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Rogers Theory on Diffusion of Innovation - The Most Appropriate Theoretical Model in the Study of Factors Influencing the Integration of Sustainability in Tourism Businesses

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Abstract

Sustainable tourism development is now a necessity of time. All the parties involved in tourism should participate in efforts to sustainable tourism development. Sustainability, as the best way of doing business today, is a new concept in the tourism sector and sustainable tourism practices can be considered as a new type of innovation in the tourism industry. Therefore knowledge of the factors affecting tourism businesses to integrate sustainability in their activities is critical. Without this type of information, we are limited in our ability to design tools that work in the future to mitigate barriers and increase motivations tourism businesses to adopt sustainable tourism practices in their activity. Factors' influencing in the integration of sustainable practices into business activities is very subject discussed in different industries and different scientific disciplines after the late 80's. However, a limited number of studies addressed perspective of tourism businesses to adopt sustainable tourism practices. These studies have used different theoretical models. This paper undertakes the analysis of these models from the review of literatures, giving their advantages and limitations in the study of the factors influencing businesses to adopt sustainable tourism practices. After analysis, the paper finally concludes that Rogers's theory on adaptation and diffusion of innovation is a suitable theoretical model in the study of factors influencing the adoption of sustainable tourism practices in tourism businesses.

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1. Introduction

Nowadays, sustainable development is a necessary of the time. Many countries are developing tourism because it has the potential to contribute positively to the socio - economic development of the country. But while tourism serves as a development agent, rapid unlimited expansion and no right managed of tourism can make it a harmful agent changes in socio-economic and ecological environment of these countries. Therefore, for development of successful today and in the future, countries with tourist appeal should develop tourism in a sustainable manner. In these countries, sustainable tourism development needs to be reflected in their development policies.

The World Tourism Organization defines sustainable tourism as: “tourism that meets the needs of present tourists and host regions, while protecting and enhancing opportunity for the future” (WTO, 1998: 21). The challenge for tourist countries is to encourage the development and management of tourism products that will provide economic and social benefits to those countries while enhance customer appeal, protecting and enhancing their natural and cultural attributes. Further, Ritchie and Crouch (2003) argue that the development of tourism in a destination should be sustainable from an economic, ecological, socio-cultural perspective, to be competitive. Being competitive, tourism can contribute successful to the development (UNWTO, 2013).

Today, tourism businesses are competing in creating more values to customers. Research and analysis of the current model of tourism demand show that visitors are becoming more selective in the choice of tourism destinations and businesses. They are showing a greater sensitivity to traditional culture, local population, environmental quality in choosing tourism destinations and businesses. Therefore, sustainable tourism development will lead to maintaining competitive advantage of tourism destinations and will serve as a crucial catalyst to tourism business growth.

In conditions of this increased competition among tourist destinations and businesses, that tourism further continue its growth to respond positively tourist demand, it is required the application of the principles and practices of sustainability in adjustments to tourism development and management. In efforts to sustainable tourism development should take part all parties involved in tourism. Without such cooperation, any effort towards sustainable tourism will remain unfinished. But the power of business to influence the sustainable management of tourist destinations is very large because most of the elements of the tourism product are in the hands of the tourist business sector. Also, tourism businesses have ability in managing tourism demand because they are the ones that directly respond to market forces and that their decisions are determined by the knowledge of customer needs and by the goal of earnings (Middelton & Hawkins, 1998; Swarbrooke, 2002). So the integration of sustainability in the management of tourism businesses is of great importance in maintaining the high quality of the tourist experience and in increasing competitive advantage of the tourism businesses. Integration of sustainability in tourism businesses is not about doing business differently, but it is about doing business better. By making sustainability a focus, tourism businesses can save money whilst enhance customer appeal, develop a competitive advantage, mitigate their impact on the environment and support local economy (Graci & Dodds, 2008; Taylor, 2008).

