

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TOURISM-LED AMENITY MIGRATION AND ONE-VILLAGE-ONE-PRODUCT (OVOP) MOVEMENT IN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract

The paper examines the interrelation between Tourism-Led Amenity Migration (TLAM) and the OVOP movement in Japan in aspects of regional and local community development. Each of them represents different theories of development and appears in different periods of times and places. The OVOP movement mainly emphasized on endogenous and participatory development theory, whilst TLAM is seen as a new tourism phenomenon in the 21st century and an exogenous factor for regional and rural development. However, at present, in the background of globalization, the selection of what tools and methods to use for regional development seems like an important issue in policy making.

1. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, regional and rural development has been emerging as a global issue, both in developing countries and in well-developed countries. The spread of globalization is creating not only chances but also challenges for developing countries in socio-economic development. Those challenges include the difference between richness and poverty or the gap in development between urban and rural areas. Apart from its positive impact on the world economy, globalization is adversely affecting local industries and undermining local values as well as local resources, pushing the foundation of local economies to the point of collapse (Yoshimura, 2004). Many countries in the world, on one hand, are considering globalization as a short way to access international markets and new technological achievements like the developed world whereas on the other hand, they are also trying to reduce the negative impact of globalization by accelerating regional and rural development.

Amenity migration originated in the mountain communities of North

America in the last years of the 20th century, and is now a growing trend throughout the world (Sungaila, 2005). The development of amenity migration in rural and mountain regions is always accompanied by the development of tourism. The discussions and debates on the role of amenity migration, especially Tourism-Led Amenity Migration (TLAM), in regional and rural development have recently been discovered for the first time in tourism literatures. Nevertheless, research into amenity migration and regional development is mainly seen in countries in Northern America and Europe such as The United States, Canada and Sweden. Most of their studies are concentrated on analyzing natural amenities as local attractions such as the landscape, water resources, good natural environment and climate etc (Peter, 2000; Marcouiller, Kim and Deller, 2004; Pearce, 2005; Waltert and Schlapfer, 2007.). There has only been a few studies on other social amenities related to lifestyles, traditional cultures, heritages, health and beauty, especially in developing countries.

In Japan, the history of implemented rural and regional development projects thus far has shown that recent trends involve greater focus on improvement of the quality of life in individual regions by enhancing the available utilities and providing more amenities for living, restoring degraded environments, and reviving lost traditions. When carrying out development projects, it is becoming more important to utilize the community capital that can contribute to sustainable regional revitalization, as well as the social capital generated through daily human communication in local communities. One of the typical projects applied in regional development in Japan is the One Village One Product (OVOP) movement. Proposed and led by Morihiko Hiramatsu, the former governor of Oita prefecture in 1979, the OVOP movement aims at encouraging and supporting the local communities to develop their local products in a unique manner. Those products can be sold both in domestic and in international markets with the purpose of bringing higher incomes for the local community. However, the significance of the OVOP movement is not limited to producing high quality products but it also contributes to the promotion and revitalization of traditional culture, tourism and creation of local amenities.

The purpose of this study is to review the trend of TLAM in Japan in recent years and to examine the role of the OVOP movement in regional development in economic and social issues and the interrelation with tourism and amenity migration. The question is whether or not the OVOP movement can support amenity migration and prevent depopulation in

rural areas and, in what ways can the three factors, OVOP, tourism and amenity migration, bring revitalization and maintain sustainable development of the local community.

2. AMENITY MIGRATION AND TOURISM

2.1 Amenity and Amenity migration

Amenities provide benefits to people through the direct consumption of specific aspects of land, natural resources and human activity (OECD, 1994). These benefits are immobile and are linked to a particular region. Amenities can be defined as *non-marketed qualities of a locality that make it an attractive place to live and work* (Power, 1988: 142 in Gary, 2001). Examples of amenities are wildlife and flora, recreational areas, cultivated landscapes, unique settlement patterns, historic sites, and social and cultural traditions (Gary, 2001). The phenomenon that people migrate or travel to a place rich in amenities is called amenity migration. Amenity migration as a social phenomenon appeared in the United States in the late 1960s and early 1970s when the population in rural areas grew at a faster rate than that of urban areas (Walter and Varna, 2005). In the 1990s, this phenomenon happened again with more than 64% population growth occurring in the rural areas.

