sinergie
italian journal of management

Vol. 36
N. 105

Jan-Apr
2018

Open perspectives on management innovation

FONDAZIONE CUEIM

ISSN 0393-5108

www.sinergiejournal.it

Quadrimestrale - Poste italiane s.p.a. - Spedizione in Abbonamento Postale - D.L. 353/203 (conv. in L. 27/02/204 n° 46) art. 1, comma 1, DCB VERONA

sinergie

italian journal of management

Vol. 36 N. 105	**Open perspectives on management innovation**	Jan-Apr 2018

Sinergie Italian Journal of Management is a peer-reviewed scholarly publication focusing on the principal trends in management, corporate governance and sustainable development.

Formerly *Sinergie rivista di studi e ricerche*

Published quarterly

Founded in 1983

ISSN 0393-5108

Open access at *www.sinergiejournal.it*

Indexed in Google Scholar, ACNP, ESSPER

The editing activity is sponsored by Consorzio Universitario di Economia Industriale e Manageriale - CUEIM - www.cueim.it

The following Italian Universities belong to the CUEIM Network:

University of Verona
Sapienza University of Roma
University of Calabria
University of Cagliari
University of Pavia
University of Trento
University of Salerno
University of Cassino and Southern Lazio
Politecnica delle Marche University
University of Bari
Tuscia University, Viterbo
IULM University, Milano
University of Brescia
University of Foggia
Salento University
Roma Tre University
University of Torino
University of Messina
University of Macerata
University of Molise
University of Firenze
University of Bergamo
Suor Orsola Benincasa University, Napoli
University of Palermo
Sannio University

Sinergie Italian Journal of Management is published by Fondazione CUEIM, a foundation aiming to carry out and to promote scientific research, especially in the fields of business administration and of organizations management, both profit and non profit.

Peer reviewed journal

Journal accredited by AIDEA

Quadrimestrale associato all'USPI
Unione Stampa Periodica Italiana

Sinergie
Italian Journal of Management

formerly
Sinergie, rivista di studi e ricerche
Founding Editor Giovanni Panati

Sinergie Italian Journal of Management
Via Interrato dell'Acqua Morta, 26
37129 Verona (VR), Italy
Tel. +39 045 597655 Fax +39 045 597550
www.sinergiejournal.it

sinergie
italian journal of management

sinergie
italian journal of management
Vol. 36, N. 105, 2018

Open perspectives on management innovation

sinergie
italian journal of management
Vol. 36, N. 105, 2018

Aphorisms

sinergie
italian journal of management
Vol. 36, N. 105, 2018

1. *Three grand essentials to happiness in this life are something to do, something to love, and something to hope for.*
   (J.Addisson)

2. *When you talk, you are only repeating what you already know. But if you listen, you may learn something new.*
   (Dalai Lama)

3. *Remember to look up at the stars and not down at your feet. However bad life may seem, there is always something you can do and succeed at.*
   (Stephen Hawking)

4. *It's what we think we know that keeps us from learning.*
   (Claude Bernard)

5. *To be impartial there is no need to be neutral.*
   (Francesco Piccolo)

FONDAZIONE CUEIM

Papers from 9th Annual EuroMed Conference

The role of cities in decentralization of national policies on science, technology and innovation[1]

Received
11th February 2017
Revised
23rd March 2017
Accepted
15th May 2017

Newton Braga Rosa - Yeda Swirski de Souza

Abstract

Purpose of the paper: *This paper discusses decentralization of national public policies on Science, Technology, and Innovation (ST&I) from the federal to the city government.*

Methodology*: Empirical data is provided by the case studies of two Brazilian cities: Porto Alegre and São Leopoldo, which were selected because of their comparatively good results in promoting companies and ecosystems of innovation regarding other Brazilian cities.*

Findings*: The main conclusions of the study are: (a) federal government public policy promotion in ST&I remains crucial to the development of entrepreneurial technologically-based ecosystems; (b) municipalities are capable of mobilizing resources, structuring incentive mechanisms, articulating actors, and organizing governance systems; (c) decentralization via municipalities can improve capillarity and effectiveness, strengthening regional innovation systems and consequently complementing national ST&I policies; (d) increased political and economic power of city governments can promote improvements in federal policies of ST&I.*

Research limits*: This study requires further empirical validation and analysis of evidence of other initiatives of ST&I decentralization*

Practical implications*: The study provides managerial implications suggesting how ST&I should be organized in a city to improve a tech-based business ecosystem.*

Originality of the paper*: Governments around the world have been supporting companies and innovation ecosystems because of their relevance to economic viability and national sustainable development. However, despite the increasing political, social, and economic relevance of cities worldwide, their role has been underestimated in national ST&I policies. In this context, this study considers how municipal decentralization of national ST&I policies enhances capillarity, efficiency, and the strengthening of regional systems of innovation.*

Key words: regional economy; digital economy; science and technology management; public policies; federative decentralization; tech- based business ecosystems.

1. Introduction

Cities are increasingly occupying a key role on the development of global talent and knowledge economies. There is a widely-recognized

[1] This paper is a revised and expanded version of a paper entitled "The Role of Cities in Decentralization of National Policies on Science, Technology and Innovation" presented at the *9th Annual EuroMed Conference,* Varsavia, 14-16 September 2016.

literature about smart cities considering the use of information technology and other means to improve efficiency and quality of life. Nevertheless, there is a lack of studies about how a city performs its role as an economic and political actor in national innovation systems to promote technology goods and services industry. This paper aims to fulfill this gap regarding the role of the city in the improving Science, Technology, and Innovation (ST&I) policies and tech-based business ecosystems.

In knowledge economies, cities have been acquiring renewed economic, social, and political relevance. To some extent, they are recovering the historic concept of world-cities like Florence, Venice (1378-1498), Genova (1557-1627) and Amsterdam (1585-1773). However, unlike the past, today's global cities are integrated into networks (Castells, 1999). Although physically distant, the cities today are connected by instant digital communication, creating an unprecedented dynamic momentum in the history (Sassen, 1999).

"If the 19th century was the century of empires and the 20th century was the century of the nations, the 21th century will be the century of the cities", summarized Wellington Webb, the mayor of Denver (Scrimger and Jubi, 2000). In 2008, for the first time in history, most people in the world began to live in cities (United Nations, 2008). As cities grow, they occupy more than ever a central place in the world, with greater economic, political, and technological power. Thus, the challenge of governments at all levels (municipal, state, federal), including transnational, is increasingly to solve the problem of cities. According to Bloomberg (2011), the mayor of New York, one cannot wait for national government decisions; cities are vulnerable on the front line because national governments are not doing what they should do. Therefore, cities need new income sources and a more dynamic economic matrix. They need to attract business, to face a competitive global economy, as well as to provide an effective and sustainable infrastructure (Dirks and Keeling, 2009), attracting technology-based business as a strategy to boost their economic matrix.

Since the 80's, knowledge has been an important factor in explaining the disparities among countries beyond the traditional factors of capital and work. Developing countries that have adopted policies of ST&I promotion are those that have progressed more rapidly in recent years showing that this is a vast and complex challenge that can be met through a large political mobilization for Science (UNESCO, 2010). Accordingly, governments throughout the world have been supporting technology companies to maintain competitiveness in an increasingly global economy (Sassen, 2009) Countries, including developed ones, support technology companies in many ways, such as through governmental policies in strategic areas and through infrastructure projects, where the State assumes part of the technological risk (Mazzucato, 2011). Thus, the state has a structuring role of the new productive forces as a driver of the diffusion of innovations in society.

In some sectors like health and education, the decentralization, of federal functions to the city level has been recognized for its positive results. However, policies on ST&I, despite clear improvements in different countries, are still excessively centralized at the federal level, which limits

capillarity and efficiency. Despite the recognized importance of smart cities and tech-based business ecosystems to economic and social development, there is a lack of literature and empirical data, answering the question: "What is the role of cities in national ST & I policies and how should it be structured to promote technology-based business ecosystems?". The present article aims to fulfil this gap by discussing the role of cities as a key actor on ST & I policies and actions. The discussion considers evidence of the case-studies of two cities with different sizes, but both well succeeded in creating a tech-based ecosystem, including internationally recognized science parks. Although studying Brazilian cases, this paper offers contribution to the need of reconfiguration of ST & I systems in different contexts.

In the following sections, we highlight key aspects of studies that support the assumption of the new economical relevance of cities in a knowledge economy; then, we present aspects about federative decentralization and the regulatory frameworks related to the public ST&I policies. Finally, we explore the data on the cases of the two Brazilian cities, which have shown comparatively good results in promoting ST&I ecosystems as compared to other Brazilian cities. As final considerations, we present propositions for a model of decentralization of ST&I national policies to the municipal level.

2. Cities in the knowledge economy

Smart cities literature deals with the management of the city using "intelligent" resources, such as digital technologies in its administration and in the provision of services to the citizen, e.g. e-governance systems. The intelligent city appears in the international academic literature with various terms: smart, innovative, sustainable, digital city, among others. In an intelligent city, investments in human capital, social welfare, and traditional infrastructure (such as land use, mobility, and urban equipment) and innovations (such as information technology, telecommunications, and the Internet) can promote sustainable economic growth and high quality of life, under wise management of natural resources and participatory governance (Caragliu *et al.*, 2009; Tregua *et al.*, 2015). Align to this stream, Sandulli *et al.* (2016) propose public-private alliances (PPP) as an essential requirement for successful Smart City projects reinforcing the main assumption of this paper that cities are key agents in the transformation of modern economies.

According to the seminal work from Thisse (Beckmann and Thisse, 1987), economic activity is not concentrated at a single point, nor is it distributed spatially in a uniform way. Instead, it is distributed unevenly, creating places more developed than others. In the 50's, the idea of regional development was based on the economic theories of the agglomeration factor in Perroux's (1982) theory of the regional pole and in Myrdal's concept of cumulative circular causation (Myrdal, 1957). This model has inspired the construction of industrial districts in various parts of the world, including Brazil, between the decades of the 50's and 80's (Monasterio, 2011; Paiva, 2004).

Theories differentiate between the concepts of regional and economic space. Region refers to a continuous territory delimited by geographical boundaries. Economic space, on the other hand, deals with scattered poles interconnected by networked economic affinities, as described by Castells (1999). In a tech-based city business ecosystem the availability of skilled workers class grows in importance. A skilled worker can change jobs from a local company to one in a distant country without leaving his desk. The modeling of a knowledge economy, for instance, must consider a unique dichotomy, where labor mobility has two dimensions: the "*hypermobility*" of the teleworking capacity (Sassen, 2009) and the physical mobility of the individual himself (Florida, 2008). With this perspective, Weiss (2006) explains the virtuous spiral of the knowledge economy cities by the "principle" of *critical mass*, a phenomenon characteristic of urban centers, which simultaneously concentrates many people with great expertise (vertical competence) and a plethora of diversity in complementary knowledge (horizontal competence). This "*wide range of highly specialized skills mixed together*" in cities generate productivity and innovation corresponding to up to 85% of the GDP in developed countries.

Sassen (2009) studied the trends that created the agglomeration of cities. New communication technologies, transport and Internet explain urban concentration. These technologies might suggest, in a more obvious manner, centrifugal forces of decentralization, such as teleworking in urban offices, which tends to produce a movement of people from the center to the periphery. Paradoxically, there are forces, which lean towards centralization. In the opposing direction, the facilities of remote management allow that a greater number of companies may expand activities in other distant places in search of factors of knowledge economy: new markets and specialized people. In short, the more powerful the new technologies are, the greater the distant management capability is; therefore, it is easier to extend operations globally, creating new centers of density and centrality as demonstrates the case-study in this article.

The *mix* of companies, talent, and *expertise*, covering a wide spectrum of knowledge fields, make the city a complex center of strategic information exchange, subject to uncertainty, lack of structure and complexities. The city becomes an intense and dense center of a certain type of information exchange that cannot be fully replicated in the virtual space and requires face-to-face contact. These ties of talented people and unforeseen and unplanned information exchange add value in a virtuous cycle that produces higher-order information in a continuous and feedback process. This dynamic environment allows people to find information they did not know they needed. Cities promote unscheduled, spontaneous, and random meetings as a "coffee room effect" (Fu, 2007). The more concentrated the agents are, the more "luck" they will have in accessing the "cafeteria type of information" and, therefore, the greater the dissemination of new knowledge in the local cluster.

Despite globalization, which has increased commonalities in everyday living for much of the world regardless of one's location, it has never been as important to choose the city where you live, almost as much as one's career (Florida, 2008). The more knowledge-intensive innovation activities are,

the greater the need for spatial proximity (Amdam, 2003). "Surprisingly, the newer technologies allow global dispersion of corporate activities, the more they produce density and centrality", summarizes Sassen (2009), creating economic agglomerations in new urban *clusters*, some of them in countries distant to the companies' headquarters. At the next section, we discuss the role of the cities in ST&I policies.

3. The decentralization of national policies and the role of the cities in the ST&I policies

Political science has a long tradition of debates and controversies regarding the optimal level of government that should be responsible for decisions and implementation of public policy in support of its citizens. In this debate, "who" does is as important as "what" must be done by the State (Ceneviva, 2010).

Thus, decentralization deals with the vertical structure of the public sector. It explores, in both normative and operational terms, the roles of the different levels and intergovernmental relations established between them (Oates, 1999; Arretche, 2004), to pursue common goals that would hardly be achieved by either party alone.

The work of Hayek (1945) argues that local governments have a more precise, detailed knowledge of the local population, and therefore are more capable than central governments in providing services to citizens. Tiebout (1956) suggests that decentralization allows each region to offer a package of benefits and taxes, creating healthy competition among them and allowing citizens to choose the jurisdiction that best meets one's expectations and needs. According to this theory in the political economy field, known as *public choice theory*, individuals and governments are rational agents, guided by self-interest and involved in complex interrelationships processes in search of a balance between costs and benefits to get them.

Decentralization assumes the existence of a central authority, which deems necessary - or unavoidable - the delegation of their powers to government's sub-national levels in favor of a more appropriate management or in response to sub-national pressures (Duchacek, 1970). Decentralization also increases the possibility of social participation in local decisions making the government more transparent and "auditable" by their constituents (Oates, 1999). In this same vein, Stuart Mill verified that decentralization promote the citizens' greater political and civil participation, increasing their level of "civic education", helping to choose their representatives and improving the allocations of public resources (Oliveira, 2007).

As Alexis de Tocqueville observed more than a century ago, the federal system was created with the intention of combining advantages at different levels. For this purpose, it is necessary to evaluate which features and instruments are best suited for each level. Thus, decentralization explores, in both normative and operational terms, the roles of different levels and intergovernmental relations between them (Oates, 1999), in pursuit of common goals that would hardly be achieved separately.

The literature shows that decentralization can establish a new balancing point in the power asymmetry between both entities federal and municipal as exemplified by the Canadian experience of Keith Banting (2004). When the federal government attempted to cut social spending, provincial governments, realizing that they would be electorally harmed, used their political power to oppose the federal intention (Oliveira, 2007). In the Canadian case, the cuts would have been more likely in the context prior to decentralization. In other words, decentralization created a new balance of power between the federated entities reinforcing the local citizen's interests and giving a leading role in federal policies to the municipality.

A stimulus to the decentralization movements in several countries around the world is the concentration of tax revenues at the federal level. In Brazil, this has reached 58% in comparison to 25.3% for the states and 16.7% for the municipalities. In OECD countries, there also exists tax concentration, respectively, 56,9%, 26,4% and 16,7% (Valenzuela *et al.*, 2015; CNM,2012). Despite the increased political power and social responsibility of cities around the world, the concentration of decision-making at the federal level suggests the need for further discussion on intergovernmental transfers and a new role for regional entities in national development, both in Brazil and among OECD developed countries.

Despite some operational problems, theoretical elements of federalism and policy practice recommend decentralization, as highlighted by the Washington Consensus: decentralization is good not only for the economy but also for the policy of developing democracies, to bring the government closer to the people, to expand the supply of services and to create "accountability" systems (Stepan, 1999). Financial agencies, such as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and the Inter-American Development Bank, constitute important vehicles of global scale dissemination on decentralization (Melo, 1996), presented the following data: in 1980, sub-national governments, including cities government, were responsible for 15% of revenues on average, and 20% of total government spending. In the late 1990s, these figures had risen to 19% and 25% respectively, exemplifying the decentralization progress (World Bank, 1994). By 1980, sub-national governments, including cities, in Latin America accounted for approximately 14 % of revenues and 16% of total government expenditures. By the end of the 1990s, these numbers had grown to 16% and 19%, reaching 23% and 29% in the year 2000, revealing the progress of federative decentralization (Ceneviva, 2011, p. 16). Literature and empirical data show that much of that decentralization is restricted to health and education, but there are no meaningful examples of ST & I decentralization as discussed in this paper.

In the following sections, we describe methods and explore data about initiatives regarding decentralization of ST&I, focusing on policies and actions held in two cities that are recognized for their technological parks of international expression.

4. Research method

The study offers empirical evidence of ST&I decentralization policies through the case-studies of two Brazilian cities, Porto Alegre, and São Leopoldo. These cities were selected based on their achievements in ST&I development. We considered the strong performance of Science Parks (respectively TECNOPUC and TECNOSINOS) as a characteristic of locally-lead ST&I development. Two of Brazil's most successful science parks are in these cities, according to AMPROTEC's (Brazil's Association Member of the IASP- International Association of Science Parks and Areas of Innovation).

The multiple case-study method is justified in this work because, as proposes Eisenhardt (1989), it favors to explore in detail the object of study, in this case, the city and its role in promoting ST & I. Second, because research questions seek to answer "how" and "why" (Yin, 1999).

We explored primary and secondary data related to the decentralization process from the federal to the municipal level in two Brazilian cities. The focus in this case analysis was on the federal and municipal policies that have been embedded in the cities' ST&I systems. We compared these policies and highlighted singularities that are relevant to clarify key aspects on municipal governance.

Primary data was collected in interviews with different actors of the federal and municipal ST&I policies. Interviewee selection was based on a *snowball* strategy, where a respondent (or documentary source) pointed to others to explore. We did 35 interviews and the respondents were managers of national federal agencies for ST&I funding; municipal leaders; representatives of business associations of regional and national technological based companies. Additionally, secondary data was provided by documents from the federal and municipal governments as regulatory frameworks, laws, decrees, complementary laws, normative resolutions, edicts, and official reports, among others. We also considered sources publications at the specialized ST&I press, news, and official organization's reports like those of the World Bank and UNESCO. Data was analyzed in a content-analysis approach, considering the dimensions explored in the study.