Research and reality indicate that the general behaviour of tourism businesses is unsustainable. Thinking of tourist business management is dominated by short-term economic aims. This is a great concern. This fact leads to the need for research to find practical ways to change the attitude of business as a precondition for achieving sustainable tourism development. But the effort to develop practical ways, strategies for sustainable tourism without sufficient management information reduces process of political aspiration of it (Middelton & Hawkins, 1998). If we understand their motivations and behavior, we better understand their behavior and therefore are in a better position to influence future behavior of tourism businesses. In these conditions, in efforts to increase the involvement of tourism businesses in the development of sustainable tourism and to adopt responsible behaviors is critical recognition of motivation and barriers that affect the integration of sustainability in tourism business activity in order to find strategies and tools that enhance their motivations and mitigate difficulties that they face.

Factors' influencing in the integration of sustainable practices into business activities is very subject discussed in different industries and different scientific disciplines after the late 80's. However, a limited number of studies addressed perspective of tourism businesses to adopt sustainable tourism practices. These studies have used different theoretical models. This study focused on analyse of those models to evaluate the most appropriate theoretical model for the study of factors influencing the integration of sustainability in tourism businesses. As such, this research contributes to researchers in the field of sustainable business development's study.

2. Methodology

This paper aims to analyze theoretical models used in researches on the perspective of tourism businesses to adopt sustainable tourism practices and to assess model more suitable in such researches. Also it is based on the appropriate theoretical model, this paper provides a conceptual research model for the adaption possibility of sustainable tourism practice by tourism businesses. In order to achieve the study aims, the research based in secondary sources such as: published theoretical literature and research literature. The published literature is reviewed to examine used theoretical models in the researches on the perspectives of businesses to adopt of innovations, to study and analyze those theoretical models with final aim to identify the advantages and limitations of used theoretical models in such studies and to determine the most appropriate theoretical model for the study of the factors influencing businesses to adopt sustainable tourism practices (STP).

3. Analyses and Results

Integrating sustainability into activity of the business is more debated topics in different industries and different scientific disciplines after 80 years (Hoffman, 2000). However, a limited number of studies address the perspective of tourism businesses to adopt sustainability in their activity. These studies have used different theoretical models. Theoretical models, more applied, are: model of analysis cost / benefit, stakeholder theory, theory of the innovation's diffusion. Each of these theories has its own merits and limitations in explaining of factors influencing the integration of sustainability in tourism businesses.

3.1 Model of Analysis Cost / Benefit

Businesses can adopt a new practice if it will benefit them. To estimate the benefits and costs of a new practice, decision makers often used analysis cost / benefit (Swarbroke, 2002). This model seeks to identify all the costs and benefits that accompany the proposed practice, in order to take a rational decision by decision maker in the business organization. When the expected benefits exceed the investment cost of a new practice, then businesses may be more motivated to adopt this practice. Figure 1 provides a reasonable explanation of the analysis cost / benefit. According to this model, a tourism business will have low possibility to adapt a sustainable tourism practice (STP) when it is perceived with high cost and low benefits. In contrast, a STP will have a high possibility to be adopted, when it is perceived with high benefit and low cost. By theory, this analysis model is simple and easy to use in evaluating of the economic costs and benefits associated with a new practice.

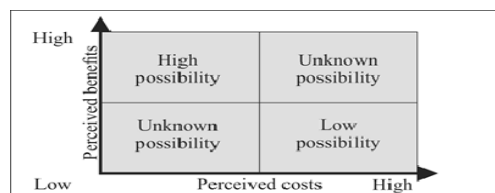


Fig. 1: The model of analyze cost/benefits on the relationship between costs/benefits of the adaption possibility of innovations

However, this model is not sufficient to study the possibility of adoption of STP for three main reasons:

- Firstly, there are two indeterminate squares for the evaluation of possibility to adapt STP at model of analysis cost / benefit. These include squares in which the perceived costs and benefits are high or both are low. Then in both cases, additional factors will encourage the firm to put towards the direction of adopting or not adopting a new practice. But, although the financial costs and benefits are very important indicator, they are not the only one of business performance. In addition, they often address the short-term period and do not represent the performance of the company in its business cycle. The researchers as Porter (1985) and Kotler (2003) introduced the concept of competitive advantage, as the principal indicator of the business's performance in competitive markets. Besides analyzing of the financial cost / benefit, competitive advantage, as qualified by Kotler, John & Makens, (2003), contains indicators: the firm's competitive position in the market and image marketing.). While the indicator of financial cost / benefit measures firm performance in the short term, the competitive position and image marketing represent long-term dimension. Based on this criterion, the firm's behavior towards adopting new practices for sustainable tourism is space beyond the simple analysis model of cost / benefit. From the viewpoint of competitive advantage, firms should consider more indicators than just short-term increase in the cost to make its decision on acceptance or refusal to adopt a new practice.

