates certain conditions which point out the most successful and skilled workers, instead of the most sly. The personal success is created by the workers themselves; however, not always the most skilled workers become leaders.

In the economy of knowledge, the destinations shall be innovative, with the main purpose to stay competent for a longer period. The knowledge management practices support innovation processes and through it we understand how we can manage knowledge through complex matrixes in the organizations, which are the basis for such processes. For the tourism, as it can be seen, the main problem is the fact that the biggest part of the destinations is created but small or medium enterprises. Organizations which have a tendency to be in the world of knowledge and its management in the public sector, it is necessary for them to be defined certain boundaries of collaboration through matrixes on a level of destination, not a level of organization. With other words, the theoretical interest for understanding of the process of knowledge transfer in the complex systems, such as tourist destinations, is of biggest importance, from the practitioners’ point of view. This implies that the future research programs should be based on configuration of matrixes, related on competitive performance destinations.

Myths have an impact on the application of the systems of knowledge management in practice, where the basic step is to formulate “knowledge societies”. In the center of these knowledge societies there are people who are willing to work. The realization consists of the following steps: (http://www.iclconference.org/dl/proceedings/2009/program/pdf/Contribution_072.pdf)

1. Formulation of the objective and the intention of the knowledge management system;
2. Description of the type of knowledge and organization (declarative knowledge, procedures of the knowledge, the source of the knowledge, the type of collaboration and the access towards the actions of knowledge);
3. Draft procedure for presenting knowledge in relation to the process of decision-making;
4. Draft technology (technology for detection of data information, sharing strategies, transfer, etc.)
5. Creation of an efficient system for knowledge management (for example, based on the principle of acquiring experiences from the learning experience from the clients – see picture 3 below).

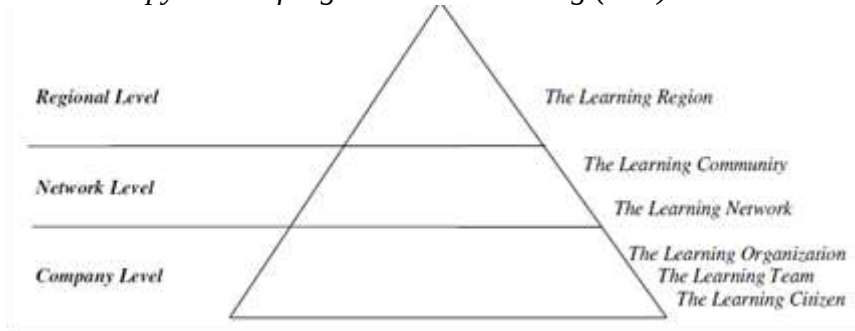
Picture 3: *Tourism Value Chain (Ibid, 12)*



Source: Shimikova, E., *Knowledge management in tourism*

In order to create a system for knowledge management and its usage in practice, it is needed that the involved participants define the level of management application. In case when the knowledge management is used at a destination level, the procedures will have to start at a lower level, i.e. at the organizational level, where the practical work is more frequent. (picture 4).

Picture 4: *The pyramid of regional level learning (Ibid)*



Source: Shimikova, E., *Knowledge management in tourism*

The comparative analysis of the matrix of destinations could be useful to improve the relation of the interventions in order to repair the destroyed relations or to make a reconfiguration of the matrixes in order for them to be more efficient.

Development of the tourism

In the process of continuous touristic promotion, we can define at least three main fields: applied strategy, knowledge management and e-learning. All three fields have an enormous significance on the development of the human resources. So, the role of the knowledge management for the touristic efforts to be more successful is very important, in order to create learning culture and positive relation to the sustainability. The process of the lifelong learning should be applied firstly on us, and after that it should be implemented as a model for the others.

Realizing the prominent role of the touristic offer, we need to learn and accept that the most influential and most successful players in the process of creating business and the social environment is the knowledge and the lifelong learning process. Without a personal example (the necessary changes first of all must be applied on us) and without our capacities to impact the society, the touristic activity would not be strong as well. Knowledge management has the role to define the touristic business on the postulates of initiative of the entrepreneurial society, creativity, innovation, expertise and competition, of course. Placed in the foundations of tourism, these universal values can help to make this sector to provide more benefits, than expected. But above all, we need to do the following things:

1. To establish such obligation that the companies every year, obligatory, allocate resources for human resource improvement;
2. To establish more stringent touristic standards, first of all in the field of human capital;
3. Touristic experts and workers shall understand that first they need to invest in their own progress, and only later to expect some profits;
4. Touristic workers shall understand that they can learn daily, especially in the sectors where knowledge management is practiced.

Recommendations

One of the most serious researches made for the conditions in tourism gives the following recommendations: (https://www.researchgate.net/publication/288872868_The_tourism_knowledge_system)

1. Re-conceptualization of the system of knowledge in tourism based on critics, synthesis and revision is needed;
2. Tourism should be seen as an extra multidisciplinary field of research. A system which is complex as the tourism shall be researched by circles and fields;
3. The idea of dual selectivity in the tourist production of knowledge is revised into a selectivity in five steps;
4. The elements in the field of knowledge have been criticized and rationalized, and this contributed to development of new sets with higher competencies for explanation and significance;
5. The system enlarges the process of creation of knowledge which was set long time ago, and this enables enlargement of the production of touristic knowledge – on the other hand, the consumption has increased too much;
6. The sixth analysis of the circle shows the production power of the elements of the system, which is insufficient for some types of knowledge and it is a possibility for new techniques of representation to perform better the wealth and complexity of the examined sector;
7. The significance of the collaboration in the process of creation of knowledge in the tourism sector is highly emphasized and increased;
8. For the tourism, the most important is the knowledge created in the academic circles (in theory and in practice). If the knowledge at the universities is prepared in an available format, everyday language and with more data and important information, the results will have a bigger use and applicability.

We are all part of the knowledge-producing machine, elements which are often hidden or taken for granted. If we want to claim greater agency and

participation in the research processes for a better world, we have to obtain sophisticated understanding how this machine works so that we can mobilize all our powers for greater agency and more aware research in the field of tourism.

Knowledge in the system of tourism reveals not only the more important processes of the theoretical progress, practical solution of the problems and real world of the engagement, but also the radical possibilities of the onto-logical policies in tourism research.

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