5. ST&I ecosystems: evidence from two cities

The decade of 2005-2015 represented great advancements for Brazil's public policies on ST&I, such as an innovation Law that allowed non-reimbursable funds to companies; a new policy had facilitated the use of incentives and, albeit timidly, the establishment of a first decentralized federal program for the Brazilian states (e. g. TECNOVA). Nevertheless, no federal programs on ST&I decentralization have been oriented for municipalities, despite the cities' increasing political, economic, and social relevance, especially in the formation of technology-based business ecosystems, as science parks, incubators, promotion programs to startups and so on.

Despite the lack of policies oriented specifically towards municipalities, the cases of Porto Alegre and São Leopoldo reveal that some initiatives at the municipal governmental level as well as cooperative actions integrating local government, companies, and Universities, which have favored the enhancement of the ST&I ecosystem. These two cities are in the same region at Southern Brazil but are different in respect to size, constituencies, cultural background, economic bases, etc. Their similarity is in their well-ranked position on the Human Development Index. In 2013, Porto Alegre was rated with 0,805 (very high) and São Leopoldo with 0,799 (high), positioning these cities in the highest ranked positions in the country. Both cities are well served also by higher education institutions and have science parks located within their boundaries.

Another important similarity is the challenge both cities have been facing in respect to their economic bases. São Leopoldo's economy has been based on small machinery companies connected to various traditional industries like footwear and furniture. The decline in competitiveness of these industries mobilized different city stakeholders to create a science park on the campus of the main community University in that area (UNISINOS University). Porto Alegre, as the state capital, needs to improve its economic matrix with dynamic industries. Consequently, stakeholders in Porto Alegre's ecosystem, as in São Leopoldo, have been challenged to create new strategies based on technology to promote city development.

In the connection with federal policies to support ST&I, both cities are in line with federal policies because: a) They support private companies through non-reimbursable financing; and b) They practice the direct tax exemption incentive. Both municipalities have demonstrated positive outcomes from their incentive policies to enhance digital ecosystems as shown by the increase of companies and projects at the Science Parks and at their extensions. However, there are differences to highlight when one makes a horizontal comparison between the municipal policies in these two cases, as will be discussed below.

Management models on incentive concession: The municipalities have different management models for incentive concessions. In Porto Alegre, the incentive is permitted for any company that provides services listed in the municipal law (ITC, engineering, and architecture services). In São Leopoldo, in contrast, the company must submit in advance a project to the city hall for analysis by an expert committee.

On one hand, the prescribed policy has the advantage for companies of cutting bureaucracy, which is particularly important for small businesses such as startups, and this policy facilitates transparency and accountability for all stakeholders.

On the other hand, the incentive based on project analysis, as proposed in the São Leopoldo policy, reinforces relationships among the municipality and the benefited companies. This policy also enables the municipal government to better stimulate the development of industry segments and technologies that it considers a priority. This is more difficult when the benefit is granted based on a preconceived policy that has only prescribed in a generic approach the segment or industry to be stimulated.

Coincidentally, a report from GCEE (2008) states: "it is the projects that more directly reflect the priorities of the policy".

I*ncentive value and counterpart*: São Leopoldo permits only a calculation-based increase, while in Porto Alegre the incentive is calculated on the entire base, which can mean different values and greater simplicity for companies and for municipality supervision. In contrast, the incentive on revenue increase has the merit of facilitating company growth.

In São Leopoldo, the best incentive levels depend on the counterpart in the form of increased revenue or an increase in the number of employees or subcontracting of one or more of the city's companies, according to a formula established by law. In Porto Alegre, there is no counterpart requirement to the company that receives the benefit, instead the fulfillment of global targets by the benefited economic sector is required. Negotiation took place with the representative entities of the sector when the law was approved. For computer services, the reference is the sector's average tax collection for the three previous years (2001, 2002, 2003), which is compared with the average of the subsequent fiscal years to the incentive grant (since 2004). For the engineering sector's grant, the comparison base was the 2007 tax collection.

Supervision and Covered sectors: In Porto Alegre, all participating companies receive an incentive to reduce the Service Tax (ISS) rate at 60% with a reduction between 2 and 5%. In São Leopoldo, this reduction tax depends on a formula, which rewards the increase in the number of employees, a billing increase, and/or the increase of the volume of local subcontracting. Complex controls lead to differences in interpretation that may cause problems for the beneficiary companies and complicate municipal supervision.

São Leopoldo's tax incentive is broader and benefits companies from various sectors. In Porto Alegre the incentive is limited to specific computer, engineering, and architecture services, previously defined by the law, which represents a limitation as when changing laws in response to the dynamics of technology-based activities, the municipality does not necessarily respond in a timely manner.

Concession period: In São Leopoldo, the incentive period is of thirty months; in Porto Alegre, indefinitely. This does not mean that the period is truly unlimited because, strictly speaking, the municipality may unilaterally halt the incentive at any time.

In short, determining the best incentive program is beyond the scope of this article, but it is necessary to point out differences and similarities because both municipalities have successful public policies, as evidenced by their technological parks and other indicators. The differences between the two municipalities suggest considerations of the trajectory dependency, in the sense that the previous choices determine different trajectories even in similar environmental conditions. In complex systems, there is no one single best answer. Table 1 summarizes main empirical findings.

Tab. 1: Policies and the role of cities at the ST&I system

	Case: PORTO ALEGRE	Case: SÃO LEOPOLDO
Management models on incentive concession.	"Automatic" incentive: Incentive is permitted for any company that provides services listed in the municipal law (ITC, engineering, and architecture services).	"Non-automatic" incentive: Companies need to apply for incentives, Applications are analyzed by a council which represents the city governance.
Incentive value and counterpart.	Tax reduction: The company has reduction on tax calculation.	Tax reduction + more incentives: The company has reduction on tax calculation and can get more incentives but should apply for the city council analysis.
Supervision and covered sectors.	Limited to specific computer, engineering, and architecture services, previously defined by the law.	Benefits companies from various sectors.
Concession period.	The incentive period is "undefined".	The incentive period is of thirty months.

Source: Compiled by the authors.

6. Final considerations

This article queried on role of cities in national ST & I policies and how should it be structured to promote technology-based business ecosystems. Aligned with extant studies on the knowledge economy and relevance of cities, we emphasized the importance of the involvement of governments around the world to support the ST&I, the growing importance of the role of cities for regional economies and the strategic importance of federal decentralization for a sustained national development.

Based on the evidence presented here, this proposal of decentralization of federal ST&I policy, via municipalities, has as its outset the finding that cities have the potential to enhance and complement the performance capacity of the federal government. The research shows that municipalities are better prepared than the federal government to identify and select relevant local projects, identifying emerging start-ups with potential and for enhancing local tech-based ecosystems.

Research has shown that despite the relevance of federal government agencies and the work done in promoting ST&I for decades in Brazil (agencies like FINEP, CNPq, CAPES), they appear to have limited bargaining power in budget resource disputes in relation to other federal agencies, to which they are subordinate. Thus, the city's inclusion brings a new political force to the national innovation system, especially when acting collectively. This new balance of power can intervene in some key aspects of intergovernmental relationship, such as: an increase in the national system's *efficiency*, thanks to the operational reach of the municipal authority; the reduction of budget *instability* of public development policies that tend to fluctuate due to several factors; the increase in *reciprocity* of intergovernmental cooperation and the decrease of asymmetry in power,

mainly due to the excessive resources concentrated at the federal entity. A harmonious and balanced relationship promises to achieve mutual benefits, common interests and goals that would otherwise be unfeasible to any of the parties singularly.

Empirical evidence shows that: (a) governmental promotion of ST&I public policy remains crucial to the development of technology-based business ecosystems; (b) the studied municipalities show the capability to mobilize resources, structure incentive mechanisms, articulate actors and organize governance systems; (c) decentralization via municipalities tends to improve capillarity and effectiveness by strengthening regional innovation systems and complementing national ST&I policies; (d) municipalities have the economic and political power to influence the political environment and make adjustments in national ST&I policies, as shown by some recent events.

Observed differences in empirical data from development policies between the two municipalities show the need for flexibility in the adaptation of decentralized national policies to the specificity of different local realities, in accordance with the CGEE (2010). The studied municipalities have trajectories, legal frameworks, institutional arrangements, and different systems of governance, with few points of contact. However, both have in common the fact that they are successful in their municipal development policies in ST&I.

From a theoretical point of view, this article contributes to studies on federative decentralization by discussing the role of cities in policies for ST & I, a complex, dynamic, and strategic subject for the nations worldwide and aims to fulfill a gap on extant literature about smart cities. As managerial implications, this study suggests policies that can be adopted to provide better structure to cities on the development of tech-based ecosystems, as management models on incentive, incentive value and counterpart, supervision and covered sectors and concession period.

As a limitation, we highlight that this study requires further empirical validation and analysis of evidence of other initiatives of ST&I decentralization. We suggest to further studies to consider transdisciplinary approaches, such as the composition of political science with organizational studies to have a more complete approach of multilevel and multidimensional aspects at ST&I systems.

As a final remark, we remind that often cities are the source of nations' major problems such as violence, pollution, water supply, energy, sewage treatment and garbage collection among many others. Paradoxically, they also account for the solution to these major national problems, once they are the center of new technology development and the concentration in critical mass of talents and the raw material of knowledge economy. Therefore, there is room to structure them in order that they are effective protagonists in national public policies of ST&I, energizing their economic matrix and increasing their ability to generate income, jobs, and new entrepreneurial opportunities.

References

AMDAM J. (2003), "Structure and strategy for regional learning and innovation: challenges for regional planning", *European Planning Studies*, vol. 11, n. 4, pp. 439-459.

ARRETCHE M. (2004), "Federalismo e políticas sociais no Brasil: problemas de coordenação e autonomia", *São Paulo em Perspectiva,* vol. 18, n. 2, pp. 17-26.

BANTING K. (2004), *Canada - Nation-building in a Federal Welfare State Zentrum für Sozialpolitik*, Universität Bremen, Bremen.

BECKMANN M.J., THISSE J.F. (1987), "The location of production activities", in Nijkamp P., *Handbook of Regional and Urban Economics*, vol. 1, pp. 21-95.

BLOOMBERG M.R. (2011), "Mayors voices: C40 Chair New York City Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg. New York", *C40Cities, available at:* http://www.c40.org/c40blog/mayors-voices-c40-chair-new-york-city-mayor-michael-r-bloomberg (accessed 10 December 2013).

CASTELLS M. (1999), *A Sociedade em Rede*, Paz e Terra, São Paulo.

CARAGLIU A., BO C., NIJKAMP P. (2009), "Smart Cities in Europe Smart Cities in Europe", *3rd Central European Conference in Regional Science - CERS*, vol. 732, pp. 45-59.

CENEVIVA R. (2010), *O Nível de Governo Importa para a Qualidade da Política Pública? A Municipalização da Educação Fundamental no Brasil*, USP - Universidade de São Paulo. Faculdade de Filosofia e Ciências Humanas, São Paulo.

CENTRO DE GESTÃO E ESTUDOS ESTRATÉGICOS (CGEE), (2010), "Descentralização do fomento à ciência, tecnologia e inovação no Brasil", *Centro de Gestão e Estudos Estratégicos*, ISBN 978-85-60755-28-8, Brasília, DF, available at: www.cgee.org.br (accessed 15 August, 2015).

CONFEDERAÇÃO NACIONAL DOS MUNICÍPIOS (CNM), (2012), "Estudos fiscais: estimativas da participação dos entes da federação no bolo tributário", *Estudos Técnicos CNM*, vol. 1, n. 8, pp. 77-81.

DIRKS S., KEELING M. (2009), *A Vision of Smarter Cities: How Cities Can Lead the Way into a Prosperous and Sustainable Future*, IBM Institute for Business Value, New York.

DUCHACEK I. (1970), *Comparative federalism: the territorial dimension of politics*, Holt, Rinehartand Winston, New York.

FLORIDA R. (2008), *Who's your City? How the Creative Economy Is Making Where You Live the Most Important Decision of Your Life*, Basic Books, New York.

FU S. (2007), "Smart café cities: testing human capital externalities in the Boston metropolitan area", *Journal of Urban Economics,* vol. 61, n. 1, pp. 87-111.

HAYEK F.A. (1945), "The use of knowledge in society", *The American Economic Review*, vol. 35, n. 4, pp. 519-530.

MAZZUCATO M. (2011), *The Entrepreneurial State*, Demos, London.

MELO M.A. (1996), "Crise federativa, guerra fiscal e 'hobbesianismo municipal': efeitos perversos da descentralização?", *São Paulo em Perspectiva*, vol. 10, n. 3.

MONASTERIO L. (2011), "Fundamentos do pensamento econômico regional", *Economia regional e urbana: teorias e métodos com ênfase no Brasil,* IPEA - Instituto de Pesquisa Econômica Aplicada, Brasília, pp. 43.

MYRDAL G. (1957), *Teoria econômica e regiões subdesenvolvidas,* Ministério da Educação e Cultura, Rio de Janeiro, Original edition.

OATES WALLACE E. (1999), "An Essay on Fiscal Federalism", *Journal of Economic Literature*, vol. 37, n. 3, pp. 1120-1149.

OLIVEIRA V.E. (2007), *O municipalismo brasileiro e a provisão local de sociais: o caso dos serviços de saúde nos municípios paulistas,* 237 f. Tese (Doctorate) - Departamento de Ciência Política, Universidade de São Paulo, São Paulo.

PAIVA C.A. (2004), *Como Identificar e Mobilizar o Potencial de Desenvolvimento Endógeno de uma Região*, FEE - Fundação de Economia e Estatística, Porto Alegre, RS.

PERROUX F. (1982), *Dialogue des Monopoles et des Nations. Presses Universitaires de Grenoble,* Grenoble, (original edition 1955).

SAMBAMURTHY V. , BHARADVAJ, A., GROVER, V. (2003), "Shaping agility through digital options: reconceptualizing the role of information technology in contemporary firms", *MIS Quarterly Management Information Systems Research Center*, University of Minnesota, USA. vol. 27, n. 2, pp. 237-263.

SANDULLI F., FERRARIS A., BRESCIANI S. (2016), "How to select the right public partner in Smart City projects", *R&D Management*, vol. 47, n.4, pp. 607-619.

SASSEN S. (1999), *The Global City. New York, London, Tokyo*, eBook Princeton University Press, USA. ISBN: 9781400847488.

SASSEN S. (2009), "Cities Today: A new frontier for major developments", in *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, vol. 626, n.1, pp. 53-71.

SCRIMGER K., JUBI H. (2000), "Lyon, France: Webb opens first Transatlantic Summit of Mayors", *U.S. Newspaper*, New York, vol. 67, n. 7, available at: http://www.usmayors.org/usmayornewspaper/documents/04_17_00/Lyon_front_pg.htm (accessed 5 December 2013).

STEPAN A. (1999), "Para uma nova análise comparativa do federalismo e da democracia: federações que restringem ou ampliam o poder do demos", *Dados* [online], vol. 42, n. 2, pp. 197-251.

TECNOVA (2010), *Manual Operacional e de Orientação ao Parceiro*, FINEP. RJ, available at: http://download.finep.gov.br/noticias/ManualdeOrientacaoaosParceiros programaTECNOVA.pdf (accessed in 2016).

TIEBOUT C.M. (1956), "A pure theory of local expenditures", T*he Journal of Political Economy*, vol. 64, n. 5, pp. 416-424.

TREGUA M., AMITRANO C.C., BIFULCO F. (2015), "Cultural heritage and multi-actors innovation. Evidences from smart cities", *XXVII Convegno annuale di Sinergie: Heritage, management e Impresa: Quali Sinergie?*, pp. 859-872.

UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION (UNESCO), (2010), *Relatório Unesco Sobre Ciência 2010: O Atual Status da Ciência em Torno do Mundo*, Representação da UNESCO no Brasil, Susan Schneegans (ed.), Brasília.

UNITED NATIONS (2008), *World Population Prospects: The 2008 Revision*, New York.

VALENZUELA E., PRESSACCO F., CIENFUEGOS I., PENAGLIA F. (2015), "Pilares necesarios para una descentralización autónoma sin cooptación del poder central: reflexiones para el proceso descentralizador chileno", *Revista de Administração Pública, Fundação Getúlio Vargas*, vol. 49, n. 5, pp. 1083-1106.

YIN R. (1999), *Case study research,* Sage, Thousand Oaks (CA).

WEISS M.A. (2006), "Metropolitan economic strategy: the key to prosperity", *Harvard College Economics Review*, Fall, pp. 25-27.

WORLD BANK (1994), *World Development Report 1994: Infrastructure for Development, Technical report,* Oxford University Press. New York, NY.

Academic or professional position and contacts

Newton Braga Rosa
Associate Professor
Institute of Computer of Information Technology Science, Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul, Porto Alegre - Brazil
e-mail: nbr@inf.ufrgs.br

Yeda Swirski de Souza
Full Professor of Organizational Behaviour
Unisinos School of Business, UNISINOS University, São Leopoldo - Brazil
e-mail: yedasou@unisinos.br

sinergie
italian journal of management

ISSN 0393-5108
DOI 10.7433/s105.2018.01
pp. 11-24

FONDAZIONE CUEIM

Open social innovation: towards a refined definition looking to actors and processes[1]

Received
3rd February 2017
Revised
19th March 2017
Accepted
11th May 2017

Gabriele Santoro - Alberto Ferraris - Demetris Vrontis

Abstract

Purpose of the paper*: despite the abundance of studies on social innovation, the focus is often on non-profit organizations whose primary purpose is to attain social change, while the involvement of external actors in social innovation development is still neglected in literature. Therefore, this paper seeks to shed light on the open social innovation concept.*

Methodology*: the open social innovation idea is studied through a conceptual paper, which involves a literature review of social innovation and open innovation models.*

Findings*: the research outlines the open aspect of social innovation, underlining the actors and the processes that are involved in generating and spreading ideas that can address a social change.*

Limitations*: the study has focused on a literature review without empirical analyses. Case studies or quantitative approaches could represent interesting avenues for further research.*

Originality of the paper*: on one hand, studies on open innovation have traditionally neglected the social sector or social aspects that are investigated in this paper. On the other hand, studies on social innovation do not consider extensively collaborations or open ways to innovate.*

Key words: social innovation; open social innovation; innovation collaboration; open innovation

1. Introduction

Quite recently, it has been proposed that an open collaboration among several stakeholders can improve the impact of social innovations (Murray *et al.*, 2010). This is important in the current global society affected by political, environmental and economic issues. Therefore, an open and collaborative approach may foster sustainable growth through the development of social solutions. There has been exploration among academics of whether open innovation processes are suitable and useful for social innovation in the last few years (Chalmers, 2013; Chesbrough and Di Minin, 2014; Martins and de Souza Bermejo, 2015).