- Secondly, there are difficulties in defining the quantity of costs and benefits which come from tourism's development. As for the other industries, for tourism as well, the implementation of sustainability ask decreasing of negative effects and increasing of positive effects of economic, social and environmental aspects which accompany tourism' activities (Allies, 2008; Aronsson, 2000; Font & Cochrane, 2005; Swarbrooke, 2002; Weaver, 2006). Thus, in order that a tourism business to orient its activity according to the concept of sustainable development, it should evaluate positive and negative economic, social and environmental effects of business management's operations and practices, as well as it should change the way of managing its business in order to increase the benefits and to decrease the costs (Allis, 2008). However, using the analysis costs/benefits has its restrictions in evaluating all costs and benefits which accompany STP. These restrictions Swarbrooke (2002) explains by the difficulties in defining the quantity of costs and social benefits which come from tourism's development, and quite often in defining the effects of short term opposite long terms one.

- Thirdly, the concept of sustainable tourism development, cannot be completely understandable only by the economic analysis of costs/benefits. This because the sustainable development is not only an economic choice, but also a social and ethical one. Sustainable tourism's development is a form of social change, therefore the implementation of sustainability's practices in business operations may ask a fundamental change in thinking as well as in organisative culture of company (Font, X & Cochrane, J., 2005). This point of view is generally addressed in literature as the ability and willingness of the company to adopt STP (Allies, 2008; Bansal, 2002; Font & Cochrane, 2005; Hackett, 1998; Hoffman, 2000; Swarbrooke, 2002). The ability to adopt STP is widely measurable by economic and technologic indicators, while the willingness to adopt attempts to be a result of sociological clarifying process.

To overcome these model's restrictions of the simple analysis costs/benefits in studying the possibility of adopting STP, a better model is needed. The new model is necessary to be able to catch a wider level of decision's dimension of the companies to adopt or to refuse STP.

3.2 Stakeholders' theory

This theory has been applied in many environmental studies to explore new motivations, besides financial benefits (Hoffman, 2000; Lorente, Jimenez & Gil, 2003; Riviera 2002, 2004; Soderbaum, 2000). This theory expanded further the rang of motivations that induce the adaptation of environmental healthful practices of a business organization, from a decision cost/benefit to a moral and ethical choice.

Introduced for the first time in 1984 by Freeman, Stakeholders theory is focused on the characteristics and behaviors of the company, and appreciates the role of stakeholders into company's environment. Since when

Freeman published this theory, it was used in many studies on business management. But this theory is criticized by different authors having not any completed protection as a theory (Key, 1999; Phillips, 1999; Sternberg, 1997; Weiss, 2006). Thus, Susan Key claims that “Freeman is focused more on technics than on theory. He does not provide a sufficient theoretical bases to explain the behavior of the organization or individual actors, internal and external ones” (Key, 1999:321). While Weiss in the critical analyses of Stakeholders theory claims “This model is based on the idea that the enterprise exists to serve to more stakeholders, which are interested on it and that in different ways may damage or benefit from it, in a time that this model excretes the idea according to which the enterprise exists first of all to serve to its owners’ interests. These interests are maximization of its wealth or some other causes for its being a business”(2006:1). Stakeholders’ theory has brought available knowledge in etic aspects, social responsibility of the company. This makes it suitable for studding the questions on management for sustainability, because these questions are parts of social responsibility of business (Kasim, 2007; Stanwic & Stanwick, 1998). Although this theory may help to clear the motivations of touristic organizations to adopt STP’s, it has restrictions to be used in this study:

- Firstly, this theory is to be applied more in big organizations, corporations. “Corporation can not serve as a representative model of the capitalist economies in general...In developing countries this kind of organization does not consist the majority of the economic activity.”(Weiss, 2006:6).