Although the concept and study of amenities has a long history, the concept of amenity migration appeared only in the mid 80s and since then, has been defined by lots of researchers. According to Moss (2003) amenity migration is defined as *“people moving into the mountains to reside year-round or intermittently, principally because of their actual and perceived greater environmental quality and cultural differentiation”*. Other researchers also have proposed different definitions but their consensus is the idea that some people choose to move to places with attractive landscapes, appealing cultures, interesting histories, low crime rate, warmer climate, cultural activities, medical care, educational opportunities, quality of life, recreational activities, etc.. for reasons mostly unrelated to job or business opportunities.

There are some reasons which led to the growth of amenity migration. Beck's (1995) study on amenity migration to British Columbia's Okanagan Valley offered an excellent review of many key driving factors including “anti-urban” push and “pro-rural” pull factors. Green (2001) has argued that one of the key forces behind this growth in high amenity areas has been the increase in retirees and recreation areas in rural America. The aging of the population has increased the number of people of retirement age who are searching for places to live that have low crime

rates, low costs of living, and moderate climates. Green (2001) also figured out that another factor contributing to the growth in high amenity areas, however, has been the economic expansion of the 1990s. Demand for amenities is strongly related to income. As the population becomes wealthier, they are more likely to take advantage of the benefits offered in high amenity areas. Glorioso (2000) stated that amenity migration assumed that we are now in the post-industrial information age, and information and knowledge were replacing labor, land and capital (money) as the main producer of wealth (p.276). She cited Moss' (1994) six key factors that combined into two societal driving forces (SDF) which contributed to the occurrence of amenity migration:

SDF 1: Increasing Motivation for Amenity Migration

1. Higher valuing of the natural environment
2. Higher valuing of cultural differentiation, and
3. Higher valuing of leisure, learning and spirituality.

SDF 2: Greater Facilitation of Mobility

4. Increasing discretionary time,
5. Increasing discretionary wealth, and
6. Increasing access through improving and providing less expensive information and communication (IC) and transportation technology. (p.277)

In Moss's presentation at the Smithers Symposium on Mountain Community Development (2005), he remarked that the particular influence of the six contributing factors has changed since he initially proposed them. Nonetheless, they remain fundamental and have been considered as such by other scholars (Gripton, 2001).

2.2 Tourism-led amenity migration (TLAM)

Tourism is not identical to amenity migration but it plays an important role because it could be seen as the first stage to amenity migration (Price et al. 1997; Moss 2003; 2006). In field studies, so far, it is however close to impossible to distinguish between tourism and amenity migration e.g. the difference between recreation homes and secondary residences, as the criteria are overlapping. In academic literature there is no consensus on the demarcation between tourism and amenity migration. For instance, Bartos (2008) considered a continuous stay of at least half a year imperative, Arnesen (2008) considered the possession of a minimally equipped second abode in order to meet the criteria of amenity resident. Milbourne (2007) and Ni Laoire (2007), also discussed the permanency of migration to rural areas. In a special issue of the Journal of Rural Studies

(23, 2007), they emphasized that not all people moving to rural places may remain settled in these places. Looking at the processes of amenity migration and relation to tourism, the author of this article agrees with Gripton's (2001) ideas and divides this relation into four stage as follows:

In the first stage, visitors come to a tourist destination (usually a rural or mountainous area) and they find that the destination is attractive and full of amenities.

In the second stage, the tourist destination becomes a favorite destination for the visitors and they return whenever they have time and can afford it. At this stage, visitors are called repeaters.

In the third stage, those repeaters who can afford will rent cottages or buy vacation homes in that tourism destination.

In the last stage, visitors completely migrate to the destination and live there as permanent residents and they are called amenity migrants.

All the stages reflect the relationship between tourism and amenity migration as illustrated in the figure below:

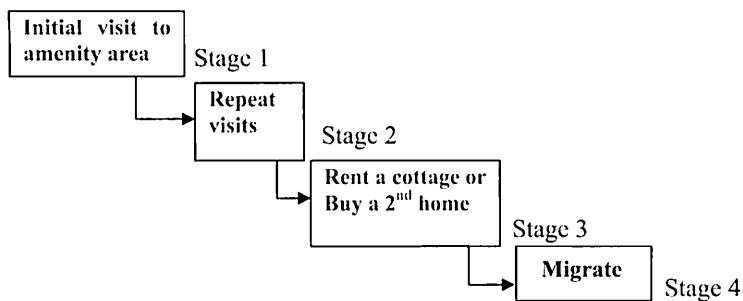


Figure 1: Stages lead to amenity migration by tourism
(Reproduced from Stuart Valentich Gripton, 2001)