[1] This paper is a revised and expanded version of a paper entitled "Open innovation in the social sector: a theoretical approach" presented at the *9th Annual EuroMed Conference,* Varsavia, 14-16 September 2016.

However, although there is an abundance of works on social innovation which explicitly or implicitly include the involvement of external stakeholders (Drayton and Budinich, 2010; Vrontis *et al.*, 2015), the focus of these studies mainly remains organizations whose primary purpose is to attain social change without an economic return (Chesbrough and Di Minin, 2014). Moreover, the relationship between social innovation and open innovation has recently been analyzed but only by a limited number of scholars. Therefore, very few efforts have been aimed at linking openness to social impact.

Our thesis developed in this work argues that openness in the social sector is already widespread and that social innovations can be developed by several actors of different nature, and through open innovation approaches.

As a consequence, the main purpose of this paper is to understand how open innovation can affect social innovation, following the research question proposed by Chesbrough and Di Minin (2014): how can open innovation contribute to social innovation? To reach this goal, a broad and critical literature review has been carried out.

Thus, this work is a conceptual paper with the purpose of contributing to this still-gaunt topic for a better theoretical and conceptual understanding of the open social innovation phenomenon with a focus on actors and processes. Moreover, it feeds current debates on social innovation, reviewing the extant literature in order to clarify its meaning and analyze its connections with open innovation. First, we reviewed social innovation literature to argue that it is related to collective actions aiming at a social change. Secondly, we employed literature on the innovation ecosystem and open social innovation in order to fill the literature gap in supporting the collective nature of social innovation and to describe how social innovation acts as an engine of change through the interrelationship between different entities and the exploitation of inflows and outflows of knowledge. Thirdly, we discuss the insights from the theoretical background, offering a new framework that interprets open social innovation, and we conclude with a summary that can provide ideas for future research.

2. The nature of social innovation

2.1 Social innovation concept

There are different definitions of social innovation in the literature. In a broad view, it concerns solutions to social pressures related to health, land consumption, wasted resources, environmental dangers, unemployment, unmet needs and marginality.

Many scholars define the social innovation concept by highlighting its differences with business innovation[2] (Dawson and Daniel, 2010; Howaldt and Schwarz, 2010) while others suggest that the two terms usually overlap (Pol and Ville, 2009). Mulgan (2006) defines it as innovative activities and services that are motivated by the goal of meeting social needs.

[2] Some scholars associate business innovation with technical innovation, often using the two terms as synonyms.

According to the OECD (2010), "Social innovation seeks new answers to social problems by: identifying and delivering new services that improve the quality of life of individuals and communities; identifying and implementing new labour market integration processes, new competencies, new jobs, and new forms of participation, as diverse elements that each contribute to improving the position of individuals in the workforce". According to this view, every innovation that has allowed the improvement of human life over time can be considered social, and each innovation that is accessible by users creates a change in society (Prahalad, 2012). Therefore, social innovation and business innovation may very often coincide. In fact, many authors stress that some tools and mechanisms typical of business innovation can perfectly fit into the social innovation process (Murray *et al.* 2010; Husted *et al.*, 2015). Similarly, a social problem can be satisfied by both a social innovation and a business innovation (Cajaiba-Santana, 2014). In this way, some scholars use the concept of "social enterprise" to outline the presence of commercial (business) models as a tool to achieve social purposes (Nicholls, 2006; Thompson, 2008), denoting its market perspective and revenues-focused and commercial features (Dart, 2004), as a private organization with a profit-oriented approach which offers products and services, mixing business and social goals (Westley and Antdadze, 2010). Similarly, a *social business* is an organization that uses its revenues to cover its costs and does not distribute profits (Yunus, 2007).

Jankel (2011) advocates that in today's society, too many organizations use most of the available money to maintain the current status of things by introducing incremental innovations. Such an approach to innovation is also due to the different risk adversity of the public side, which, for political reasons, often prefers solutions that do not involve radical changes (Nicholls and Murdock, 2011). Finally, looking at the actors, Cajaiba-Santana (2014) proposes two perspectives of analysis. On one hand, social innovation is created and sustained by a single actor through an individualistic and behavioral approach, the social entrepreneur proposed by Lettice and Parekh (2010). On the other hand, social innovation is fostered in a broader context and in a structuralist perspective. In this sense, social innovations can emerge not only from public and philanthropic organizations, but also from private organizations and groups of citizens (Mair and Martì, 2006; Dacin *et al.*, 2011).

Other studies indicate that business innovation is motivated by profit and therefore developed by for-profit organizations through a market orientation, while social innovation aims at satisfying new needs that are not provided by the market (NESTA[3]; Mulgan *et al.*, 2007; OECD, 2010). Similarly, Neumeier (2012) rejected the creation and development of innovations through the classic mechanisms of competition that are typical of the business sphere, which tends to exclude the social aspects of innovation.

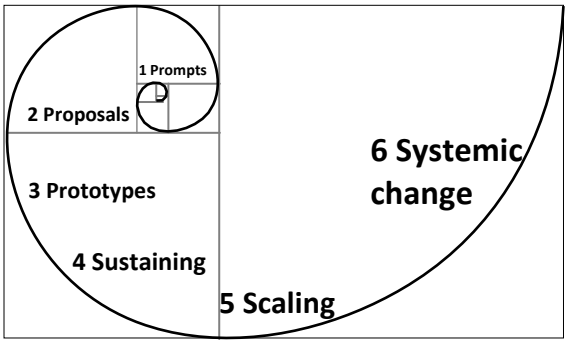
2.2 Social innovation development process

As regards the social innovation development process, it still lacks an understanding of how innovation in the social sector is designed, diffused

[3] http://www.nesta.org.uk

and supported (The Young Foundation, 2012). Accordingly, after mapping hundreds of methods, Murray *et al.* (2010) identified six distinct phases to developing and disseminating a social solution (Fig. 1).

Fig. 1: Social Innovation phases



Source: Murray *et al.* (2010)

This model emphasizes how social innovation involves iterative stages that are not always sequential, creating relationships between various stakeholders in each phase:

1. Prompts, inspirations and diagnoses: identification of a social problem and the need for innovation;
2. Proposals and ideas: generation of ideas with design or creativity methods;
3. Prototyping and pilots: ideas get tested in practice, with focus on trial and error, iteration;
4. Sustaining: the idea becomes everyday practice ensuring long-term financial sustainability;
5. Scaling and diffusion: growth and spread of the innovation;
6. Systemic change: alteration of the previous status.

Similarly, Brown and Wyatt (2015) propose a social innovation development model based on the concept of design thinking and the inspiration, ideation and implementation phases.

The two models mentioned underline the importance of having different groups of people and stakeholders involved in the social innovation process in order to increase the likelihood of achieving systemic change.

3. Openness for social innovation

Recent studies emphasize the importance of multiple alliances in sustaining social changes and systematic relationships between different entities (Murray *et al.*, 2010), also through the creation and exploitation of ecosystems (Ranga and Etzkowitz, 2013; Ferraris and Santoro, 2014; Ferraris and Grieco, 2015). The concept of innovation ecosystems refers to the set of people, institutions, policies, and resources that promote the translation of new ideas into products and processes (Sandulli *et al.*,

2016; Vrontis *et al.*, 2016; Ferraris *et al.*, 2017; Santoro *et al.*, 2017). Several models regarding innovation ecosystems have been proposed. The Triple Helix Model considers the dynamic interplay of firms, universities and the public actor (Etzkowitz and Leydesdorff, 2000).

Therefore, social innovation can be developed through actions across fields and sectors, i.e., the civil society, public and private actors (Nicholls and Murdock, 2011). Public-private partnerships are hybrid forms of collaboration that merge the public interest with the competencies and capabilities of the private, improving service delivery and saving costs by enhancing both societal and economic outcomes for communities.

Recently, there has been an exploration among academics of whether open innovation processes are suitable and useful to social innovation (Chalmers, 2013; Chesbrough and Di Minin, 2014; Martins and de Souza Bermejo, 2015). Chesbrough and Di Minin (2014) also embedded inbound and outbound activities for NGOs and organizations within the public sector to reach social goals. They theorized that, without an open approach, the surveyed organizations would not have achieved the expected results. Moreover, they ask "how can open innovation contribute to social innovation?" and "how can open innovation strategies be applied by organizations whose final aim is to achieve social change?". Through these research questions and three case studies, the authors attained the "open social innovation" concept. They define open social innovation *"the application of either inbound or outbound open innovation strategies, along with innovations in the associated business model of the organization, to social challenges"* (Chesbrough and Di Minin, 2014). Arguably, the authors did not consider the coupled process even though the case of Ashoka involved long-term partnerships through joint inbound and outbound activities, and many (for-profit) companies play a decisive role in the network built by Ashoka. Besides this, Chalmers (2013) emphasized how "openness" can overcome common barriers to social innovation and mitigate some of the risks of the innovation process. Following the previous contributions, Martins and de Souza Bermejo (2015) outlined the role of public participation and public engagement, and the exchange of ideas among citizens, governments and private organizations through crowdsourcing platforms.

Within open social innovation, strong emphasis is put on inbound and outbound activities, but little on coupled processes, which certainly deserve more attention. In particular, the links between NGOs and companies, between public and private actors, among social networks, are creating new conditions for the development of effective social solutions under the lens of a new collective dimension. Accordingly, Holmes and Smart (2009) demonstrated the value of dyadic open innovation practices for nonprofit organizations through several case studies.

Finally, among all the practices and external sources that have been widely focused on in the open innovation literature, users play a proactive role in social innovation (Neumeier, 2012; Chalmers, 2013; Del Giudice and Della Peruta, 2013; Mulgan, 2013), because users can transfer specific knowledge about their needs (Ogawa and Piller, 2006; Martins and de Souza Bermejo, 2015; Santoro *et al.*, 2016).

4. Improving the impact: from social to open social innovation

The literature on social innovation shows that it has profoundly changed over time. The following section represents a comprehensive view that helps to better understand the transition from social to open social innovation, emphasizing its concept, final goal, actors and innovation process. Table 1 summarizes the main results.

4.1 Definition and final goal

Social innovation regards "innovative activities and services that are motivated by the goal of meeting social need" (Mulgan, 2006). Thus, social innovation aims at satisfying social needs and improving the life of individuals and communities (OECD, 2010) by achieving social change (Mulgan, 2006).

In turn, based on the literature, we define open social innovation *"all those ideas, activities and processes that support the development of new social solutions (products or services), through the inflows and outflows of knowledge and technologies (inbound and outbound activities) and collaborations between different entities (coupled processes), mobilizing actions across boundaries and exploiting ecosystems"*. Therefore, an open social innovation aims at satisfying both collective social needs and the needs of the involved stakeholders. This approach allows the mitigation of the risk associated with the innovation process (Chalmers, 2013). This is possible by joining social and commercial interests developing an integrated and open business model between social and business-oriented actors (Chesbrough and Crowter, 2006; Pol and Ville, 2009; Westley and Antadze, 2010). This is because, for example, a non-profit organization may be able to increase the benefits it provides to its end clients by cutting the selling price of a good or service, or by providing more of a free service; however, by doing so they would also experience a decrease in revenue. This must be balanced: a loss of revenue would, in turn, result in the reduced ability to offer services and goods in the long run, which would decrease the organization's ability to achieve its primary goal of creating a substantial impact on society.

4.2 Actors involved

Social innovation usually involves a shift from power directly held by the public, philanthropic and non-profit organizations, and through actions of well-known examples of heroic individuals, such as Bill Drayton, Robert Owen and Muhammad Yunus. On the other hand, open social innovation supports the role that is given to other stakeholders, with emphasis on networks and collaborations between several actors.

Following the open social innovation approach, many actors, such as governments, public institutions, businesses, NGOs, NPOs, and users, can identify a social problem. Alongside these, there are new forms of business such as social businesses and social enterprises. It has been recognized that ideas and projects are often stalled by a lack of ability to transfer

innovations and knowledge among entities, and an inability to mobilize actions across the boundaries and scales that define a social system (Moore and Westley, 2011; Del Giudice and Maggioni, 2014). Thus, the integration of different sources of knowledge is more likely to lead to the emergence of novel ideas. We propose that the more boundaries and levels an innovation crosses, the wider and deeper the impact will be, and the more likely the innovation will result in totalizing and transformative change (Moore and Westley, 2011).

Openness in the social sector helps in promoting this collaboration and exploiting the complementarities of several actors, as well as institutions, sectors and disciplines boundaries, through a mobilizing dynamic (Carayannis and Rakhmatullin, 2014). One possible explanation to this phenomenon is that, due to the lack of resources and expertise of the public entity, as well as the current mix of sovereign debt crises, slow growth and recession, government cutbacks, and reduction of philanthropic donation, investments from other counterparts are required. In fact, more and more governments cannot solve these major social challenges on their own because existing structures and policies lack solutions to some of today's most pressing issues (Murray *et al.*, 2010). This calls for a joint approach on the part of the government, knowledge institutes, the business sector and citizens (Waasdorp and de Ruijter, 2011).

Moreover, the literature underlines a shift in interest that drives social innovation and this is due to the collaborative interaction among different stakeholders who have their own goals (Westley and Antadze, 2010). In fact, in the past, they were mostly developed by non-profit organizations with actions driven by social interest. Recent studies show that social innovation can be developed either by non-profit or for-profit organizations, and that some forms of business model have been successfully applied to find social solutions, ensuring financial sustainability (Chesbrough *et al.*, 2006). In fact, the main problems in social innovation projects are related to difficulties in sustainability and scalability (phases 4 and 5 of the model proposed by Murray *et al.*, 2010).

Thus, we suggest that open social innovation regards both public and private organizations, and both non-profit and for-profit organizations. Public and non-profit organizations are traditionally risk-averse. Because risk-taking is linked to innovation (Covin and Slevin, 1998), these organizations tend to be less innovative compared to for-profit organizations, which means spending less in research and development (Hull and Lio, 2006). This, in turn, increases the cost of product innovation by requiring either external sources of innovation or the acquisition of specialized resources. For these reasons, open innovation is a valuable strategy for non-profit and public organizations. In addition, governmental organizations may play a relevant role in open social innovation since they create a suitable political and legal environment to catalyze innovation through a collaborative approach.

On the other hand, the role of businesses in the social sphere has changed. An ongoing exploration of societal needs can lead companies to discover new opportunities for competing in traditional markets, and to recognize the potential of new markets that they had previously overlooked (Porter

and Kramer, 2011). For example, they can target specific markets that had not been considered so far, finding business opportunities, a way to test new business models (Prahalad, 2012) and new scalable technologies in other fields. In fact, many innovative multinational companies are already serving the world's poor and generating strong revenues, leading to greater efficiencies (Prahalad and Hammond, 2002).

By taking advantage of collaborations, networks and ecosystems, businesses may gain value and make profits from the developed technologies (Bresciani *et al.*, 2013), while the public side and non-profit organizations can offer new radical and more effective solutions and services to citizens. Furthermore, through technological development in the social sphere, private subjects have the possibility to create and exploit new "blue oceans" (Kim and Mauborgne, 2005), and gain competitive advantages from first-mover benefits (Drayton and Budinich, 2010).

Accordingly, there are business opportunities and synergies to be exploited by better integrating social challenges at the core of innovation activities and creating the condition for participatory relationships (Prahalad, 2012). This perfectly explains a win-win situation: new technologies and services are opportunities for the social sector, as the social sector is an opportunity to discover new markets for business. Moreover, international firms can learn locally in order to compete globally by using cities as a lab where to develop and test new businesses and new products and services (Almirall and Wareham, 2008).

Therefore, it has been argued that networks and ecosystems, with their ability to buffer, adapt to, and shape change, may be useful to organize socially to avoid traps and deal with complex problems (Bodin and Crona, 2009). In fact, building an ecosystem can lead to several benefits such as cost-efficiency, scalability, higher knowledge and skills (Prahalad, 2012). From an ecosystem perspective, the topic of Smart Cities falls right into open social innovation borders, since it concerns collaborations between different actors (including public and private), for the implementation of innovations which aim to make the city a better place for citizens. In this view, well-known companies in the ICT sector, such as Microsoft, IBM and Cisco are involved in Smart City projects in close collaboration with local governments providing innovative technology and support in order to ensure new public services. One of the case studies analyzed by Chesbrough and Di Minin (2014) clearly represents an example of a Smart City and, more specifically, the city of Birmingham (England), which adopted inbound and outbound activities in order to find solutions to address social problems associated to child neglect and child abuse. Thus, the Open City is an ecosystem where people and organizations interact to sustain growth through solutions to social problems. In addition, companies could transfer unused technology and IP, and a smart city is an opportunity to sell or reveal such assets.

So far, emphasis was put on the fact that companies may be helpful to NGOs and public organizations to find new ideas to solve social problems. In turn, NGOs can also transfer knowledge to businesses. NGOs possess the knowledge, local infrastructure, and local networks to deploy business models. The collaboration between NGOs and companies may result in a

co-creation process through the development of an integrated and hybrid business model (Brugmann and Prahalad, 2007).

Another key actor in the social innovation development process is the user. User-centred innovation through participatory engagement has proven useful in social innovation development (Murray *et al.*, 2010). A perfect example of user engagement that has led to social change is Wikipedia.

4.3 Innovation process

Identifying a problem means being aware of a need that is not being met (Mulgan, 2013), and this concerns both social innovation and open social innovation. In recent years, the process of social innovation has shifted from single-entity actions through heroic behavior (Lettice and Parekh, 2010) to collaborative actions through inbound, outbound and coupled processes (Chesbrough and Di Minin, 2014; Martins and de Souza Bermejo, 2015), leveraging the business model to ensure sustainability (Chesbrough *et al.*, 2006). The absence of networks and collaborations is the main reason why social innovation projects fail (Mulgan *et al.* 2007).

Thus, open social innovation assumes a process of identifying and solving a social problem by accessing external knowledge, relying on participatory paths, changing the system and spreading the found solution. Moreover, it concerns the exchange of ideas and values among public, private, and nonprofit sectors; shifting roles and relationships between business government and non-profit organizations; blending of a market-based approach and its mechanisms with public and philanthropic support (Phills *et al.*, 2008). These dissolved boundaries are likely to enhance the impact of the social innovation.

For example, Chesbrough and Di Minin provide evidence of how NGOs and public organizations, such as Emergency, Ashoka and the City of Birmingham, draw on inbound and outbound activities in order to solve social problems. Moreover, the case studies highlight how these activities involve the exchange of knowledge with entities that are different from one another. As Hull and Lio (2006) suggest, non-profit organizations can greatly reduce potential risk by adopting forms of innovation that have already been tested in the market (and therefore by means of inbound activities), or by sharing the risk with another organization in a cooperative manner through coupled processes.