- Secondly, a characteristic of the touristic industry is the domination of the small and medium businesses “ Small and medium businesses are the blood of touristic industry and continue to dominate big businesses” (Ritchie & Crouch, 2003: 108). These facts are more evident in the touristic industry of the developing countries which appeal for tourism where small and medium touristic businesses dominate.

3.3 Rogers Theory

Rogers developed this model to explain the diffusion of the innovation process. The spreading out of innovation is a process by which, through certain channels, novelty is communicated among the members of a social system over time (Rogers, 1995). Consequently, it is a process that spreads innovation out from its discovery or creation source to the user or its adapter, a process that occurs in the society as a group process (Rogers, 2003). According to the theory of Rogers, there are four elements involved in the process of idea, practice, or object dissemination: a) it should be classified as innovation; b) it must be communicated through certain channels; c) it must be adopted among members within a social system; d) it must take into account duration or the time factor.

The process begins with innovation. Innovation may be an idea, practice, or object that is perceived as new by potential adopters and should be considered as desirable to adapt. Characteristics of innovation help to explain different levels of the adoption of innovation. Rogers (1995, 2003) defines the characteristics of innovation as causes for the adoption of innovation at different levels. These characteristics set by Rogers are the following:

- In Rogers’s view, the relative advantage is the extent by which a particular group of users perceive innovation as better than the idea, or practice it replaces (Rogers, 1995). The bigger the perceived relative advantage of innovation by the organization, the faster the level of its adoption will be (Rogers, 1995, 2003). The relative advantage can be financial or non-financial. The extent of the advantage may be measured in economic, social prestige, comfort, and pleasure terms. However, "there is no absolute rule as to who is included in the relative advantage. It depends on individual perceptions and the needs of the user group"(Robinson, 2009: 2).

- According to Rogers, compatibility with the existing values and practices is the degree to which innovation is perceived as consistent with existing values, past experiences, and needs of potential adapters. An idea that is incompatible with the values and norms of their practices will not be adapted as fast as compatible innovation will be (Rogers, 1995, 2003).

- Complexity is the degree to which innovation is perceived as difficult to understand and use. The simpler innovation to understand, the sooner it will be adapted. Innovations that are complex to understand and use will require adopters to develop new skills (Rogers, 1995, 2003).

•Ability to be tested is the extent to which innovation can be proven on limited evidence before it can really convince most potential adopters. If innovation is not tested, it can not be expected to be successful. Verifiable innovation represents less uncertainty to the individual who will consider it for adoption, he could learn by doing (Rogers, 1995, 2003).

•The distinctiveness of the results is the degree to which the results of innovation are more visible than others. If the results of an innovation are easier to be noticed by the individual, it is more likely for them to adopt it. Such a distinction stimulates discussion with others which often require assessment information on innovation.

The other element of innovation diffusion is the process in which participants create and share information with each other through communication channels in order to reach a mutual understanding on innovation. In other words, individual adopters must have knowledge and experience and these should be communicated or transmitted to others. The spreading out of innovation model takes into account the dissemination of innovation among the members of the social system. The social system is defined as a placement of interrelated units involved in the solution to a common problem to meet a common goal. Members of a unit of a social system can be individuals, informal groups, organizations and so on. The social system constitutes the area in which innovation spreads out. Meanwhile, norms that may affect the spread of innovation are models of behavior created for the members of the social system.