The figure above proves that tourism often correlates positively with amenity migration (Stewart, 2002 in Sungaila, 2005). However, not all amenity migrants are led by tourism activities. Some migrants who are not necessarily rich still move to rich amenity areas because they want to change their living environment or want to enjoy the lifestyle of the destinations. –

Researchers such as Moss (2003), Chipeniuk (2004), Sungaila (2005), only considered the last stage described in Figure 1 above to be amenity migration. The author of this article argues that amenity migration should also include stage 2 and 3 mentioned in Figure 1. In other words, repeat

visitors (or repeaters) and cottages renters or second home owners are included in the concept of amenity migration because their temporary residences also play an important role in regional and local economic development. First time visitors to the destination may not be considered as such since it is difficult to evaluate whether or not they would be attracted by tourism amenities of the destination and would come back again. If they are attracted and desire to come back again, they then can be considered as the subject of amenity migration. Therefore, the term to describe people who move to high amenity areas should be "amenity mover". This term was coined by Norman (2004) and has a larger meaning than the term "amenity migrant" used in previous researches. In conclusion, tourism is not the same as amenity migration but it always accompanies and appears in the amenity migration process.

2.3 The positive and negative impact of amenity migration on regional development

Although the amenity migration phenomenon can occur in a variety of places, the majority of research has focused on amenity migration in mountain regions. This focus has been attributed to the growing number of people moving into mountain regions as both visitors and residents in North America, Western Europe and increasingly in less wealthy nations (Price, Moss & Williams, 1997; Moss, 2003). The research is also mainly concentrated on the impact of amenity migration on the rural and mountain regions. Similar to tourism, amenity migration has both positive and negative impacts on the local community.

Researchers (Williams and Gill, 2004) have pointed out some positive effects as:

- The infusion of new economic, institutional, and physical infrastructure into the host region
- Economic diversification and prosperity
- Increasing property values
- Lower rates of out-migration
- New job opportunities

While the positive effects of amenity migration are mainly economic the negative effects and threats from amenity migration are focused on the social and environment issues such as: The construction of homes for new residents may encroach on undeveloped virgin land; many original residents will be driven out by the increasing cost of living; rising demand for municipal services and higher taxes; losing habitats for plants and animals and increasing pollution in the form of waste and vehicle fumes,

if not managed well.

2.4. The trend of TLAM in Japan

TLAM is mostly popular in tourism and amenity migration research in North America and Europe. In Japan, the terms TLAM or “amenity mover” are still not commonly used though studies on this phenomenon have been increasing recently. Like North America and Europe, people moving to rural areas that have high amenity values is now seen as a demographic trend in Japan. In the period of rapid economic growth, Japan was faced with waves of people moving to urban areas for better employment opportunities and income. However, the situation seems to have changed after the burst of Japan’s economic bubble in 1992 and there has been growing opportunities available for people to relocate to rural areas and find new employment opportunities in tourism, traditional crafts or even start up their own business using their own particular business expertise (Norman, 2005). The development of transportation and the revolution of communication technologies, especially internet and mobile phones in the early 90s, have also made it easy for people to continue their jobs or businesses even when they migrate to rural areas.

Drawing on the trend of people traveling to rural areas in Japanese modern society, Creighton (1995), in her study on Japanese craft tourism pointed out that throughout the spring and summer months, many Japanese women- predominately those who are fairly affluent, urban dwellers - pay large amounts of money to travel to the mountains of Shinshu in order to study silk cultivation and silk weaving as a leisure hobby pursuit. Creighton’s study not only described a new movement in traveling for modern Japanese people but also emphasized that Japanese people who are dwelling in big cities now have a strong demand to go back to Japanese tradition and the role of Japanese traditional culture in rural areas as an amenity value to attract tourists. She also described the phenomenon of people traveling to rural areas as *Nostalgic Journeys*. This phenomenon shares the same meaning as *Furusato* (one’s “old village” or “hometown community”) which has been seen as a national movement and a countermeasure for depopulation in Japan in recent years. Although *Furusato* once designated a person’s own native hometown and the bonds with that place created through the memories of childhood, the modern tourism industry suggests that any Japanese person can travel to any rural place and experience it as their own *Furusato*. This also relates to a shift in values for Japanese people in traveling and has an impact on rural areas. Previously, Japanese tourism was defined by “3Ss” - Sex, Sun and