Another example concerns crowdsourcing, namely a tool that incorporates the idea of inbound and outbound. In the cases reported by Martins de Souza and Bermejo (2015), inbound activities consist in the public institution seeking knowledge from an external source (citizens), while outbound activities consist in the knowledge transferred from citizens to public institutions. In this context, many organizations employ crowdsourcing to gather and assess information in order to foster public participation by exploiting citizen knowledge. Challenge.gov, for example, is an online challenge platform promoted by the U.S. federal government. It enables the government to collaborate with citizens by calling for specific challenges, to which people can adhere in the form of

proposals and projects. Accordingly, the Internet has opened an avenue for social networks, which incentivize inflows and outflows of knowledge. Accordingly, InnoCentive has created a Web site that allows people to post solutions to challenges that are defined by InnoCentive members, a mix of non-profit organizations and companies. Scientists, engineers, and designers from around the world have posted solutions, modifying the organization's innovation process.

Although previous studies have mainly focused on inbound and outbound activities, the challenges faced by modern economies urgently call for new forms of coupled processes and collective action among public and private stakeholders in order to face social challenges exploiting research and innovation. The role of science and technology is critical to address these challenges, as is taking a multidisciplinary approach that is dynamic and involves multilateral collaboration among different stakeholders (Moore and Westley, 2011). To do so, the development of a new governance system, as well as participative tools such as connectors, incubators and intermediaries (such as Ashoka), should be strengthened in order to be effective (OECD, 2011; Calza *et al.*, 2014). For example, the Research Institute of Science and Technology for Society (RISTEX), supports R&D activities producing, utilizing and transferring know-how through a cycle of activities that involve the use of open innovation practices (Shigeto, 2011). These practices include collaborations with several local actors such as universities, governments, companies, and NPOs as suggested by the Quintuple Helix model (Carayannis and Rakhmatullin, 2014).

Thus, innovation for social challenges clearly involves a wide set of stakeholders during the processes of idea generation, application and diffusion. In this way, solving complex social problems through knowledge and innovation is no longer the task of governments alone, but more and more a result of cooperation among all actors in society. This stresses the importance of cooperation and networking between stakeholders along with the right incentives (Waasdorp and de Ruijter, 2011). Therefore, the actor who seeks to solve a social problem should enlist partners in order to assemble the right skills and share costs (Porter and Kramer, 2011).

Nevertheless, coupled processes and cooperation should also include NGOs or social entrepreneurs, who are knowledgeable about the local context, so they can understand and perceive the needs of local communities. However, they often do not have the technology and skills to scale up projects. Therefore, NGOs, public entities and companies can complement each other by developing a comprehensive and hybrid social business model (Drayton and Budinich, 2010). Companies may offer scale, expertise in production, technologies, knowledge, skilled human resources (Porter and Kramer, 2011). Social entrepreneurs and public organizations can better address social issues due to their long-term perspective (Chesbrough *et al.*, 2006) and can contribute with lower costs, strong social networks, and deep insights into local communities (Drayton and Budinich, 2010). The alliance among companies and NGOs, with the support of local governments, can reshape industries and solve social challenges in an effective way (Brugmann and Prahalad, 2007). Starting

from the assumption that many social problems cannot be solved by companies or citizen-sector organizations (CSOs) on their own (Drayton and Budinich, 2010).

Solving social problems through coupled processes, often results in the development of strong ecosystems for innovation. This allows the spread of R&D costs through all the organizations within the ecosystem, and to take advantage of the specialization of each actor involved (Prahalad, 2012).

As anticipated, businesses and NGOs can develop a coupled process and an integrated open business model in order to find novel and sustainable solutions. This is well explained by the example of the partnership between Unilever (Lipton business) and Rainforest Alliance[4] (van der Wal, 2011). Rainforest Alliance is an NGO that works with individuals, communities and companies with the main purpose of reducing environmental impact and increasing social and economic benefits. Rainforest Alliance provides knowledge to stop major drivers of deforestation and environmental destruction, teaching farmers how to improve their productivity and reduce costs by cutting down pesticide use, eliminating waste and improving farming techniques. The Rainforest Alliance certification encourages farmers to grow crops and manage ranchlands sustainably, supporting farmers who are working to improve their livelihoods and those of their families while protecting the planet for the future. Unilever does not have an active role as a social problem solver, but rather uses the partnership to increase its CSR. In particular, Unilever implements a way of doing business that is useful for social innovation. In this case, an open and hybrid business model can positively affect social impact. This indicates that companies and NGOs can create business models to generate value in the social sector, pursuing scale, profits, social equity, and empowerment as part of an integrated value chain (Brugmann and Prahalad, 2007).

In this light, the P&G Children's Safe Drinking Water[5] (CSDW) case involves the business model that P&G developed jointly with Population Services International (PSI), a non-profit organization which seeks to increase the availability of health and population control products/services in low-income areas of the world, with the purpose of providing clean drinking water to the people who need it most by using water purification packets invented by P&G. Through this long-term project, P&G and PSI aim at raising awareness of the clean water crisis and provide clean water to people in different countries. In this case, the open and hybrid business model represents the key to ensure the spread of the project in other regions.

The key role of an integrated business model is relevant in Drayton and Budinich's study (2010). In particular, they present the case of E-Health Point, a project developed by Indian businesses, citizen sector, for-profit venture capital and social funds that aims at enabling on-line medical services providers to specific target markets. The project has two main advantages: first, it enables the delivery of a service to people who cannot move easily (due to problems related to the lack of transportation, heavy traffic or lack of time); second, the service provides medical examinations at

4 http://www.rainforest-alliance.org/
5 http://www.csdw.org/csdw/index.shtml

very low prices ($1 per consultation), thus ensuring financial sustainability.

Grameen Danone is another example of open social innovation through a coupled process. Grameen Foundation was founded to help the world's poor, addressing their unique needs and working with private sector companies, non-governmental organizations, and government agencies to ensure an achievement of lasting impact. Grameen Danone is a joint venture between the Grameen Foundation and the Danone Group that was launched in 2006 and aimed at producing and providing a type of yogurt enriched with crucial nutrients to decrease malnutrition for the children of Bangladesh. In a similar way, Grameen Intel, born as a joint venture between Grameen and the Intel Corporation, sought to provide IT solutions to address specific social problems such as low agriculture outcomes or lack of pre-natal care.

Tab. 1: From social to open social innovation

	Social innovation	*Open social innovation*
Definition	Innovative activities and services that are motivated by the goal of meeting social need (Mulgan, 2006)	The application of either inbound or outbound open innovation strategies, along with innovations in the associated business model of the organization, to social challenges (Chesbrough and Di Minin, 2014)
Final goal	Satisfy social needs, improve life of individuals and communities (OECD, 2010), through the achievement of social change (Mulgan, 2006)	Both satisfying social needs and those of the involved stakeholders, mitigating the risk associated with innovation process (Chalmers, 2013). This is possible by joining social and business interests (Chesbrough *et al.*, 2006; Pol and Ville, 2009; Westley and Antadze, 2010)
Actors involved	Individuals (Lettice and Parekh, 2010; Cajaiba-Santana 2014), public, philanthropic and non-profit organizations (Murray *et al.* 2010).	Businesses (Huizingh, 2011; Porter and Kramer, 2011), users (Chalmers, 2013), NGOs (Chesbrough, 2006), ecosystems involving public, private, users, universities and research centers (Nicholls and Murdock, 2011; Mulgan, 2013; Ranga and Etzkowitz, 2013; Carayannis and Rikhmatullin, 2014; Ferraris and Grieco, 2015), governments and communities (Martins and de Souza Bermejo, 2015)
Innovation process	Single-entity actions through heroic behavior (Lettice and Parekh, 2010)	Collaborative actions through inbound, outbound and coupled processes (Chesbrough and Di Minin, 2014; Martins and de Souza Bermejo, 2015), transferring knowledge and mobilizing action across boundaries (Moore and Westley, 2011). Focus on social business models to ensure sustainability (Chesbrough *et al.*, 2006).

Source: own elaboration

5. Discussion and conclusions

This paper analyzed several links between social innovation and open innovation. We promote the concept of open social innovation from a theoretical perspective, arguing that openness in the social sector facilitates the sharing, improvement and efficiency of social solutions. Moreover, the present paper sheds some light on the study of open social innovation by providing at least three suggestions. First, different organizations can act as promoters of social innovation: the public sector and policymakers; civil society; NGOs, social entrepreneurs; social businesses; foundations and philanthropists who can fund and support projects; and private organizations trying to meet social needs more effectively by offering skills

and technologies. Interaction among different actors creates synergies between business innovation and social innovation. Each actor provides different assets and competencies to the social solution in order to generate greater value than an individual effort could generate. Second, combining purely social interests with business interests accelerates the social innovation process. In this way, the business model has a key role in ensuring the sustainability of projects. As a result, a market-orientation approach will help organizations to deliver more social value for the money they spend. Then, by applying successful business practices, organizations can increase their efficiency and thus make a greater impact with a given budget (Hockerts, 2006). Third, in line with the open innovation paradigm, inbound activities, outbound activities and coupled processes increase the effectiveness and impact of social solutions (Chesbrough and Di Minin, 2014), because tapping into the resources of other actors increases the likelihood of innovative development ideas and solutions.

Moreover, innovation that aims directly at addressing social challenges must cope with specific barriers that cause under-investments and hinder their development and dissemination. In this context, according to Chalmers (2013), social innovation hindrances such as market protectionism, risk aversion and a conservative culture of public organizations, and often of the non-profit organizations, exist. In fact, due to their reduced capacity for risk and lack of perceived need for internal expertise, non-profit organizations are less likely to have on extensive learning capacity (Hull and Lio, 2006). Lower tolerance for risk and a reduced learning capability lead to lower innovativeness through an internal process. Therefore, adopting an open approach both for public and private institutions helps to mitigate these barriers and achieve radical social changes. There is a clear need for a greater involvement of stakeholders who can introduce the necessary abilities and interests in research and innovation to address social changes. This reflects the emerging trend towards more 'open' and 'user-led' innovation in the private sector (Murray *et al.*, 2010).

To enrich this thesis, we quote Bill Drayton, CEO of Ashoka, the largest worldwide network of social entrepreneurs: "Whatever the issue may be, we believe that the most powerful and profitable answer is often a new form of partnership between the business and the citizen sector… The more eyes we have on society's problems - and opportunities - the better our chances of coming up with viable solutions".

The key aspect that emerges and the main obstacle for solutions to social problems concern the interests of those who develop new ideas. On the one hand, there are governments and NGOs that offer few scalable solutions. On the other, there are companies that have set profit maximization as their main goal and whose social intents are limited to CSR programs with minimal impact (Bresciani *et al.*, 2016). While initiatives and projects are developed individually, social problems remain fundamentally unsolved.

The considerations provided in this paper indicated that open social innovation is not a new paradigm in the Kuhnian sense, but rather an important issue that needs further investigation and empirical research. In fact, the connection between social and open innovation is evident. These suggestions have implications for everyone involved in processes or

activities of social innovation and assume that common practices of open innovation are useful for both public and private sectors. On one hand, the public can implement a process of co-creation and co-development of innovative ideas through the public engagement of citizens by acquiring knowledge and technologies from privates or collaborating with them. On the other hand, companies can impact positively on society and communities by applying the principles of open innovation to cut R&D spending, increasing the effectiveness of innovation development and reducing risks.

Finally, this paper aimed at contextualizing the underpinnings of open social innovation to stimulate future research in this field from both the perspective of organizations that seek social change as their primary purpose (Chesbrough and Di Minin, 2014) and the perspective of private organizations that indirectly achieve social change through business innovations (Porter and Kramer, 2011).

The main limitation of this paper is that it does not present empirical evidence but rather theoretical arguments. Accordingly, in the future, case studies of open social innovation projects would help to build a conceptual framework and to better understand the nature of the phenomenon in order to realize how a single actor could create and capture value through collaboration. Open social innovation cases should be analyzed both from the perspective of the value created for the community and from that of the open innovation strategy adopted by organizations.

In addition, although the few existing studies on open social innovation have focused more on inbound and outbound activities, the theoretical foundations of this paper indicate that the coupled process is a common practice with positive results in terms of social impact. Accordingly, future research should specifically consider examples of collaborations between companies and NGOs, the ways in which these organizations create value through collaboration and, perhaps most importantly, the most suitable incentives and tools that allow a safe and convenient collaboration.

References

ALMIRALL E., WAREHAM J. (2008), "Living labs and open innovation: roles and applicability", *eJOV: The Electronic Journal for Virtual Organization and Networks,* n. 10, pp. 21-46.

BODIN Ö., CRONA B.I. (2009), "The role of social networks in natural resource governance: What relational patterns make a difference?", *Global Environmental Change*, vol. 19, n. 3, pp. 366-374.

BRESCIANI S., THRASSOU A., VRONTIS D. (2013), "Change through innovation in family businesses: evidence from an Italian sample", *World Review of Entrepreneurship, Management and Sustainable Development,* vol. 9, n. 2, pp. 195-215.

BRESCIANI S., FERRARIS A., SANTORO G., NILSEN H.R. (2016), "Wine Sector: Companies' Performance and Green Economy as a Means of Societal Marketing", *Journal of Promotion Management,* vol. 22, n. 2, pp. 251-267.

BROWN T., WYATT J. (2015), "Design thinking for social innovation", *Annual Review of Policy Design,* vol. 3, n. 1, pp. 1-10.

BRUGMANN J., PRAHALAD C.K. (2007), "Cocreating business's new social compact", *Harvard Business Review,* vol. 85, n. 2, pp. 80-90.

CAJAIBA-SANTANA G. (2014), "Social innovation: Moving the field forward. A conceptual framework", *Technological Forecasting and Social Change*, n. 82, pp. 42-51.

CALZA F., DEZI L., SCHIAVONE F., SIMONI M. (2014), "The intellectual capital of business incubators", *Journal of Intellectual Capital*, vol. 15, n. 4, pp. 597-610.

CARAYANNIS E.G., CAMPBELL D.F. (2009), "'Mode 3'and'Quadruple Helix': toward a 21st century fractal innovation ecosystem", *International Journal of Technology Management*, vol. 46, vol. 3-4, pp. 201-234.

CARAYANNIS E.G., RAKHMATULLIN R. (2014), "The quadruple/quintuple innovation helixes and smart specialisation strategies for sustainable and inclusive growth in Europe and beyond", *Journal of the Knowledge Economy*, vol. 5, n. 2, pp. 212-239.

CHALMERS D. (2013), "Social Innovation: An exploration of the barriers faced by innovating organisations in the social economy", *Local Economy*, vol. 28, n. 1, pp. 17-34.

CHESBROUGH H.W. (2003), *Open innovation: the new imperative for creating and profiting from technology*, Harvard Business School Press, Boston.

CHESBROUGH H.W., CROWTHER A.K. (2006), "Beyond high tech: early adopters of open innovation in other industries", *R&D Management*, vol. 36, n. 3, pp. 229-236.

CHESBROUGH H., DI MININ A. (2014), "Open social innovation", in Chesbrough H., Vanhaverbeke W., West J. (eds) *New frontiers in open innovation,* Oxford University Press, Oxford, pp. 169-188.

COVIN J.G., SLEVIN D.P. (1998), "Adherence to plans, risk taking, and environment as predictors of firm growth", *The Journal of High Technology Management Research*, vol. 9, n. 2, pp. 207-237.

DACIN M.T., DACIN P.A., TRACEY P. (2011), "Social entrepreneurship: A critique and future directions", *Organization Science*, vol. 22, n. 5, pp. 1203-1213.

DART R. (2004) "The legitimacy of social enterprise", *Nonprofit Management and Leadership*, vol. 14, n. 4, pp.411-424.

DAWSON P., DANIEL L. (2010), "Understanding social innovation: a provisional framework", *International Journal of Technology Management,* vol. 51, n. 1, pp. 9-21.

DEL GIUDICE M., DELLA PERUTA M.R. (2013), *Unpacking open innovation: Highlights from a co-evolutionary inquiry*, Springer, New York.

DEL GIUDICE M., MAGGIONI V. (2014), "Managerial practices and operative directions of knowledge management within inter-firm networks: a global view", *Journal of Knowledge Management,* vol. 18, n. 5, pp. 841-846.

DRAYTON B., BUDINICH V. (2010), "A new alliance for global change", *Harvard Business Review*, vol. 88, n. 9, pp. 56-64.

ENKEL E., GASSMANN O., CHESBROUGH H. (2009), "Open R&D and open innovation: exploring the phenomenon", *R&D Management*, vol. 39, n. 4, pp. 311-316.

ETZKOWITZ H., LEYDESDORFF L. (2000), "The dynamics of innovation: from National Systems and "Mode 2" to a Triple Helix of university-industry-government relations", *Research Policy*, vol. 29, n. 2, pp. 109-123.

FERRARIS A., GRIECO C. (2015), "The role of the innovation catalyst in social innovation-an Italian case study", *Sinergie Italian Journal of Management*, vol. 33, n. 97, pp. 127-144.

FERRARIS A., SANTORO G. (2014), "Come dovrebbero essere sviluppati i progetti di Social Innovation nelle Smart City? Un'analisi Comparativa", *Impresa Progetto-Electronic Journal of Management,* n. 4, pp. 1-15.

FERRARIS A., SANTORO G., DEZI L. (2017), "How MNC's subsidiaries may improve their innovative performance? The role of external sources and knowledge management capabilities", *Journal of Knowledge Management*, vol. 21, n. 3.

GASSMANN O., ENKEL E. (2004), "Towards a theory of open innovation: three core process archetypes", *R&D Management Conferenc*e, Lisbon.

HOCKERTS K. (2006), "Entrepreneurial opportunity in social purpose business ventures", in *Social entrepreneurship* (pp. 142-154), Palgrave Macmillan UK.

HOLMES S., SMART P. (2009), "Exploring open innovation practice in firm-nonprofit engagements: a corporate social responsibility perspective", *R&D Management,* vol. 39, n. 4, pp. 394-409.

HOWALDT J., SCHWARZ M. (2010), SI: "Concepts, research fields and international trends", *Report of ESF, EU,* and Aachen University, Dortmund.

HUIZINGH E.K. (2011), "Open innovation: State of the art and future perspectives", *Technovation*, vol. 31, n. 1, pp. 2-9.

HULL C.E., LIO B.H. (2006), "Innovation in non-profit and for-profit organizations: Visionary, strategic, and financial considerations", *Journal of Change Management*, vol. 6, n. 1, pp. 53-65.

HUSTED B.W., ALLEN D.B., KOCK N. (2015), "Value creation through social strategy", *Business and Society,* vol. 54, n. 2, pp. 147-186.

JANKEL N. (2011), *Radical (re) invention*, London: white paper, available online.