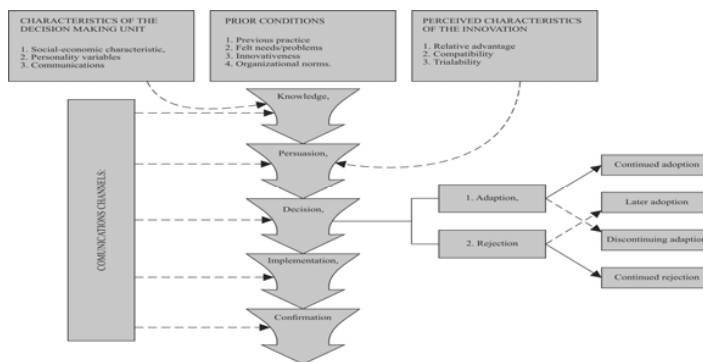


Fig. 2: Elements of Rogers' initial model of innovation diffusion process (Source: Rogers, 1995)

An important factor in the process of innovation spreading out is time. Time dimension specifically refers to the length of time by which innovation is fully convincing for potential adopters to decide for the adoption or rejection of innovation. "The theory of innovation diffusion shows that before being adapted, innovation goes through the mental process of individual's decision making (or some other decision-making unit) for the adoption of innovation" (Anis, 2009: 244). In Rogers's view (1995, 2003), the process of innovation decision making is a linear five-stage mental process through which an individual (or some other decision-making unit) goes, beginning from the first innovation recognition to the formation of an attitude towards it, then to the decision to be adopted or rejected, later on to the implementation and use of the idea or the new practice, and finally to decision confirmation. At various stages of the decision-making process, the individual looks for information in order to reduce uncertainty about the expected results of innovation. Elements of Rogers's basic model for the spreading out of the innovation process are displayed in Figure 2.

Immediately, innovation could be adapted, the speed of its adaptation by the members of a social system constitutes the level of adoption (Rogers, 1995). The level of adoption is usually measurable on the basis of the number of the members who adopt the innovation system in a given period, and who are classified in different categories: innovators, early adopters, early majority, late majority and the backwardness. With respect to the successful spreading out of innovation theory, Rogers pays attention to the role of opinion leaders (known as the agent of change). This role is directly related to early adopters (Rogers, 1995, 2003). "According to Rogers's model of innovation proliferation, this stage is critical to the success of the model because it lies on the creation of a critical

mass among early adopters to the level of 20% of the starting level of adaptation. Failure to achieve the expected level shows that innovation is likely to fail. Innovation is not automatic. It lies on a critical mass to launch" (Anis 2009: 259).

Rogers developed this initial model to explain the process of the proliferation of individual innovation. However, Rogers noted that in the research carried out before the 70-s, that used this model as the theoretical basis, students simply transferred this model to the study of organizations, often without thinking carefully about the similar or different points of the two levels of the system. In Rogers's view, this direction (1995) is problematic because even though many features of organization are similar to those innovative individuals, key organizational characteristics have similarities. For this reason, the initial model of innovation spreading out can not be applied to the studies of organization directly, because they require certain modifications. Rogers developed a model to study the diffusion of innovation in the context of the organization, which he called organizational innovations. Figure 3 displays this pattern.

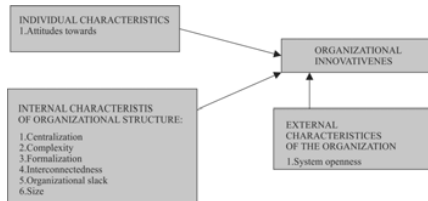


Fig.3: Rogers' initial model of the organizational innovativeness (Source: Rogers, 1995)

Nevertheless, Rogers (1995) developed another model for the description of the links between influencing factors and the level of adaptation of a particular innovation. Figure 4 displays this relationship. The difference between the model of organizational innovation and adaptation-level model is an issue which should be analyzed. Organizational innovation model focuses on organizational characteristics that influence the decision to adopt innovation (Rogers, 1995). The level of adaptation focuses on the perceived attributes of innovation that are considered to have major influence on the ability to be adapted to innovation (Anis, 2009; Robinson, 2009; Rogers, 1995).

