



HOKKAIDO UNIVERSITY

Title	Tourism as an innovation and its diffusion among rural destinations -A Case study in Tsurui Village- [an abstract of dissertation and a summary of dissertation review]
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学位論文審査の要旨

博士の専攻分野の名称: 博士(観光学) 氏名: Roldán Martínez Beatriz Adriana

審査委員	主査	准教授	Paichadze Svetlana
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学位論文題名

Tourism as an Innovation and its diffusion among rural destinations

- A Case study in Tsurui Village -

(イノベーションとしての観光と農村地域への普及: 鶴居村の事例)

The examination of Roldán Martínez Beatriz Adriana's PhD thesis was held on 27 October (Friday) from 10:00 to 12:00 in an open, face-to-face format at classroom 101. The jury consisted of Associate Professors Paichadze Svetlana, Akinori Amada, Mayumi Okada and Professor Johan Edelheim.

In the beginning of the examination, the candidate provided an outline of the doctoral degree dissertation. This research aims to consider types of tourism development as innovations for the area where it has been developed. It proposes using Diffusion of Innovation's innovation-decision process regarding a tourism innovation at a local community in a rural area to track down residents' perception change patterns. Primarily, it develops and theorizes the author's Level of Adoption Classification (LOAC) as a tool that can assist in the classification and identification of residents' adoption levels and maintenance of a tourism innovation. This research applied the Diffusion of Innovation theory to track down the perception change of residents in Tsurui Village, Kushiro city, Hokkaido, Japan. It focuses on a case study in Tsurui Village, where a tourism-related innovation, Heart'n Tree (hereafter H'nT), a farm-inn and restaurant, has been able to position itself as a tourism promoter and residents have well accepted it. The discussion was created by integrating different relevant data from the participatory observation, the survey, the interviews, and past research to give an overview of the behavioral change patterns. At the same time, the conclusion presented the contributions to knowledge and practice of the study, focused on the LOAC tool and its usefulness in other rural areas.

After the presentation, the jury asked questions and the candidate answered in English. According to the jury's comments and the candidate's response,

there are three major academic contributions of this paper: First, the author's model in which the innovation diffusion theory presented in this paper serves as an indicator for the relationship between tourism promotion and residents is original, and the fact that it can actually be applied to the specific tourism phenomenon of Tsurui Village is a significant academic contribution. Secondly, the case of the Heart'n Tree in Tsurui Village, which is treated as a specific case study, is discussed based on data from the author's seven years of field research, including a period of her master's course, and quantitative and qualitative surveys conducted for this study. The study is of high documentary value. Third, the application of a qualitative method, a special analysis of the psychology of the people who organize tourism and are in direct contact with them, can give a new direction to tourism research.

On the other hand, the jury also pointed out some of the challenges of this thesis. First, although this research is based on the results of the candidate's master's thesis, the candidate may not have reviewed previous research with enough depth, and consideration of innovation diffusion theory may not have been significantly updated from the master's thesis. In addition, the author closely traces the behavioral changes caused by the innovation and the typology based on the level of acceptance of the Heart'n Tree, an innovation in Kushiro City's Tsurui Village. Thus, the results of the data analysis obtained from the qualitative and quantitative surveys, and the overall discussion do not organically mesh with each other. Furthermore, although the specific case study is the village of Tsurui, the thesis tends to focus on the adaptability of the theory and lacks, for example, research trends in innovation diffusion theory in Japan or recommendations for the future promotion of green tourism in Tsurui Village (or Japan) in general. Finally, the dissertation may be lacking in terms of, for example, research trends in innovation diffusion theory in Japan or recommendations for the future development of tourism in Tsurui Village (or Japan) in general, and green tourism in particular.

All the questions and comments during the oral examination were answered sincerely by the candidate, and which indicates that the candidate was aware of the challenges remained in this dissertation after the long-term fieldwork and pursuit of the adaptability of innovation diffusion theory. At the end of the examination, the Board of Examiners unanimously decided that the doctoral thesis meets the standards required for a doctoral thesis. Therefore, the Examination Committee considers the thesis worthy of a doctoral degree (Tourism) award and judges it to be acceptable.