KIM W.C., MAUBORGNE R. (2005), *Blue Ocean Strategy: How to Create Uncontested Market Space and Make Competition Irrelevant,* Harvard Business School Press, Boston.

KUHN T.S. (1962), *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, University of Chicago Press., Chicago.

LETTICE F., PAREKH M. (2010), "The social innovation process: Themes, challenges and implications for practice", *International Journal of Technology Management,* vol. 51, n. 1, pp. 139-158.

MAIR J., MARTÌ I. (2006), "Social entrepreneurship research: A source of explanation, prediction, and delight", *Journal of World Business*, vol. 41, n. 1, pp. 36-44.

MARTINS T.C.M., DE SOUZA BERMEJO P.H. (2015), "Open Social Innovation", Handbook of Research on Democratic Strategies and Citizen-Centered E-Government Services, pp. 144-163.

MOORE M.L., WESTLEY F. (2011), "Surmountable chasms: networks and social innovation for resilient systems", *Ecology and Society*, vol. 16, n. 1, pp. 5.

MULGAN G. (2006), "The process of social innovation", *Innovations*, vol. 1, n. 2, pp. 145-162.

MULGAN G. (2013), *Social innovation*, Egea spa, Milan.

MULGAN G., TUCKER S., ALI R. SANDERS B. (2007), "Social innovation: what it is, why it matters and how it can be accelerated", *Skoll Centre for Social Entrepreneurship*, Saïd Business School, University of Oxford.

MÜLLER-SEITZ G., SYDOW J., (2012), "Open innovation at the interorganizational network level - Collaborative Practices in a Semiconductor Industry Consortium", in *Open Innovation: New Insights and Evidence Conference*, Imperial College London, June 2012, pp. 25.

MURRAY R., CAULIER-GRICE J., MULGAN G. (2010), *The Open Book of Social Innovation*, The Young Foundation, London.

NEUMEIER S. (2012), "Why do Social Innovations in Rural Development Matter and Should They be Considered More Seriously in Rural Development Research? - Proposal for a Stronger Focus on Social Innovations in Rural Development Research", *Sociologia Ruralis*, vol. 52, n. 1, pp. 48-69.

NICHOLLS A. (2006), *Social entrepreneurship: New models of sustainable social change*, Oxford University Press.

NICHOLLS A., MURDOCK A. (2011), *Social innovation: Blurring boundaries to reconfigure markets*, Palgrave Macmillan, London.

OECD (2010), *SMEs, Entrepreneurship and Innovation*, http://www.oecd.org/document/16/0,3746,en_2649_33956792_44938128_1_1_1_1,00.html.

OECD (2011), "Fostering Innovation to Address Social Challenges", workshop proceedings.

OGAWA S., PILLER F.T. (2006), "Reducing the risks of new product development", *MIT Sloan Management Review*, vol. 47, n. 2, pp. 65.

PHILLS J.A., DEIGLMEIER K., MILLER D.T. (2008), "Rediscovering social innovation", *Stanford Social Innovation Review*, vol. 6, n. 4, pp. 34-43.

POL E., VILLE S. (2009), "Social innovation: Buzz word or enduring term?", *The Journal of Socio-Economics,* vol. 38, n. 6, pp. 878-885.

PORTER M.E., KRAMER M.R. (2011), "Creating shared value", *Harvard Business Review,* vol. 89, n. 1-2, pp. 62-77.

PRAHALAD C.K. (2012), "Bottom of the Pyramid as a Source of Breakthrough Innovations", *Journal of Product Innovation Management*, vol. 29, n. 1, pp. 6-12.

PRAHALAD C.K., HAMMOND A. (2002), "Serving the world's poor, profitably", *Harvard Business Review*, vol. 80, n. 9, pp. 48-59.

RANGA M., ETZKOWITZ H. (2013), "Triple Helix systems: an analytical framework for innovation policy and practice in the Knowledge Society", *Industry and Higher Education*, vol. 27, n. 4, pp. 237-262.

SANDULLI F.D., FERRARIS A., BRESCIANI S. (2016), "How to select the right public partner in smart city projects", *R&D Management*.

SANTORO G., FERRARIS A., GIACOSA E., GIOVANDO G. (2016), "How SMEs engage in open innovation: A survey", *Journal of the Knowledge Economy*, 1-14.

SANTORO G., VRONTIS D., THRASSOU A., DEZI L. (2017), "The Internet of Things: Building a knowledge management system for open innovation and knowledge management capacity", *Technological Forecasting and Social Change*.

SHIGETO S. (2011), "A method that goes beyond "good practices": a case of ristex", in OECD (Ed.), *Fostering innovation to address social challenges* (pp. 45-52), OECD, Paris, France.

STREECK W., SCHMITTER P. (1995), "Community, market, state - and associations?", in Streeck W., Schmitter P. (Eds.), *Private interest government - Beyond market and state,* CA: Sage, Beverly Hills.

THE YOUNG FOUNDATION (2012), *Social Innovation Overview: A deliverable of the project: "The theoretical, empirical and policy foundations for building social innovation in Europe"* (TEPSIE), European Commission - 7th Framework Programme, European Commission, DG Research, Brussels.

THOMPSON J.L. (2008), "Social enterprise and social entrepreneurship: where have we reached? A summary of issues and discussion points", *Social Enterprise Journal,* vol. 4, n. 2, pp. 149-161.

VAN DER WAL S. (2011), "Certified Unilever Tea: Small Cup, Big Difference?", *SOMO - Centre for Research on Multinational Corporations*.

VRONTIS D., VIASSONE M., THRASSOU A. (2015), "The role and potential of social networks sites in tertiary education", *Sinergie Italian Journal of Management,* vol. 33, n. 97, pp. 55-81.

VRONTIS D., THRASSOU A., SANTORO G., PAPA A. (2016), "Ambidexterity, external knowledge and performance in knowledge-intensive firms", *The Journal of Technology Transfer*, vol. 42, n. 2, pp. 374.

WAASDORP P., RUIJTER K. (2011), "Countries' approaches & innovation policies to address social challenges: Opportunities and barriers", in *OECD (Ed.), Fostering innovation to address social challenges* (pp. 69-74), OECD, Paris, France.

WESTLEY F., ANTADZE N. (2010), "Making a difference: strategies for scaling social innovation for greater impact", *The Innovation Journal: The Public Sector Innovation Journal*, vol. 15, n. 2, pp. 1-19.

YUNUS M. (2007), "Creating a world without poverty: Social business and the future of capitalism", *Global Urban Development Magazine*, vol. 4, n. 2, pp. 16-41.

Academic or professional position and contacts

Gabriele Santoro
Post Doc Researcher in Management
University of Turin - Italy
e-mail: gabriele.santoro@unito.it

Alberto Ferraris
Post Doc Researcher in Management
University of Turin - Italy
e-mail: alberto.ferraris@unito.it

Demetris Vrontis
Full Professor of Marketing
University of Nicosia, Nicosia - Cyprus
e-mail: vrontis.d@unic.ac.cy

sinergie
italian journal of management

ISSN 0393-5108
DOI 10.7433/s105.2018.02
pp. 25-42

FONDAZIONE CUEIM

Exploring the relationship between customer education and customer satisfaction[1]

Received
4th February 2017
Revised
12th April 2017
Accepted
1st June 2017

Kamel Ben Youssef - Milena Viassone - Philip Kitchen

Abstract

Purpose of the paper: *This paper has a dual objective: it explores how to build an effective awareness/education program in terms of customer education (CE) and verifies how this can lead to improved satisfaction and whether customers find value in the education involved in these programs.*

Methodology*: It consists of a literature review on the role of CE, a description of two models - the '5Ms' CE Model and that of Honebein and Cammarano, and adaptation/application of these to two major Italian coffee firms via qualitative research.*

Findings*: Findings indicate that the adapted models fit well with the coffee industry and outline CE dimensions which - if applied - could help underpin increased customer satisfaction in the B2D (business-to-distributor) sector.*

Research limits: *Despite the research contribution, this is an exploratory study that needs to be applied to a larger number of cases, and subsequent empirical testing via quantitative methods.*

Practical implications: *The application of these models to the B2D sector allows the suggestion of strategies to better develop CE programs.*

Originality of the paper: *CE plays an important role in satisfaction, particularly in industrial markets (B2B). However, little is known about CE's educational effect in terms of ROI related to satisfaction in the B2D sector. In addressing this, two models of consumer education are analyzed and applied to the Italian coffee B2D market.*

Key words: Customer Education (CE); customer satisfaction; relationship management; experience marketing; coffee sector

1. Introduction

In accordance with the Pareto principle, it is six to seven times more expensive to gain a new customer than retain a current customer (www.forbes.com, 2015). Yet, based on the marketing concept, customer satisfaction is the lifeblood of a business.

CE, delineated as a company's role in providing customers with the necessary information, skills, and abilities needed for them to become more informed buyers, is widely acknowledged as playing a key role in

[1] This paper is a revised and expanded version of a paper entitled "How can customer education in the coffee sector increase customer satisfaction?" presented at the *9th Annual EuroMed Conference*, Varsavia, 14-16 September 2016.

client satisfaction (Bell *et al.*, 2017; Vrabiuta, 2014), particularly in the context of industrial markets (B2B) (Zaho *et al.*, 2008).

While CE is multi-faceted (Aubert and Gotteland, 2010; Monnot, 2010, cited in Volle, 2012, pp. 31-32), it is apparently most effective when used to engage online shoppers or in-store customers. However, while online or offline message structure remains the same, CE areas can vary (Aubert and Gotteland, 2010) though both have the objective of providing customers with information related to products/services. Trust between sellers and buyers is essential in developing and building sound customer relationships.

CE is considered to be (Sharma and Patterson, 1999) the extent to which employees inform and educate customers about service-related concepts and explain the benefits of recommended products. Bell and Eisingerich (2007) demonstrated that perceived technical and functional service quality significantly and positively affects trust. Similarly, CE has a significant, direct, and positive impact on customer trust.

Aubert *et al.* (2005) investigated the effects of CE on the skills, usage behavior and satisfaction of customers, and showed that skill improvement had a significant positive effect on product usage intensity and the variety of functions that customers can develop after CE.

Despite the important role played by CE (Vigolo *et al.*, 2016; Damali *et al.*, 2016; Von Hippel, 1986) in customer satisfaction and loyalty (Eisingerich and Bell, 2006), studies have mainly focused on industrial market context (B2B) (Ho *et al.*, 2015; Elsevier Clinical Solutions, 2015). In particular, studies have demonstrated how educated customers have the potential for achieving higher levels of satisfaction and developing a stronger sense of loyalty for [their] service providers (Suh *et al.*, 2015).

While there is increasing interest in CE programs and their effects on satisfaction in B2B, little is known about CE effects on customer satisfaction in distributors (B2D) (Ben Youssef *et al.*, 2016a) and the roles played in successful educational programs. For example, this is hardly explored in the beverage sector and, in particular, in the coffee industry.

In order to bridge this gap, this study explores how to build an effective awareness/education program and attempts to verify how 'CE' can lead to improved customer satisfaction, and whether customers find value in such educational programs in the B2D sector.

To explore these purposes we use two models:

- the '5Ms' CE Model, which defines critical factors to help organizations achieve success with their online or face-to-face educational marketing activities in terms of ease, relevance, freshness, management and evaluation;
- the Honebein and Cammarano model, which describes six qualities of CE to be incorporated, including: transparency, clear benefits, understanding customer interests, continuing CE, usage of different media and language, simplicity and ease of understanding.

Starting from these models, we tackle two research questions related to the overarching issue of how CE may work in a specific B2D market:

- RQ1. How can an effective awareness/education program be developed?
- RQ2. How can Honebein and Cammarano's CE model be used in the

B2D coffee sector to create customer satisfaction, and is this model appropriate for building customer satisfaction in this sector?

In exploring these questions, we review the literature, then propose and adapt the models. The models are explored and applied via interviews with the Marketing Manager and Marketing Director of two major Italian private coffee distributors. Finally, results are discussed in an attempt to offer nascent managerial implications and recommendations.

2. The role of CE

In recent years there has been an increasing need for CE because of usage criteria (Aubert, 2006), complex services and novice consumers (Burton, 2002). Such education can be delivered through educational programs such as professional advice, blogs, seminars, advertising, forums and other online and offline activities (Suh *et al.*, 2015). CE seems to offer several organizational advantages: enhancement of individual product knowledge, facilitation of purchases (Zhou and Whitla, 2013), enhancement of customer loyalty through perceived service quality (Suh *et al.*, 2015) and by attracting and retaining customers.

In a very early paper, Bloom (1956) developed a model that promoted higher forms of thinking in education such as analyzing and evaluating, rather than just teaching students via rote learning, and shared learning in three domains: cognitive, affective and psychomotor. Nevertheless, this model did not always succeed in changing behavior or enhancing knowledge at that time. Therefore, Gilbert (1978) suggested other solutions to change behavior, most of which were not focused on education in the traditional sense. This later became known as 'human performance' (see Honebein and Cammarano, 2011). In designing education, it is essential to clearly define what a specified audience can or may learn. Thus, a content and task analysis needs to be performed prior to delivery. To develop content, existing sources, subject-matter experts, and other educational materials should be considered. Nevertheless, these can only answer questions of what customers need to know partially at best. Therefore, it is incumbent upon businesses to ask their customers what they need to know and what they would like to do or learn (Thrassou and Vrontis, 2009; Maggioni and Del Giudice, 2011; Thrassou *et al.*, 2014). This approach is thus primarily customer-centered or business-centered once analysis is complete.

In order to operationalize CE, companies could organize groups of customers, provide a general description of what the company does, and ask customers for any questions or issues they may have about the subject. With these in mind, content and delivery of subsequent educative programs can be developed or adjusted. Follow-up discussions involve comprehending why a customer needs to answer posed questions and, of course, prioritize questions. This process enables customer interactivity and becomes an essential part of the teaching process. Trust is very important in this context. Before customers can develop attitudes toward a brand (Bloom, 1956), they need certain knowledge or skills. When preparing content for teaching, it is crucial to prioritize certain topics and

find the most essential aspects, as too much content may not be recalled (Honebein and Cammarano, 2011).

In general, there is a strong relationship between marketing and CE, so it may be wise to consider an integrated marketing communications approach in disseminating CE (Kitchen, 2017). IMC requires or mandates customer-orientation. Other models have developed different aspects of CE. For example, Temerak *et al.* (2009) developed a model of the relationship between CE and customer participation. It consisted of forms of CE, customer participation, psychological mechanisms mediating CE/participation relationships and contextual factors moderating CE effects (Ben Youssef *et al.*, 2016b).

3. Two important models of CE

3.1 The "5 Ms" of the CE Model

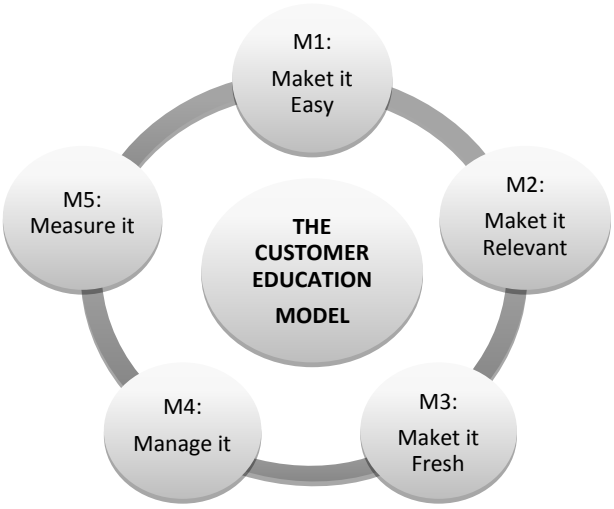
Through their client experience and independent research on CE, the Intrepid Learning Solutions Consultancy Group defined five factors to help organizations succeed with their online or face-to face educational marketing activity (the 5'M' CE Model) summarized by Ben Youssef *et al.* (2016a) in table 1:

Tab. 1: The five success factors for the CE Model

1. Make It Easy	"The centerpiece of any successful program is an interactive on direct contact website designed specifically for the targeted audience the company is seeking to reach. The classroom environment (Young, 2005) or website sophistication should mirror the organization's training and communications needs and budget (Intrepid Learning Solutions, 2010)".
2. Make It Relevant	"A successful educational marketing solution must include topics and formats that are customer-generated, covering not just how to use specific products, but also related topics that help customers achieve their fundamental goals and objectives aiding them to consider [your] products and services (Bell and Eisingerich, 2007; Intrepid Learning Solutions, 2010)".
3. Make It Fresh	"Develop an education and awareness strategy that is regularly updated and improved by customer feedback, as it can motivate learners who tend to lose interest in an overt classroom environment (Young, 2005) or in web sites that do not provide compelling reasons for them to return. Companies need to post fresh educational content (Intrepid Learning Solutions, 2010; Ben Youssef *et al.*, 2016a)".
4. Manage It	"Behind the scenes, an effective educational marketing website or classroom environment (Young, 2005) needs to capture critical customer information, such as what content your customers are viewing, how content preferences differ by type of learner, and where and why customers might "bail" from your site. Furthermore new content and site improvements can be developed and critical data regarding customer and prospect preferences garnered (Intrepid Learning Solutions, 2010)".
5. Measure It	"Scorecards and dashboards make it easy for decision makers to see the impact of educational marketing (Intrepid Learning Solutions, 2010; Honebein and Cammarano 2011). Website analytics and content consumption data enable marketers to see the impact of CE on product sales and gain macro-level information to refine and focus marketing campaigns (Intrepid Learning Solutions, 2010)".

Source: Based on Ben Youssef *et al.*, (2016a, pp. 209-218)

Fig. 1: The 5 M CE Model



Source: Personal elaboration based on Intrepid Learning Solutions (2010)

The 5 M CE model (if used) allows a company to maximize the potential of success of their CE programs with established goals, when tied to a strategy and where return on investment can be encrypted.

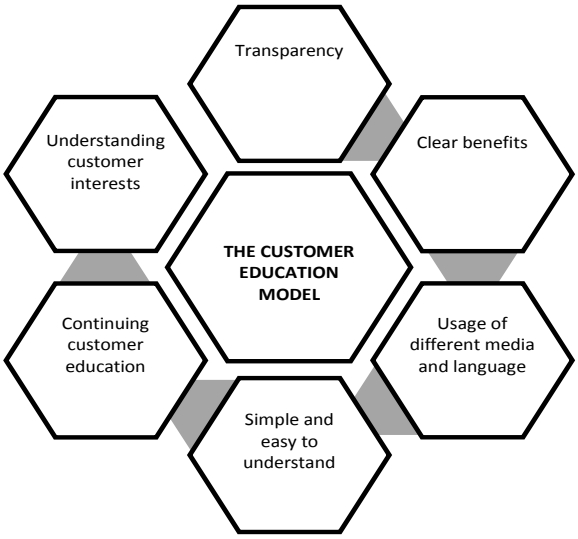
3.2 The Honebein and Cammarano CE Model

Honebein and Cammarano (2005) essentially connected Gilbert's (1978) concepts in relation to 'human performance' with their own approach and coined their approach 'customer performance'. This has resulted in the orchestration of four elements in creating customer experience focused upon changing behavior so jobs and tasks can be successfully performed:

- Vision: goals, feedback, and expectations that guide and shape performance;
- Access: the experience environment includes processes, interfaces, and information that enables sound performance;
- Incentives: rewards and punishments that motivate performance;
- Expertise: CE that enhances the knowledge, skills and attitudes that are required for performance.