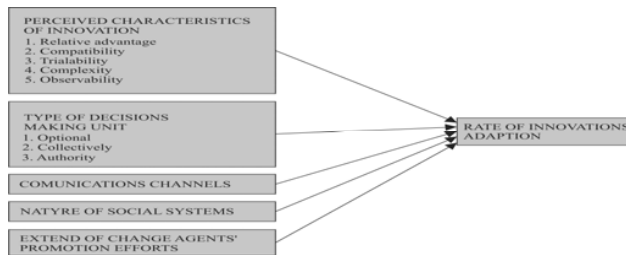


Fig.4: Rogers' initial model on adaption rate of the innovations (source: Rogers, 1995)

However, early research review that apply theoretical structure of the spread of innovation and subsequent criticism found that study of the innovative behavior in the organization remains relatively underdeveloped because research results of organizational innovation have been unconvincing, contradictory, characterized by a low level of explanation (Damanpouer, 1991; Downs and Mohr, 1976; Rogers, 1995; Wolfe, 1994). For example, if a study found that factor was to be very important for organizational innovation, another research found it to be less important or too trivial, even with adverse effect (Downs & Mohr, 1976). The cause of this contradiction, as was determined by Downs and Mohr (1976), is the change in the attributes of innovation. Downs and Mohr (1976) suggested that innovation must be first classified by the main attribute, as cost or the level of technical difficulty and then the comparison should be based on second attribute of innovation. Damanpouer (1991) also further explored the innovation attribute changes suggesting the categorization of innovations in various types based on their nature of technological innovations versus administrative innovations. Therefore, the comparison of innovation

accompanied by specific types of innovation can be more convenient. Rogers (1995) and then Ravichandran (1999) also managed to examine another cause of this variability of results. According to them, it happens that research often considers organizations as "static" when in fact they operate in a dynamic environment, complex. This suggests that researchers should look into the external environmental influences on organizational innovation. The outer environment is different at different times and from one industry to another, a fact that leads to contradictory research findings. Therefore, Rogers suggested the examination of the external environment which is measured by open model systems that spread out innovation, as shown in Figure 3.

It was also concluded that the existence of conflicting results in the studies on the spread of innovation was due to the fact that even though researchers have adopted the same theoretical framework, they have used various research areas which, according to Downs and Mohr (1976), fell only in the organization category of innovation or research. Viewing symmetrical and close relations between the model of the spread of innovation and adaptability, Downs and Mohr (1976) suggested another research project which they called a multi-innovation project or innovation decision. According to them, when studying both innovation and adaptability, measurable attributes of the organization for adaptability of innovations, being identical for each mode of organization innovation, they can be measured only once and then be transferred to measure the impact of attributes of innovation on the possibility of his adaptation (Downs and Mohr, 1976). With such a diversity of applications and studies on innovation dissemination, Wejnart Rogers categorized factors that influence the possibility of adopting innovations in three main groups: 1) characteristics of innovation; 2) characteristics of the organization (or adapters); and 3) characteristics of the external environment (Rogers 1995, 2003; Wejnart, 2002). In search of an appropriate theoretical model for the study of influencing factors to the possibility of the adaptation PTQ tourist businesses, the theory of adaptation and innovation dissemination by of Everett Rogers provides the best theoretical model. It is supported by four facts:

- First, its sustainability is an innovative idea (Gössling, S., Hall, M., & Weaver, D., 2009). Innovation is an idea, practice, or object that is perceived as new by potential adopters (Rogers 1995). The concept of sustainable tourism is a new concept developed after the 90's. From this points of view, STP's, as ways of doing businesses of tourism can be regarded as innovations. As such, Rogers's theory of adaptation and innovation dissemination serves as a convenient theoretical model to study the possibility of adapting the STP's.

- Second, the spread of innovation theory overcomes the problems of the economic model of the simple cost / benefit analysis. The spread of innovation model can be conceptualized as containing a number of broad economic indicators, as well as process variables that measure the psychological / social adaptation by providing a more important explanation to the organization's decision to adopt STP. Furthermore, the spreading out of innovation theory overcomes the limitations of the application of Stakeholders' Theory only in corporations. It has no restrictions of this kind. This theory is one of the most popular theories used in the developed countries and the developing countries, both at macro and micro level, concerning tangible and intangible innovation (Anis, 2009). Therefore, the spreading out of the innovation theory includes an incentive range covering both the simple model of cost / benefit Analysis and the Stakeholders Theory concerning the adoption of innovation.