Sea. Hundreds of resort hotels were built all across the coastlines of Japan and they all prospered as Japanese people flocked to them, especially during the summer season. However, in recent years, there has been a shift from 3Ss to "3As" - Amenity, Access and Attractions. Places that are easily accessible to the public and have an abundance of amenities and attractions are receiving more and more tourists. Many people are choosing to relocate to rural areas after first visiting them as tourists. Even when people choose not to relocate to rural areas, many are still finding it possible to enjoy rural life. A recent survey by the Japanese Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications conducted on city dwellers showed that 30 percent of respondents want to have a home base in both the city and the countryside at the same time to be able to interact with the local residents (Norman, 2005).

The trend of tourism and amenity migration in Japan mentioned above has reflected the need of people in a modern society for a better quality of life and new lifestyles with emphasis on health and sustainability rather than simple economic purposes.

3. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TLAM AND THE OVOP MOVEMENT IN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Tourism, amenity migration and the OVOP movement have been seen as effective tools for regional and rural development. The start of OVOP movement in Japan from 1979 was considered as a solution to revitalize the rural economy and narrow the gap between urban and rural areas. The movement originated in Japan but now has spread to many countries in Asia and Africa. The research into the role of tourism in regional and rural development started in the late 80s and the beginning of the 90s when alternative tourism was developed to replace mass tourism from the 50s and is now popular all over the world.

The relation of these three factors is manifested as follows.

3.1 The relationship between Gross National Satisfaction (GNS) and local amenities creation

GNS is one of the two targets of the OVOP movement. This aims at increasing incomes and living standards by producing high quality products and raising the quality of life of the local community. It can be considered a higher level of GNP (Gross National Product) with an emphasis on the spiritual values of life. Therefore, the revitalization of rural communities mentioned in the OVOP movement is also includes the restoration of traditional cultures, festivals, events and sport activities and

as a result the movement is raising amenity values and tourism activities in the local community. Yufuin town in Oita prefecture can be seen as a good example in local amenities creation. Being a predecessor of OVOP in tourism and agro-industry, Yufuin has established the status of being one of the most popular hot spring resorts in Japan. It was not easy for Yufuin to gain such a reputation as Japan is a volcanic archipelago and there are lots of famous hot spring resorts in the whole country. Moreover Yufuin was once regarded as just a peripheral resort of Bepu, a traditional hot spring resort with a lot of leisure facilities such as golf courses, drinking bars, theaters etc. Today, in sharp contrast to Bepu, Yufuin has established itself as an environment-friendly, quiet and relaxing resort with warm hospitality (Adachi, 2005).

In resonance with natural amenities such as beautiful landscapes, hot springs, the local community in Yufuin has also created a lot of additional tourist attractions such as horse-driven carts for sightseeing, an annual movie festival, music festival, shout contests etc. Consequently, Yufuin, a town of 12,000 residents, about 70% of them involved in tourism, now receives about 4 million visitors per year and 60% of the visitors are repeaters. In addition, about 90% of the visitors said that they hoped to come back to Yufuin again¹. Although, there are no statistics on the number of new residents in recent years, the population of Yufuin has remained steady since 1980. The number of repeaters to Yufuin itself proves that Yufuin has become one of the best-amenity places in Japan. The success of Yufuin, a typical example of OVOP, can be attributed to the harmony between preserving traditional culture, natural landscapes and creating amenities and a new lifestyle for the region.

In both OVOP and amenity migration literature, quality of life (QOL) factors continue to gain importance in residential location decisions as well as location decisions of firms (Waltert and Schlapfer, 2007). Before GNS, another term to measure QOL was Gross National Happiness (GNH) which was coined in 1972 by Bhutan's former King Jigme Singye Wangchuck in order to define QOL in more holistic and psychological terms than GNP. Therefore, while conventional development models stress economic growth as the ultimate objective, the concept of GNH claims to be based on the premise that true development of human society takes place when material and spiritual development occur side by side to complement and reinforce each other. The four pillars of GNH are the promotion of sustainable development, preservation and promotion of cultural values, conservation of the natural environment, and establishment of good governance². In conclusion, both GNS and GNH