The nature of the task is not of prime importance, as an experience that effectively juxtaposes these elements permits better customer performance and thus successful completion of the respective task, which leads to greater satisfaction. It is thus therefore important to link "customer performance" with "CE", as the performance experience seems to be crucial in an educative sense (Honebein and Cammarano, 2005). According to the authors (2011, ibid), six qualities of CE need to be incorporated (see Figure 2):

Fig. 2: The CE model



Source: Authors' elaboration albeit based on Honebein and Cammarano (2011)

Transparency is very important for CE, as customer concerns may increase otherwise. It is essential to pro-actively disclose information that customers might misinterpret, so businesses can use transparency to reinforce customer trust. Another crucial aspect is that customers need to be educated about the benefits of teaching. Businesses tend to position product features as benefits. Another issue is that CE consists of rationally-framed benefits that may not generate attention or interest or may be ambivalent in nature. The usage of differential media and languages is also important. This usually concerns employees, as they can act as brand ambassadors. Other media can also be used to transmit CE messages. Language and imagery play an important role in this context. It is also crucial for CE to be continuous, as it is more effective when designed as a process and not as an event. Effective education relies somewhat upon repetition. The use of simple language is another crucial aspect for educating customers. There are quantitative and qualitative rules relating to this. Last, seeking to understand customers' interests is essential in CE. Customer needs and interests can be ascertained by questioning, but it is important to provide the opportunity for customers to dig deeper into topics that are deemed important. A so-called 'opt-in' concept is recommended, as teaching minimalistic information might dissuade, rather than persuade, customers regarding product/service usage or benefits.

4. Methodology

In order to explore how to build effective awareness/education CE program and illustrate whether this can increase customer satisfaction, we apply the two models described above to the coffee sector via two case

studies, and assess their suitability to create customer satisfaction. Then, we explore the research questions. In order to arrive at this point we describe the different qualities affecting the two models throughout the literature review, before adapting them. Then we apply the model to the examples of major Italian private coffee distributors.

A case study methodology can be defined as:

"An empirical inquiry about a contemporary phenomenon (e.g., a "case"), set within its real-world context - especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident" (Yin, 2009, p. 18).

This can be applied in different situations (Yin, 2012), such as when the research addresses a descriptive or exploratory question as is done here. Thus, by emphasizing the study of a phenomenon within its real-world context, data collection takes place in a business setting rather than relying on "derived" data (Bromley, 1986, p. 23). For these reasons, the case study method seemed appropriate for the investigated topic. In-depth interviews were chosen to elicit information in order to achieve a holistic understanding of the interviewees' perspectives. This type of interview involves asking informants open-ended questions, and probing wherever necessary to obtain data deemed useful by the researchers. In particular we adopt the standardized open-ended interview that is "utilizing open-ended questions carefully worded and arranged and minimizing variation in questions posed" (Patton 1987, p. 112).

The coffee sector was specifically selected because in recent years it has invested significant resources in developing CE programs.

The company chosen for the application of the 5M CE Model is an Italian SME that provides coffee. The research design is based on an interview with their marketing manager and questionnaires with product distributors. The questionnaires for the distributors aimed at providing insights into how important CE implementation is for them, especially in light of their own business strategy. A total of seven questions were sent. The interview with the marketing manager of this firm aimed at analyzing the company's marketing strategy vis-a-vis CE implementation. A total of fifteen questions dealing with the expected benefits of CE initiatives by organizations are addressed. The second company was selected as the six qualities of the Honebein and Cammarano model seem to be emphasized and may be applicable. In this company, it is claimed that innovation is immediately translated into education, i.e. a program capable of educating customers to transmit the qualities that characterize this coffee. Naturally, we seek to understand the interactions between CE and specific purchase contexts. After a first round of data collection of the company and its culture, an in-depth interview with the Director of Marketing was carried out. This was structured into six sections aimed at investigating:

- the presence of the six drivers through open questions;
- the level at which they affect customer satisfaction by asking the interviewee to express a level of agreement about several items through a 5-point Likert scale (1= total disagreement; 5= total agreement).

Interviews were recorded and transcribed. Then we defined the coding categories (the 5 "Ms" for the first model and the 6 drivers described by Honebein and Cammarano) and summarized the main results concerning

their management. Furthermore, we classified relevant information, underlying the most important information and expressions.

This methodology allows us to explore the research questions that lead to nascent theoretical and managerial implications.

5. Case studies: discussion of results

The case study referred to the 5 Ms CE Model

The Oro caffè company trademark was created in 1972 as a place where coffee was served, consumed and enjoyed. Fifteen years later, the two owners took over a small coffee roasting center and decided to run it on their own. By continually improving the original recipe, sophisticated blends were perfected over time. What made the company successful was the owners' direct involvement in carefully selecting raw coffee and the use of high-tech, fully automated coffee roasting equipment, a mix guaranteeing high and consistent quality levels. Starting in the 90s, distribution extended beyond national borders (company website).

The Company School was established in 2009 with the final objective of getting the most out of the company blends and, at the same time, improving the types of offer, while diversifying them in a creative way (Ben Youssef *et al.*, 2016a).

Nowadays, this educational offer is accessible to anybody wishing to attend courses with the intent of spreading knowledge about the world of coffee and training an increasingly aware and careful consumer. In classrooms, courses are held by a team led by an expert coffee trainer and sector specialist, who is also a professional barman.

The syllabus goes from a historical outline on the origin of coffee to the study of its organoleptic features distinguishing Arabicas from Robustas. After examining roasting processes, the practical stage begins, with the golden rules for getting the best from the blends: correct use of the machines, appropriate extraction times and full advice, and the secrets for being able to offer all the flavour and aroma of Italian quality espresso. A visit to the production plant completes attendees' training path (Source: www.orocaffe.com/en).

The application of the 5M CE Model

We applied the model to this specific company in order to reply to RQ1: How can an effective awareness/education program be developed?

In this specific company, the main benefits of CE initiatives were to increase knowledge on qualitative coffee and associate it to the good reputation of the company. Both of these benefits were effectively achieved.

These courses are considered very important by distributors who became commercial partners of the company a few years ago and by final consumers (Table 2).

Tab. 2: CE model perception by distributors and final consumers

The perception of CE by	
The distributors	The final consumers
The distributors purchase the company's products because: - their products are high-quality; - the quality/price ratio is optimal; - the owners and employees are very kind and helpful; - of the professionalism of the firm; - of the quality of the offered services. - companies interact directly with their distributors.	Attending the Oro Caffè School is considered to be very important by final consumers because it enables : - the preparation of coffee by competent and highly-educated barmen; - a high quality of coffee; - passion in the preparation of coffee; - innovative products.

Source: Authors' elaboration, albeit based on questionnaire for the marketing manager of Oro Caffè and an overview of their distributors (2016)

This shows how distributors acknowledge the company as being able to provide high quality/innovative products and a high level of education. Starting from this consideration, we can deduce that a 5 M CE Model has been well developed by the company. In fact, through a theoretical and practical approach, its school makes the learning process easy for participants. This is possible also thanks to visits to the production plant and on-site presentations/demonstrations of the processing cycle (make it easy). Furthermore, this school doesn't only provide a description of the characteristics and origin of coffee but also teaches barmen the correct use of coffee machines, proper extraction times and the secrets to preparing a very high-quality Italian coffee. These are all very useful abilities for participants (make it relevant); the company communicates with its participants also by means of social media (facebook, twitter) and this makes communication easy, informal and fast: in this way the company can always be informed about participants' new needs (make it fresh) (Intrepid Learning Solutions, 2010; Ben Youssef *et al.* (2016a)). In addition, distributors perceive the importance of this school for several reasons and this means that the CE process is well-managed (manage it); finally, thanks to specific tools we can deduce measure the return on investment, given that the Marketing Director was able to provide specific information in terms of the increase in reputation, customer loyalty, as well as the decrease in costs (measure it).

The case study referred to the Honebein and Cammarano Model

Diemme Caffè has produced toasted coffee since the beginning of the 1900's and claims to be a historic coffee company. It has been coordinated by a single family for three generations and it tries to educate its customers in order to do business together (The company website). The company has coffee roasting as core business but it has also actively invested in other companies in the catering and bar business, operations in shopping malls, and the direct management of a number of prestigious venues where their coffee is marketed. Their current production capacity exceeds three million kilos of coffee per year (The company website).

"In our Drink Different School"- explained the Marketing and Communication Director of the company – "we organize several courses delivered by qualified teachers and structured on different levels. In this way we transfer know-how, allowing participants to learn several things about the coffee plant, its manufacturing and the correct use of professional tools. We allow them to assist in tasting to see how to prepare our main coffee products and refined cocktail drinks, happy hours, and learn about a perfect 'mise en place' and specific topics about the management of a bar . At the end of the course we issue a participation certificate and the "Coffee Passion" guide. Up until now, the typical barman who attends our courses is between 20-45 years old, is the bar owner or an employer, has a secondary school degree, sometimes in the catering sector".

"We believe that investing in training is of increasing importance to enable the development of a business and increase its competitive edge". Training, organized at different levels, transmits fundamental notions about the coffee plant, its processing, the proper use of professional equipment, interesting tasting tests, the correct methods to prepare coffee products and the refined Drink Different cocktails, and in-depth information on how to properly set up, arrange and run a bar.

Application of the Honebein and Cammarano CE model

Replies to the second research question (*How can Honebein and Cammarano's CE model be used in the B2D coffee sector to create customer satisfaction, and is this model appropriate for building customer satisfaction in this sector?*) are provided throughout the case study, which offers an application of the Honebein and Cammarano CE model to Diemme Caffè and, in this way, to a specific industry, i.e. the coffee industry. It provides the following results: (1) *Transparency*: while customers demand transparency, being completely transparent with customers is something most utilities find challenging (Honebein and Cammarano, 2011). The concept of transparency in this company is mainly addressed to bar operators or pastry chefs, given that they participate in their educational programs. These programs are communicated online, by brochure and through territorial retailers. Communicative style used in delivering courses is simple and easy to understand. Also, information is easily accessible by participants and lessons are delivered by qualified employees who assist participants during the theoretical and practical parts of the course. Most relations with consumers are managed through territorial retailers and only in few cases by e-mails addressed to specific offices. This aspect (transparency) has an important effect because it also generally increases trust although only up to a certain point (Horvath and Katuscakova, 2015). (2) *Clear benefits:* According to the company, the benefits deriving from attending the organized courses are communicated clearly by the company and the most used channels are the web, brochures and retailers. It is important to consider that utilities sometimes mistakenly present position features as benefits (Honebein and Cammarano, 2011). A clear communication of benefits offered by these courses contributes to increasing customer satisfaction. (3) *Usage of different media and language*: Since there is a

tight relationship between marketing and CE, it is advisable to adopt an integrated marketing communications (IMC) approach (Tafesse and Kitchen, 2016), i.e. involving the blending advertising, personal selling, public relations, direct marketing and sales promotion media channels (Honebein and Cammarano, 2011) in order to disseminate CE. The company uses different media to transmit consumer education concepts (media, brochures, sellers). A relevant role in the communication of educational courses and information about products is played by word-of-mouth, which can have a strong impact on new customer acquisition (Trusov *et al.*, 2009). According to the Marketing Director of the company the usage of different languages allows the company to reach a greater number of consumers. (4) *Continuing CE:* as suggested by Honebein and Cammarano (2011), CE must be designed as a process and not an event. This company adopts this approach, delivering courses every week. This is a very important aspect because it allows the company to satisfy every type of participant and pursue educational objectives. In fact, CE affects customer perceived value in terms of benefits (Ben Youssef *et al.*, 2016b) and, in particular, customer satisfaction (Bonfanti and Brunetti, 2014). (5) *Usage of simple language:* in this company the usage of a simple language is the rule: only information that is considered fundamental for every specific level of course is provided, transmitted in its key points through verbal, visual and hands-on styles. This reflects the rules of simple communication proposed by Honebein and Cammarano (2011): the organization of elements through bullet points and a design that incorporates the three primary learning styles: verbal, visual, and kinesthetic. A relatively simple use of language is considered very important in order to educate and satisfy consumers. (6) *Understanding of customer interests:* the company develops specific courses based on the customers' needs. These are analyzed by observing customers and via continuous interaction with them. In fact, as sustained by Honebein and Cammarano (2011), CE is always constructed on the needs of an audience, and these can be discovered through audience analysis, which should initially be broad in scope, given the limited customer information stored in the information system and the costs of acquiring primary data about customers. The relevance of the contents of the courses delivered by the company is constantly monitored and can contribute to increasing customer satisfaction. Results show a particular attention on the company's part to all dimensions of the CE framework, as proposed in figure 2. According to the company, the dimensions that are most able to affect customer satisfaction are "continuing CE" and "usage of simple language". In the application of these six qualities, the relationship between CE and satisfaction is also emphasized, thus replying also to the second research question ("RQ2. Is Honebein and Cammarano's CE Model appropriate for building customer satisfaction in the coffee sector?). Each of these qualities contributes to developing customer satisfaction in different ways: transparency can positively affect trust, while clear benefits can improve the perception of the company by customers.

Tab. 3: The CE model applied to a major private coffee distributor

- Transparency	- Communication by web, brochures and retailer; simple communicative style; easily accessible info
- Clear explanation of benefits	- Benefits communicated clearly by web, brochures and retailers; the company pays attention to verify the perception of benefits by the customer
- Use of different media and language	- Importance of word-of-mouth
- Continuing CE (not just one educational event)	- Courses delivered every week
- Simple and easy to understand	- Only fundamental concepts, delivered by key points, through verbal, visual and hands-on styles
- Understanding customer interests	- Courses on the basis of the customers' needs; continuous interaction with customers; monitoring

Source: Our own elaboration based on Honebein and Cammarano (2011)

In addition, through "usage of different media and language", the company will be able to reach a higher number of consumers, who are more aware of the company's products, while "continuing CE" allows the company to satisfy different kinds of participants; finally "usage of simple language" makes it easier for participants to understand the content of courses, while "understanding of customer interests" allows it to provide the best solutions for them.

Theoretical Implications

This paper replies to two research questions (1) How can an effective awareness/education program be developed? and (2) How can the Honebein and Cammarano CE model be used in the B2D coffee sector to create customer satisfaction, and is this model appropriate for building customer satisfaction in this sector? It presents various advantages for implementing CE programs. More advantages are indicated, including customer loyalty, participation, satisfaction, retention and clear customer roles. If firms are able to appropriately tackle these challenges, CE tools can result in beneficial outcomes. Appropriate tools (Aubert and Gotteland, 2010; Monnot, 2010, cited in Volle, 2012, pp. 31-32) must be chosen in order to match various variables like customer age (Cole and Gaeth, 1990), expertise (Eisingerich and Bell, 2008), and participation levels (Bitner *et al.*, 1997).

Managerial Implications

The main managerial implications concerning these initial case studies may be summarized as follows:

- users/customers don't always understand the full value of your product or service. In this case, educating them becomes an essential remedy in addressing this deficiency / gap;

- through the School of Coffee, Management refocused the entire company on helping Clients/Distributors realize the extensive value of the offered product that they hadn't realized to date, and revolutionized the customer experience and value;
- the School of Coffee is now perceived and valued as a marketing tool that provides ongoing value via customer insights. By educating its customers, the company managed to achieve more frequent engagement for longer periods of time;
- the attention shown by this firm toward educational programs can increase its reputation, so these kinds of initiatives may be considered in programs of brand reinforcement

Furthermore, with reference to the second case study, the present paper shows how CE can increase customer skills satisfactions. The development of company knowledge by customers, along with subsequent interaction can strengthen relationship marketing and facilitate the product/service co-creation process. If companies employ CE they may be able to enhance effectiveness. This would allow companies to verify if they are using the right channels to communicate with their customers, and if/or the language used during education is suitable for the participants. Furthermore, an increased adoption of social networks could help companies obtain fast and continuous feedback by customers (Vrontis *et al.*, 2015). Finally, companies should consider investing in CE and see it as a tool that, if adequately incorporated, can lead to customer satisfaction and this can result, in a second step, in increased customer loyalty.

6. Conclusions

By juxtaposing concepts from CE, consumer behavior and satisfaction, this exploratory paper shows how to build an effective awareness/education program CE in the coffee industry and verifies how CE can lead to improved customer satisfaction and how customers find value in an education sector that seems to be involved in these types of programs.

With regard to RQ1, results show how the main effects of these initiatives affect loyalty and show a relevant increase. This confirms the hypothesis supported by Eisingerich and Bell (2006). Furthermore, important effects are also registered in terms of costs reduction: in fact, thee programs promote a greater knowledge of products (Challagalla *et al.*, 2009) and need less assistance; this results, as observed by Intrepid Learning Solutions (2010), in a reduction of costs.

It is important to also emphasize an increase in reputation. This is also thanks to customers' understanding of the full potential of the products (Bell and Eisingerich, 2007, p. 470), given that customer wants to know what to expect (Bitner *et al.*, 1994). This attention of the company to educational issues is well perceived by distributors, who consider it very important in delivering the best product possible to their customers. In this way, distributors seem to have clearly understood the benefits that this kind of school can bring and improve the image of the firm. Finally, this company seems to adapt well to the 5 M Model, achieving success with its

online or face-to-face educational marketing activity (Ben Youssef *et al.*, 2016a).

With regard to RQ2, the paper provides an adaptation of the CE model by Honebein and Cammarano (2011) and illustrates how this can be considered and used in a B2D sector to enhance customer learning and satisfaction. Also, by means of the case study of a major private coffee distributor and further research, we emphasize the role played by six dimensions (as shown in Figures 1 and 2) in order to enhance customer satisfaction. Particular attention is paid to a continuing CE process, (inter alia … considering it as a process and not a single event) and to the language, i.e. the language used in communication must be simple both at the qualitative (verbal, visual, etc.) and quantitative (bullet points) levels.

The paper provides a helpful and illuminating approach to designing CE in the Italian coffee B2D market. The findings show how transparencies, simple communication, clear benefits, CE, understanding of customer interests and usage of simple language are important features for a successful CE program.