- Third, the theory of innovation dissemination assumes a very different direction compared to most other theories of change. Instead of focusing on individual adaptation to change, it primarily considers the change as product of evolution, behavior so that it could become better adapted to the needs of individuals and groups. Evolution is the main principle of the innovation dissemination theory (Robinson, 2009). This direction is very applicable in tourism. Strong competition among businesses, tourist destinations that appeal to the same tourist market (Ritchie & Crouch, 2005) constantly require innovative improvements of practice, product, behavior and so on. "A climate of improvements stimulates competition and discourages stagnation" (Ritchie & Crouch, 2005: 14). Nevertheless "Continuous Improvement is a condition for the spread of innovation" (Robinson, 2009: 3).

- Fourth, the spread of innovation theory is a well-developed theory, broadly accepted and widely applied. Since its publication in 1962, the model has been continuously improved by Rogers and his assistants through empirical research in 1971, 1983, 1995, and 2003. Besides, the theory of Innovation Dissemination was used until 2003 in more than 5000 studies in various scientific disciplines, business, and social studies (Rogers, 2003). Furthermore, in 2009, Robinson concluded that "the Theory of Rogers has been tested through more than 6,000 research studies and

various tests, which make it very reliable" (Robinson, 2009: 1). Besides, it has been applied in different research studies related to tourism. Even though the spread of innovation theory has not been applied in studies on sustainable development, recently, researchers have been exploring the adoption of sound environmental innovations by using this model. They concluded that the same factors that encourage innovation in general, promote environmental innovation (Bansal, 2002; Harobin & Long, 1996; Ramus, 2001). Moreover, the application of this theory was supported by various disciplines, and its application has been tested in different countries and cultures (Anis, 2009; Robinson, 2009; Rogers, 1995, 2003). "This model does not recognize disciplinary, cultural and national borders and for as long as it is usable and capable of explaining the phenomenon of the spread of innovation which we are studying, the model will be useful to us. It is a tool by which we can benefit" (Anis, 2009: 259).

Therefore, the combination of model on innovation in the organization (Figure 3) and adaptation possibility model (Figure 4) in base of the theory of innovation diffusion for three main groups of factors influencing the possibility of innovation adaptation constitutes the most appropriate conceptual model in researches that have the object of analysis innovation for sustainable tourism of the businesses and factors influencing the possibility of adopting them. In this way, model of Rogers on the diffusion of innovation ensure adequate theoretical model to study the possibility of adopting of STP in tourist businesses. Figure 5 shows the conceptual research model with variables influencing the possibility of adoption of STP to tourism businesses. Within the three main groups of influential factors, except factors corresponding to the initial model of Rogers, the model other factors to adapt to the current conditions of the tourist industry in a country where the search will take place.

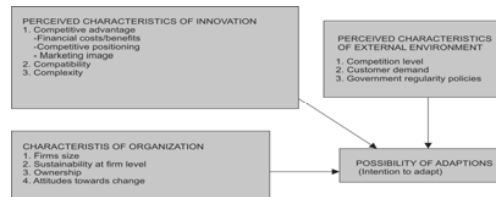


Fig.5: Conceptual research model for the possibility adaption of sustainable tourism practice by tourism businesses, based on Rogers theory

4. Conclusion

In summary, the goal of this study was to assess theoretical model more suitable to use in researches on the perspective of tourism businesses to adopt sustainable tourism practices. In order to achieve the study aims, the research based in secondary sources such as: published theoretical literature and research literature. After a deep analyze and evaluate of advantages and limitations of used theoretical models in studies on the perspectives of businesses to adopt of innovations, Rogers theory on innovation adaptation and diffusion concluded as theoretical model more appropriate for the study of the factors influencing businesses to adopt STP. Factors that influence the possibility of adopting innovations should be studied in three main direction: characteristics of innovation; characteristics of the organization (or adapters); and characteristics of the external environment Based on this theory, the conceptual research model, presented in this paper for study of the possibility adaption of sustainable tourism practice by tourism businesses, can be expanded within those three direction with other factors related to specific conditions of the tourist industry in a country where the research will take place. So, this paper provides a conceptual research model most appropriate for researchers who are in the field of sustainable business development.

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