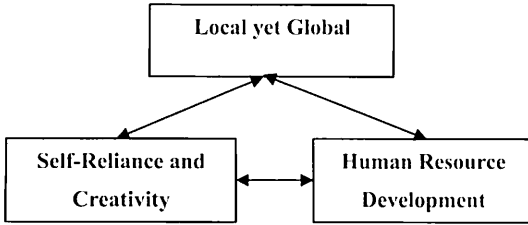
aimed at building a QOL for all citizens and more specifically for local communities. This has the same meaning as creating amenities for life and establishing a new lifestyle in the community and as a result promoting amenity migration. In response, amenity migration also makes lifestyle entrepreneurs support targets of GNS. Thus, GNS and amenity migration can be understood to be mutually related. GNS can create amenities for amenity migration and amenity migration can also contribute to economic development, prevent depopulation and ensure the sustainable maintenance of GNS.

3.2 The combination of endogenous, participatory and exogenous development theories

In regional development, the theories of endogenous, exogenous and participatory development are emerging as effective tools for rural revitalization. The concept of endogenous development (*naihattu teki hatten*) appeared in Japan in the 1970s through words such as "locality making" (*machi zukuri*) and "village awaking" (*mura okoshi*) and was defined by Kenichi Miyamoto in 1989 as "regional development achieved through the initiative of local governments based on self-help efforts by local industries and local individuals, from the formulation of schemes for research and development activities, in order to ensure a better quality of life in their communities by promoting economic development in harmony with the local culture and history and effective use of local resources, while protecting the natural environment." (Yoshimura, 2004).

The second concept mentioned is participatory development (*sankagata no hatten*). This is an approach to "development" that empowers individuals and communities to define and analyze their own problems, make their own decisions about directions and strategies for action, and lead in those actions. The approach is in contrast to the "top-down" development processes, in which outsiders, with greater socioeconomic and political power, make the key decisions about local resource use and management⁴.

In contrast with endogenous and participatory development concepts, exogenous development projects aim to revitalize local economies and increase the incomes of local people by inviting factories and businesses from outside the region, or by developing some key facilities or infrastructure inside the region, in anticipation of the future profits and ripple effects that they bring. In this exogenous development methodology, economic development is achieved through external factors, and it has no relation to regional autonomy.



Source: www.ovop.jp

Figure 2: The three basic principles of OVOP

Among the three concepts mentioned above, endogenous development and participatory development theory are similar in terms of content because both of them emphasize the role of local resources and local manpower in development. In OVOP, endogenous and participatory development theories were fully implemented and can be seen in its principles.

OVOP is designed to encourage local people to become more motivated, to have greater pride in their communities, and to become more involved in the activation of their local community through their own efforts to produce local specialties (Yoshimura, 2004). The first principle “Local yet Global” means the local community produces local specialties that can be marketed both nationally and globally and the products they make reflect their pride in the local culture. The second principle “Self-reliance and Creativity” manifested clearly the thought of endogenous development by encouraging the independence and creativity of the local community in production and in utilizing regional resources. The third principle “Human Resource Development” emphasizes fostering human resource training so that local people can take pride in their communities and think globally while acting locally. In this principle, Hiramatsu (2005) emphasized the importance of training local community leaders as a strategy for local development. This principle is the adoption of both endogenous and participatory development theories. At present, endogenous development is still applied in OVOP though slogans such as “*machi zukuri*” “*chiiki jiritsu*” or “*chisan chisho*” .

A typical example of endogenous development in OVOP is seen in the development of Yufuin in Oita prefecture. Yufuin embarked on its city-making strategy in the early 70s mainly as a reaction to externally imposed development projects and spreading real estate speculations

(Steffensen, 1994). In 1970, when the construction of a golf course in the Inosedo swamp, which spread from Yufuin Town to neighboring Beppu City, was proposed, a movement against the project was launched to protect the precious vegetation in the swamp. After that, they established Yufuin Hot Spring Tourism Association and another Association for Protecting the Nature of Yufuin. In November 1981, the Yufuin Hot Spring Tourism Association received the Outstanding Contribution to the One Village One Product Movement Award and in December of 1986, Yufuin received the Excellence Award in the Rural Village Amenity Contest organized by the National Land Agency. With the above achievements, Yufuin has repeatedly been upheld as an ideal proto-type for practical endogenous development initiatives in Japan.