In general, companies in this sector could embrace these qualities that may underpin effective, efficient and appealing CE. Prior to necessary further research, it is felt that this adapted model could become a referential framework for B2D firms interested in developing educational programs in order to increase customer satisfaction. From a theoretical point of view, this paper shows how a generic CE model can be applied to a specific industry. In addition, it maps the qualities supported by the literature that are confirmed by the case studies. It also demonstrates how CE qualities can achieve the needed objectives: transparency can increase trust and benefits, communicating well can achieve clarity via customers, using different media and languages extends customer reach, continuing CE leads to customer satisfaction, usage of simple language facilitates the understanding of concepts by participants, and the understanding of customer interests via market analysis allows a company to provide the necessary materials in the right ways and at the right time.

7. Limits

Despite the contribution provided by the paper, it is an exploratory study that needs to be applied to a larger number of cases at an Italian and European level.

In addition, further empirical testing via quantitative techniques could be applied in order to test the two research questions.

Furthermore, with reference both to the 5 M CE Model and to the Honebein and Cammarano Model, the paper only proposes an application/adaptation of existent models to specific cases without providing an estimate of how much the different dimensions affect the coffee industry. However, these limits could be considered as the starting point for future research.

In addition, firms should investigate their customer base regarding their preferences for technical and detailed explanations, or whether or

not customers prefer individual training approaches to get the best results. More research is needed to empirically test and construct frameworks for both CE models and the different types of CE.

References

AUBERT B., KHOURY G., JABER R. (2005), "Enhancing customer relationships through customer education: an exploratory study", in Chapelet B., Awajan A. (Eds) *Proceedings of the first international conference on e-business and e-learning,* (pp. 194-201), Amman.

AUBERT B. (2006), *Customer education: definition, measures and effects on customer satisfaction*, Newcastle University, UK.

AUBERT B. (2008), "Toward a Better Understanding of the Effects of Customer Education on Usage Behavior and Satisfaction", A*dvances in Consumer Research*, vol. 35, pp. 920-921.

AUBERT B., GOTTELAND D. (2010), "Former les Consommateurs à l'usage des Produits: Intérêt et Principes de Mise en Œuvre", *Décisions Marketing*, vol. 59, n. 3 pp. 7-16.

BELL S.J., AUH S., EISINGERICH A.B. (2017), "Unraveling the Customer Education Paradox: When, and How, Should Firms Educate Their Customers?", *Journal of Service Research*, vol. 20, n. 3, pp. 1-16.

BELL S.J., EISINGERICH A.B. (2007), "Perceived Service Quality and Customer Trust: Does Enhancing Customers' Service Knowledge Matter?", *Journal of Service Research*, vol. 10, n. 3, pp. 256-268.

BEN YOUSSEF K., VIASSONE M., LEROUX E. (2016a), "Goals, strategies and expected return on investment of customer education: an exploratory case study", in *The 4th International Conference on Marketing and Business Development (MBD)*, Bucharest University of Economic Studies, June 30th - July 2nd 2016.

BEN YOUSSEF K., VIASSONE M., KITCHEN P. (2016b), "How can customer education in the coffee sector increase customer satisfaction?", in *9th EuroMed Conference of the EuroMed Academy of Business Conference Readings Book Proceedings Innovation, Entrepreneurship and Digital Ecosystems*, pp. 169-183.

BITNER M., BOOMS B., MOHR L. (1994), "Critical Service Encounters: The Employee's Viewpoint", *Journal of Marketing*, vol. 58, n. 4, pp. 95-106.

BITNER M.J., FARANDA W.T., HUBBERT A.R, ZEITHAML V.A. (1997), "Customer contributions and roles in service delivery", *International Journal of Service Industry Management*, vol. 8, n. 3, pp. 193-206.

BLOOM B.S. (1956), *Taxonomy of educational objectives, the classification of educational goals - handbook i, cognitive domain*, McKay, New York.

BONFANTI A., BRUNETTI F. (2014), "Effects of Customer Education in Terms of Customer Perceived Value: The Role of Customer Evaluation Skills", *Sinergie Italian Journal of Management*, vol. 33, n. 97, pp. 219-238.

BROMLEY D.B. (1986), *The Case-Study Method in Psychology and Related Disciplines,* Wiley, Chichester, Great Britain.

BURTON D. (2002), "Customer Education and Service Quality: Conceptual Issues and Practical Implications", *Journal of Services Marketing,* vol. 16, n. 2, pp. 125-142.

CHALLAGALLA G., VENKATESH R., KOHLI A.K. (2009), "Proactive Postsales Service: When and Why Does It Pay Off?", *Journal of Marketing*, vol. 73, n. March, pp. 70-87.

COLE C.A., GAETH G.J. (1990), "Cognitive and age-related differences in the ability to use nutritional information in a complex environment", *Journal of Marketing Research*, vol. 27, n. 2, pp. 175-184.

DAMALI U., MILLER J.L., FREDENDALL L.D., MOORE D., DYE C.J. (2016), "Co-Creating Value Using Customer Training and Education in a Healthcare Service Design", *Journal of Operations Management*, vol. 47-48, n. November, pp. 80-97.

EISINGERICH A., BELL S. (2006), "Relationship Marketing in the Financial Service Industry: The Importance of Customer Education, Participation and Problem Management for Customer Loyalty", *Journal of Financial Services Marketing*, vol. 10, n. 4, pp. 86-97.

EISINGERICH A., BELL S. (2007), "Maintaining Customer Relationships in High Credence Services", *Journal of Service Marketing*, vol. 21, n. 4, pp. 253-262.

EISINGERICH A., BELL S. (2008), "Perceived Service Quality and Customer Trust: Does Enhancing Customers' Service Knowledge Matter?", *Journal of Service Research*, vol. 10, n. 3 , pp. 256-268.

ELSEVIER CLINICAL SOLUTIONS (2015), "How to Develop and Use Effective Patient/Consumer Education", *Elsevier White Paper*, pp. 1-10.

FORBES (2015), https://www.forbes.com/sites/williamcraig/2015/04/10/dont-market-to-your-customers-educate-them-instead/2/#6ff5ea2827cb

GILBERT T.F. (1978), *Human competence: Engineering worthy performance*, McGraw-Hill, New York.

HO A., SHARMA P., HOSIE P. (2015), "Exploring Customers' Zone of Tolerance for B2B Professional Service Quality", J*ournal of Services Marketing,* vol. 29, n. 5, pp. 380-392.

HONEBEIN P.C., CAMMARANO R.F. (2011), "The five Qualities of Effective Smart Grid Customer Education", *Metering International*, vol. March, n. 1, pp. 24-29.

HONEBEIN P.C., CAMMARANO R.F. (2005), *Creating do-it-yourself customers,* Thomson Texere, Natorp, OH.

HORVATH R., KATUSCAKOVA D. (2015), "Transparency and trust: The case of the European Central Bank", *IOS Working Papers*, n. 352, pp. 1-19.

KITCHEN P.J. (2017), "Integrated Marketing Communications: Evolution, Current Status, Future Developments", *European Journal of Marketing*, in press.

LIU Y. (2006), "Word of Mouth For Movies: Its Dynamics and Impact on Box Office Revenue", *Journal of Marketing*, vol. 70, n. July, pp. 74-89.

MAGGIONI V., DEL GIUDICE M. (2011). "Relazioni sistemiche tra imprenditorialità interna e gemmazione d'impresa: una ricerca empirica sulla natura cognitiva delle nuove imprese", *Sinergie*, n. 71, pp. 171-197.

MONNOT E. (2010), *L'Expérience d'apprentissage du client : la première utilisation d'un produit-service. Thèse de Doctorat en Sciences de Gestion*, Université Paris-Dauphine, Paris, France.

PATTON M.Q. (1987), *How to use qualitative methods in evaluation,* Sage Publications, Inc., California.

SHARMA N., PATTERSON P. G. (1999), "The Impact of Communication Effectiveness and Service Quality on Relationship Commitment in Consumer, Professional Service", *Journal of Service Marketing,* vol. 13, n. 2, pp. 151-170.

SUH M., GREENE H., ISRAILOVA B., RHO T. (2015), "The Impact of Customer Education on Customer Loyalty through Service Quality", *Services Marketing Quarterly*, vol. 36, n. 3, pp. 261-280.

TAFESSE W., KITCHEN P.J. (2016), "IMC - An Integrative Review", *International Journal of Advertising,* published online January.

TEMERAK M.S.A.H., WINKLHOFER H., HIBBERT S. (2009), "Managing Customer Participation Through Customer Education", *S-D Logic Workshop 2009*, pp. 1-36.

THRASSOU A., VRONTIS D. (2009). "A new consumer relationship model: the marketing communications application", *Journal of Promotion Management,* vol. 15, n. 4, pp. 499-521.

THRASSOU A., VRONTIS D., BRESCIANI S. (2014). "Strategic reflexivity in the hotel industry–a value-based analysis", *World Review of Entrepreneurship, Management and Sustainable Development*, vol. 10, n. 1-2, pp. 352-371.

TRUSOV M., BUCKLIN R.E., PAUWELS K. (2009), "Effects of Word-of-Mouth Versus Traditional Marketing: Findings from an Internet Social Networking Site", *Journal of Marketing*, vol. 73, n. 5, pp. 90-102.

VRONTIS D., VIASSONE M., THRASSOU A. (2015). "The role and potential of social networks sites in tertiary education", *Sinergie*, vol. 33, n. 97, pp. 55-82.

VIGOLO V., BRUNETTI F., BONFANTI A. (2016), "Customer Education Programs: an Investigation in Italian Opera Theatres and Foundations", in *19th Toulon-Verona International Conference Proceedings,* pp. 485-502.

VOLLE P. (2012), *Stratégie clients*, Pearson, France.

VON HIPPEL E. (1986), "Lead Users: A Source of Novel Product Concepts", *Management Science,* vol. 32, n. 7, pp. 791-805.

VRABIUTA M. (2014), "Customer Education Revolution - A Managerial Approach", *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, vol. 116, n. February, pp. 4401-4405

YIN R.K. (2009), *Case study research: design and methods,* (4th ed.), Sage, Thousand Oaks, CA.

YIN R. (2012), *Applications of case study research*, (3rd ed.), SAGE Publications, Thousand Oaks, CA.

YOUNG M.R. (2005), "The Motivational Effects of the Classroom Environment in Facilitating Self-Regulated Learning", *Journal of Marketing Education*, vol. 27, n. 1, pp. 25-40.

ZAHO X., MATTILA A., TAO L. (2008), "The role of post-training self-efficacy in customers use of self service technologies," *International Journal of Service Industry Management*, vol. 19, n. 4, pp. 492-505.

ZHOU L., WHITLA P. (2013), "How Negative Celebrity Publicity Influences Consumer Attitudes: The Mediating Role of Moral Reputation", *Journal of Business Research*, vol. 66, n. 8, pp. 1013-1020.

Web sites

http://www.diemmecaffe.com/en, (Accessed on March 20th 2016).

http://www.orocaffe.com/en, (Accessed on April 15th 2016).
http://www.edisonfoundation.net/iee/Documents/Honebein_IEE_SocialRoadmap_8-16-10.pdf
https://www.smartgrid.gov/files/NV_Energy_CCP_Handbook_March_2013_FINAL.pdf
http://www.erc.or.th/ERCWeb2/Upload/Document/Honebein_ERCSmarGridWorkshop_Presentation_120220%20March%201%202012.pdf (Accessed on March 20th 2016).
https://www.intrepidlearning.com/business-priorities/customer-education

Facebook pages

https://www.facebook.com/DiemmeCaffe/?fref=ts, (Accessed on March 20th 2016).
https://www.facebook.com/espressoorocaffe/?fref=ts,(Accessed on April 15th 2016).

Academic or professional position and contacts

Kamel Ben Youssef
Associate Professor of Marketing
University of Paris Nanterre - France
e-mail: kbenyoussef@parisnanterre.fr

Milena Viassone
Associate Professor of Management
University of Turin - Italy
e-mail: milena.viassone@unito.it

Philip Kitchen
Full Professor of Marketing
Salford University UK and Affiliate Professor, Rennes School of Business - France
e-mail: P.J.Kitchen@Salford.ac.uk

sinergie
italian journal of management

ISSN 0393-5108
DOI 10.7433/s105.2018.03
pp. 43-60

FONDAZIONE CUEIM

Competing through consonance: a stakeholder engagement view of corporate relational environment[1]

Received
6th February 2017
Revised
6th April 2017
Accepted
27th April 2017

Marialuisa Saviano - Francesco Caputo - Jens Mueller
Zhanna Belyaeva

Abstract

Purpose of the paper: *The purpose of this paper is to investigate companies' approach to market relationships with the aim of highlighting the positive impact of consonance-oriented strategies of stakeholder engagement.*

Methodology: *Building upon a VSA view (Barile et al., 2015a) of stakeholder engagement that highlights the relevance of stakeholders' perceptions of companies' alignment with them, exploratory research is conducted using Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) with reference to a sample of stakeholders of 37 Italian Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs). The aim is to verify possible relationships between companies' ability to be perceived as aligned with stakeholders' expectations and their market share (MS).*

Results: *This paper offers evidence of a positive relationship between companies' ability to be perceived as aligned with stakeholders' expectations and their market share (MS), highlighting advantages for companies to actively embrace stakeholders' engagement through consonance-oriented relational strategies.*

Research limitations: *The research is conducted with reference to a non-random sample of companies. Findings herein should be verified with reference to a random sample and by adopting different qualitative and quantitative methodologies.*

Practical implications: *The paper shows the positive impact on performances of companies' capabilities to establish consonant relationships with their stakeholders in order to be perceived as aligned with their expectations.*

Originality of the paper: *The paper contributes to previous studies on the topic of stakeholder engagement identifying elements upon which companies may act to build effective relational strategies with the aim of improving companies' economic performance. The study also contributes to discussion about the VSA consonance/competitiveness dilemma providing empirical evidence of effectiveness of consonance-oriented strategies.*

Key words: stakeholder engagement; relationships; consonance; Italian SMEs; structural equation modelling; Viable Systems Approach (VSA).

[1] This paper is a revised and expanded version of a paper entitled "A focus on company-stakeholder relationships in the light of the stakeholder engagement framework" presented at *9th Annual EuroMed Conference*, Varsavia, 14-16 September 2016.

sinergie
italian journal of management
Vol. 36, N. 105, 2018

1. Introduction

In recent decades an increasing competitiveness has affected the economic history of our world (Reiner, 2009). Companies have progressively focused their attention on the acquisition of (tangible and intangible) resources with the aim of increasing their competitive advantages (Hunt and Morgan, 1995; Hooley *et al.*, 1998; Barney, 2001). Economic actors have developed individualistic approaches inspired by a strict competitive market view in which sum zero logics prevail (Vervest *et al.*, 2005; Del Giudice *et al.*, 2016; Saviano *et al.*, 2016a).

Nowadays, this traditional market logic is progressively showing an increasing weakness in supporting companies' survival and long-term competitiveness as consequences of several social and economic changes such as globalisation, development of Information and Communication Technology (ICT), and evolution of consumers' behaviours (Tamásy and Taylor, 2008; Caputo and Walletzky, 2017). Besides the new competencies and capabilities that are required by the market for companies that aim to survive (Gibbert *et al.*, 2002; Payne and Frow, 2005), a new relational approach is necessary to deal with a changing market context that is showing an *ecosystemic* functioning (Vargo and Akaka, 2012; Saviano and Caputo, 2013; Barile *et al.*, 2015b; Saviano *et al.*, 2016b) as a complex of actors capable of influencing individual companies' strategies and behaviours (Starkey and Madan, 2001). In such a scenario, companies cannot be focused only on the adaptation to market requests based on individualistic strategies; rather, they need to consider the challenge of a collaborative environment that is becoming an imperative (Vargo *et al.*, 2008; Del Giudice *et al.*, 2012; Caputo, 2018).

Both researchers and practitioners are increasingly aware of the need to rethink the approach to markets' re-interpreting the bases of competitiveness according to a relational logic (Gummesson, 2011; Payne *et al.*, 2008; Di Fatta *et al.*, 2016). Several contributions have been provided by managerial and marketing studies about partnerships (Lamming, 1993), relational approaches (Grönroos, 1994) and the role of ICT (Leu *et al.*, 2004) in defining effective relational strategies to ensure companies' long-term survival. An ongoing debate has started in the stream of studies on the *Viable Systems Approach* (*vSA*) relative to a decisional dilemma that posits *competitiveness* and consonance as alternative or potentially convergent views of relationships with markets (Barile *et al.*, 2012, 2018; Golinelli, 2010; Saviano, 2012).

Many contributions have provided techniques and tools for supporting the adoption of collaborative strategies (Cummings and Worley, 2014; Saviano *et al.*, 2017a), highlighting the opportunities offered by collaboration within a networked environment (Hansen and Nohria, 2004) and emphasising the role of strategies in ensuring the emergence of long-term relationships (Cousins, 2002).

Despite the relevance of these contributions, a 'transactional logic' still appears to dominate in practice and to be interpreted in the theory of managerial and marketing studies as a 'means' to achieve companies' aims and improve companies' power (Kanter, 2011), instead of a new logic of

exchange. In fact, the implementation of sharing strategies based on win-win logics and on value co-creation appears to be an unsolved challenge in companies' approaches (Grönroos and Ravald, 2011; Caputo *et al.*, 2016b).

Agreeing that "one way to succeed in a highly competitive globalised economy is to co-operate" (Svendsen, 1998, p. 1), this paper embraces a view of competitiveness not 'opposite to' but 'based on' consonance as a relational strategy inspired by the adoption of win-win logics in order to build effective relationships with relevant stakeholders and be perceived as aligned to their expectations. Accordingly, in order to contribute to discussion about the effectiveness of a consonance-oriented relational strategy and the way companies can implement such an approach, the paper adopts the stakeholder engagement framework as a key literature reference to investigate how companies' can implement an effective consonance-oriented strategy by 'engaging' stakeholders in a co-creation relational context.

Specifically, the paper proposes exploratory research on a sample of Italian Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) with the aim of testing via Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) if there are positive relationships between a number of dimensions considered relevant by managerial and marketing studies in building collaborative and relational approaches between companies and stakeholders, and companies' market share (MS).

The paper is structured as follows: in section 2, a brief description of the conceptual framework developed to define the premises for stakeholder engagement is provided and key hypotheses are formulated; in section 3, the methodology and the research pathway are described; in section 4, the results of the explorative research are presented; in section 5, the findings are discussed both from a theoretical and a practical point of view; in conclusion, in section 6, the limitations of the study are highlighted together with future directions for research.