Through the example of Yufuin, endogenous and participatory development have proved their key roles in the success of OVOP while exogenous factors seemed to have no position in this development. Exogenous projects have been rejected by the local community in Yufuin since 1970. With regards to tourism and amenity migration, endogenous development and OVOP have proved their role in creating local amenities in general and tourism amenities in particular. Miyamoto (1989) also emphasized that the role and the main goal of endogenous projects is to improve the local welfare and cultural status mainly by upgrading local amenities based on the principle of environmental protection. The point for discussion is whether TLAM, which is seen as an exogenous factor, is a contradiction. At present, in the age of globalization, it seems difficult for local communities, especially in undeveloped areas in developing countries, to depend only on endogenous development. Yoshimura (2004) pointed out two options for the local community to counter the current progress of globalization. One is with the support of the national government. The other is to ensure the sustainable development of interdependent local economies from a local perspective – by utilizing local resources and local values, as well as by establishing a network connecting various local economic and civil movements – with the aim of revitalizing weakened regional industries or creating new businesses. These two options emphasize the role of exogenous factors for local communities such as support from national government and inter-regional cooperation. In OVOP, self-reliance is one of the most important principles in the adoption of the endogenous development theory but it is difficult for villagers to find information and markets for their specialties and products without the support from national governments or other outside stakeholders. Therefore, in some aspects, endogenous

development is dependent on exogenous factors. This relation was described by Yasuo Konami in figure 3 below.

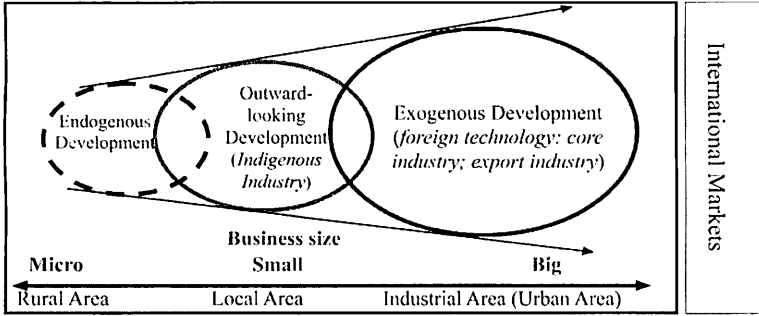


Figure 3: Each development methods and their position

(Referred from Endogenous Development in Rural Areas by Yasuo Konami – Group Leader, Research Group of Endogenous Development using Biomass Waste, Hara Research Laboratory Graduate School of Asia-Pacific Studies, Waseda University)

One of the aims of the OVOP movement is to produce local specialties and products that can be sold internationally. As described in Figure 3 above, exogenous factors can support endogenous development and help to export local products to international markets through its linkage with the indigenous industry of the local community.

On the role of TLAM, one of the features of TLAM is people moving from urban and high developed areas to rural and mountain regions with high tourism amenity values and new lifestyles. As a result, they tend to buy and consume local products and services and this is called “export on site” in tourism literature. In addition, amenity movers can also support local communities by providing market information, new technologies and management skills, creating new employment opportunities and new business because they usually have the financial capacity and a higher education level than that of the local community.

4. CONCLUSION

TLAM is not limited to domestic tourism in Japan. Every year there are about 18 million Japanese people travelling abroad and most of them are being attracted by tourism amenities and new lifestyles in other countries. Similar to TLAM, the OVOP movement is considered as a development

tool for regional revitalization and has been adopted by many countries in developing countries. There is a relationship between TLAM and OVOP although each of them has a different view of development. OVOP mainly emphasizes endogenous development by encouraging local communities to have confidence and pride in their traditional culture, acknowledge the importance of rural areas and nature and establish new industries based on their own traditional culture and resources to diversify employment opportunities. TLAM represents exogenous factors and also has an important role in supporting local economic development despite its negative impact on the local economy. In the background of globalization, the application of only one development model or theory limits development due to the limitations of each development theory, especially in developing countries. Therefore, in policy making for regional development, the combination and selection of tools for development theories should be carefully considered.

Note:

1. A 1998 survey of 2000 tourists conducted by the Yufuin Hot Spring Tourism Association
2. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gross_National_Happiness
3. <http://www.ecoagriculture.org/page.php?id=65&name=Glossary>

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