2. Conceptual framework and hypotheses development

As underlined by Araújo and Gava (2012), the radical changes in social and economic dynamics are requiring companies to develop aligned instruments, models and managerial approaches. The traditional transactional view is showing a decreasing capability of supporting decision makers in defining strategies capable of catching and satisfying stakeholders' expectations (Bueren *et al.*, 2005); hence, the viable survival of many organisations is today uncertain (Burke, 2013).

Nowadays, companies that want to survive in the emerging social and economic scenario must adopt a radical change in perspective, shifting from individualistic win-lose to collective win-win logics (Golinelli *et al.*, 2012). With the aim of supporting companies in realising this change, many researchers have tried to define possible guidelines to increase the opportunities for collaboration between companies and their stakeholders (West *et al.*, 2014).

The way collaboration is conceived and realised, as well as its outcomes, however, depends on the true logic that lies behind it. In the research stream

of the *Viable Systems Approach* (*vSA*), the collaborative view is interpreted through the consonance-resonance framework (Barile, 2009a). Essentially, any kind of systemic entity (individuals and organisations) strives to remain viable in its context by establishing consonant relationships with relevant stakeholders (called suprasystems). This relational consonance is the necessary condition for (co)-creating value, i.e. generating a resonance outcome (Barile and Saviano, 2013).

Among the rich literature that proposes collaborative approaches to management and marketing, the research stream on stakeholder engagement (Devinney *et al.*, 2013; Muff, 2014; Caputo, 2016) represents one of the frameworks towards which the consonance approach best converges. By overcoming the logic of Corporate Social Responsibility which may still reveal a 'market' logic, the stakeholder engagement approach has the merit of having highlighted that companies must be built and managed taking into account and possibly complying with expectations and interests of legitimate stakeholders (Aguinis and Glavas, 2012). The effectiveness of such an approach to relationships derives from the evidence that companies' performances are related to companies' ability to positively engage stakeholders in their activities (Greenwood, 2007).

More specifically, building on the conceptual framework of Stakeholder Theory (Freeman, 1984), stakeholder engagement investigates the domain of collaboration between companies and stakeholders in the case in which the claims of stakeholders are not fully specified (Klein *et al.*, 2013). Accordingly, the stakeholder engagement approach states that an efficient, effective and suitable collaboration between companies and stakeholders requires the identification and understanding of the aims of stakeholders and the types of purpose that can be considered legitimate and aligned with a company's perspective (Brown and Forster, 2013). Re-interpreted through the lens of the VSA (Barile, 2009b; Barile and Saviano, 2013), the stakeholder engagement approach highlights the capability of companies to improve the quality of stakeholder engagement, which requires deep understanding of the cognitive dimensions and strong beliefs that influence stakeholders' behaviours and actions, as well as companies' perspectives (Del Giudice *et al.*, 2016).

Among the key advancements of the stakeholder engagement research stream, Hill *et al.* (2014) posit the relevance of stakeholders' perceptions about companies' strategies and actions and their role in influencing the relationship between companies and stakeholders. In this respect, Carroll and Buchholtz (2014) underline that in order to improve their performances through a stakeholder engagement approach, companies are required not only to understand and satisfy stakeholders' expectations but also to do this by developing acceptable approaches and paths for stakeholders. Interestingly to the aim of this work, Herrera (2015) highlights that stakeholder engagement is a multi-level process that impacts on companies' performance only if stakeholders perceive it to be aligned with companies' visions and organisational models.

From a *vSA* consonance perspective, stakeholders' perceptions of the companies' alignment with their aims, strong beliefs and behaviours is

fundamental to providing evidence of the effectiveness of the stakeholder engagement strategy. In order to investigate this relationship, we posit the following hypothesis:

H_1: There is a positive relationship between stakeholders' perceptions about companies' alignment with their aims, strong beliefs, and behaviours, and the companies' MS.

The conceptual domain of stakeholder engagement appears to be an articulated complex of standpoints directed to investigating the multiple dimensions interested in the relationship between companies and stakeholders (Noland and Phillips, 2010). Despite some divergences in perspective, a general part of the contributions provided in this domain underlines the need for companies to shift from a transactional to a collaborative perspective in their relationships with stakeholders (Vos and Achterkamp, 2015). Specifically, they focus attention on the role that stakeholders might have in the definition and implementation of companies' strategies and behaviours (Rothaermel, 2015). However, stakeholders cannot be considered as simple external (f)actors that influence companies' decisions. Stakeholders may play a more active part in companies' processes as 'filters' through market dynamics and guiding companies towards a closer alignment with the market (Brandon and Fukunaga, 2013). As shown by sociological studies, the evolution of stakeholders' power is affecting the definition of suitable competitive drivers for social and economic organisations (Bundy *et al.*, 2013). The boundaries between companies and stakeholders are progressively disappearing and companies should rebuild their market approaches if they want to survive (Fernandez-Feijoo *et al.*, 2014). Embracing these views about the relevance of an appropriate stakeholder engagement strategy, the *vSa* provides a 'relational' concept and approach - that of consonance - through which effective relationships with stakeholders that are considered as potentially more impactful on the company's performance (relevant suprasystems), can be established.

vSa agrees that the companies' competitiveness and performances are strictly linked to their ability to develop strong stakeholder engagement. Recognising the general validity of this assumption, it is necessary to more concretely identify possible pathways to support companies in building strong relationships with stakeholders. With the aim of enriching previous contributions in this domain, interesting stimuli can be derived from the distinction between information sharing and reciprocal understanding proposed and discussed by Barile *et al.* (2014b) and further discussed in Caputo *et al.* (2016a).

With reference to this interpretative proposal, Barile *et al.* (2014a, 2015b) suggest a constructivist view by recognising the relevance of adopting individual perspectives of interacting actors to assess reciprocal understanding based on information sharing (Tashman and Raelin, 2013). Focusing attention on the cognitive and psychological dimensions that affect individual perceptions, it is possible to overcome the limitations of the dominant transactional approach and build the required relational conditions for a long-term relationship (Cornelissen, 2014), with the

desired effect of increasing companies' economic performances (Manetti, 2011).

As a necessary condition for the creation of an effective relationship, Shannon (1949) recalls that each system communicates with its market, defining a framework that includes an information source, a transmitter, a channel, a receiver and a destination. Adopting both the viewpoints of the sender and the receiver, this communication process can be read in terms of information sharing and appears a necessary (although not sufficient) condition for reciprocal understanding, hence engagement.

The impact of communication on companies' performances (Garvey, 2014; Caputo *et al.*, 2017) has been deeply investigated in literature adopting various perspectives (sociological, psychological and managerial) (Jackson, 2012). All these contributions agree on the relevance of companies' communication as a means of providing effective answers to stakeholders' requests for information about companies' strategies and activities (Siano *et al.*, 2013). The relevance of information sharing in terms of a positive correlation between companies' ability to acquire/share information from/with stakeholders and economic performance has been highlighted via qualitative and quantitative researchers (Saviano and Caputo, 2012; Slabbert and Barker, 2014; Formisano *et al.*, 2015).

The companies' attention towards the information requests from stakeholder is increased over time (Carroll, 2015). However, the strong correlation between companies' communication and companies' economic performances doesn't seem to be only the consequence of the companies' ability to satisfy stakeholders' requests (Scandelius and Cohen, 2016; Ferraris and Grieco, 2015): the *vSa* view of stakeholder engagement suggests to shift the focus on the cognitive level of the relationship between companies and stakeholders to better capture the relevance of communication considering in particular the psychological aspects (Barile, 2009a; Thorson and Moore, 2013; Evangelista *et al.*, 2016).

Accordingly, it is possible to assume that the positive effect on performances of companies' communication with stakeholders is linked to the fact that stakeholders have the opportunity to verify if there are the expected conditions of a company's alignment with their expectations (Siano, 2012). Clearly, communication is a relevant leverage for stakeholder engagement; however, its positive effect on companies' economic performance requires basic conditions to be respected (Vernuccio *et al.*, 2012). Specifically, according to Cornelissen (2014), companies should inform stakeholders by planning and implementing transparent information flows. In the same direction, Locker and Kaczmarek (2013), posit that companies' communication positively affects stakeholder engagement and companies' economic performance, only if companies are able to ensure a high standard in quality and affordability of the information shared. In essence, communication can be considered an effective driver in influencing stakeholders' evaluations of companies (Gustafsson *et al.*, 2012), supporting companies' stakeholder engagement (Holtzhausen and Zerfass, 2014) and improving companies' economic performance only if information (data) shared by the companies is positively evaluated by stakeholders. Accordingly, the following hypotheses can be formulated:

H_2: There is a positive relationship between stakeholders' perceptions about companies' ability to share qualitative, transparent and affordable information about their strategies, actions and aims, and companies' MS.

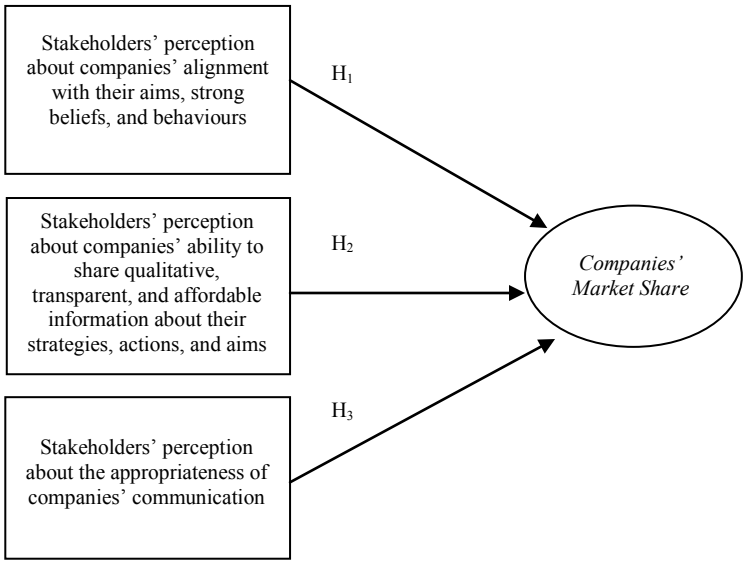
H_3: There is a positive relationship between stakeholders' perceptions about the appropriateness of companies' communication and companies' MS.

3. Methodology and research pathway

3.1 Variables and structural model

This research is based on a questionnaire survey developed on the basis of managerial, organisational and marketing contributions about stakeholder engagement and companies' communication. The structural model consists of three independent and one dependent variables, as shown in Figure 1.

Fig. 1: The Structural Conceptual Model



Source: Authors' elaboration.

Independent variables: (1) Stakeholders' perceptions about companies' alignment with their aims, strong beliefs and behaviours; (2) Stakeholders' perceptions about companies' ability to share qualitative, transparent and affordable data about their strategies, actions and aims; (3) Stakeholders' perceptions about the appropriateness of companies' communication, measured using questions scaled through a five-point Likert scale in which 1 means 'strongly disagree' and 5 means 'strongly agree', while the dependent variable - companies' market share - is defined using the AIDA database (aida.bvdinfo.com).

The order of the questions used to measure the independent variables was randomised to avoid any order bias.

3.2 Sample and Data collection

The research was conducted with reference to a sample of Italian SMEs located in the Campania Region (Italy). The choice to focus the research on SMEs located in a specific Italian region is motivated by the increasing attention that these companies are paying to developing communication strategies and paths directed at increasing stakeholder engagement (Banca d'Italia, 2015).

Among the 35,274 SMEs located in the Campania Region (ISTAT, 2011), a non-random sample of 37 companies from different sectors was selected to carry out an exploratory analysis via a questionnaire survey to investigate the perceptions and opinions of their stakeholders. The questionnaires were submitted directly to a group of stakeholders with the co-operation of the human resources departments of the companies included in the sample.

According to the finality of the research, the principal aim of the survey was to acquire as much information as possible on stakeholders' opinions and perspectives, therefore, stakeholders were not preventively selected. In the month of April (2016), 747 questionnaires were submitted and 432 completed. After a first review of the contents, 37 questionnaires were excluded because they were incomplete. Finally, 278 questionnaires were included in the research (response rate 64.35%).

Stakeholders included in the research are composed as shown in Table 1:

Tab. 1: Stakeholders that have responded to the survey

Category	Number	Perceptual
Male	187	67,27%
Female	91	32,73%
	278	100%
Client	116	41,73%
Suppliers	74	26,62%
Employees	52	18,71%
Public institutions	27	9,71%
Shareholders	7	2,52%
Competitors	2	0,72%
	278	100%

Source: Authors' elaboration.

As a first step to assess non-response bias, we compared the distribution of the responses with the corresponding distribution of the submitted questionnaires. As a chi-square test indicated that the pattern of responses reflected the sample frame; then there is no level bias related to response rates. As a second step, we compared early with late respondents (Li and Calantone, 1998). The first 75% of returned surveys were classified as 'early respondents' (N = 208). The last 25% were considered 'late respondents'

(N = 70). We analysed the responses of the two groups and have not found significant differences.

4. Results

4.1 Reliability and convergent validity

Table 2 reports Cronbach's alpha (α), Composite Reliability (CR) and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) coefficients for the investigated independent variables and items. According to Hinkin (1995) the criterion of reliability is satisfied in the presence of an α coefficient equal or greater than 0.7. At the same time, Hair *et al.* (2010) affirm that the model can be considered convergent if the CR is higher than 0.7 and the AVE is higher than 0.5.

Tab. 2: Reliability and convergent validity

Independent variables	Items	α	CR	AVE
Stakeholders' perception about companies' alignment with their aims, strong beliefs, and behaviours	CA_1	0.719	0.781	0.536
	CA_2	0.803		
	CA_3	0.903		
	CA_4	0.754		
	CA_5	0.807		
	CA_6	0.732		
	CA_7	0.917		
	CA_8	0.881		
	CA_9	0.731		
	CA_{10}	0.702		
Stakeholders' perception about companies' ability to share qualitative, transparent, and affordable information about their strategies, actions, and aims	CS_1	0.772	0.792	0.645
	CS_2	0.836		
	CS_3	0.932		
	CS_4	0.902		
	CS_5	0.749		
	CS_6	0.768		
	CS_7	0.731		
	CS_8	0.791		
	CS_9	0.684		
	CS_{10}	0.819		
Stakeholders' perception about the appropriateness of companies' communication	ACC_1	0.763	0.827	0.712
	ACC_2	0.874		
	ACC_3	0.921		
	ACC_4	0.794		
	ACC_5	0.837		
	ACC_6	0.719		
	ACC_7	0.701		
	ACC_8	0.902		
	ACC_9	0.832		
	ACC_{10}	0.707		

Source: Authors' elaboration.

4.2 Testing via Structural Equation Modelling

The hypotheses were tested via Structural Equation Modelling (Ullman and Bentler, 2003) and the results are reported in Table 3. Only the hypotheses with a probability value (P-value) of less than 0.05 were accepted.

Tab. 3: Hypothesis Testing Results

Hypothesis	P-value
H1 (+): Stakeholders' perception about companies' alignment with their aims, strong beliefs, and behaviours → Companies' Market Share	0.038
H2 (+): Stakeholders' perception about companies' ability to share qualitative, transparent, and affordable information about their strategies, actions, and aims → Companies' Market Share	0.025
H3 (+): Stakeholders' perception about the appropriateness of companies' communication → Companies' Market Share	***

Notes: ***: Standardized regression coefficient is significant at the 0.001 level (two-tailed).

Source: Authors' elaboration.

4.3 Fitness indices

Finally, the fitness of the structural model was verified by measuring some indices as reported in Table 4.

Tab. 4: Fitness indexes

Index	Cut-off values	Value
the chi-square-to-degree-of-freedom ratio (χ^2/df)	≥3 (Byrne, 2001)	6.27
goodness of fit index (GFI)	> 0.90 (Jöreskog and Sörbom, 1996)	0.93
Tucker–Lewis index (TLI)	> 0.90 (Bentler and Bonett, 1980)	1.03
Incremental fit index (IFI)	> 0.9 (Hu and Bentler, 1999)	1.24

Source: Authors' elaboration.

As shown in Tables 4 and 5, all the hypotheses cannot be rejected and all the cut-off values related to the fitness of the model are respected, therefore the model has been accepted.

5. Discussion

The research illustrated in the previous section clearly shows that there is a positive relationship between the elements identified for building effective stakeholder engagement and companies' market share. Specifically, the results show that there is a positive relationship between stakeholders' perceptions about companies' alignment with their aims, strong beliefs and behaviours, and companies' market share (H_1). This result can be considered as evidence of previous sociological and marketing

studies about the relevance for companies of building an image perceived by stakeholders as aligned with their vision of the world (Scott and Lane, 2000). At the same time, this result emphasises the relevance for companies of building actions directed at reinforcing cognitive relationships with stakeholders in order to overcome the traditional transactional logic with the aim of gaining a defendable competitive advantage (Grönroos, 1997). Acting in this direction, companies can effectively engage stakeholders in the definition and implementation of their strategies and behaviours, improving their market performances and increasing their competitiveness through the collaboration with a network of partners (Pels *et al.*, 2000; Polese *et al.*, 2016; Dominici *et al.*, 2017).

The study also shows that there is a positive relationship between stakeholders' perceptions about companies' ability to share qualitative, transparent and affordable information about their strategies, actions and aims, and companies' market share (H2). This finding underlines the relevance of the quality of information shared in supporting the development of effective companies' strategies for stakeholder engagement (Giacosa *et al.*, 2017). Also in this case, the result can be considered aligned with previous contributions about the role of stakeholders' perceptions about companies' activities and their willingness to be engaged in companies' paths (Bhattacharya *et al.*, 2009). In such a line, it is possible to state that companies' attention to communication flow is a relevant driver on which they may act to improve stakeholder engagement with a positive impact on economic performances (Lawrence, 2002). Moreover, the ability of companies to involve (or at least to give the impression of involving) stakeholders by defining effective communication flow has a relevant influence on stakeholders' perceptions and, subsequently, impacts on the opportunities for companies to define an efficient, effective and sustainable stakeholder engagement (Payne and Calton, 2002; Saviano *et al.*, 2016a, 2017b; Barile *et al.*, 2016; Barile and Saviano, 2017).

Finally, the research shows that there is a positive relationship between stakeholders' perceptions about the appropriateness of companies' communication and companies' market share (H3). This result highlights the relevance for stakeholders of having information on the companies in order to better guide their behaviours and choices (Foster and Jonker, 2005). In stakeholders' engagement view, the companies' availability to share appropriate information with stakeholders can be considered a manifestation of companies' willingness to build collaborative relationships with stakeholders (Carr *et al.*, 2008). In such a perspective, this result shows that perceived appropriateness of information about companies affects stakeholder interaction with companies and, subsequently, the companies' economic performances (Phillipson *et al.*, 2012). This finding can be considered consistent with previous contributions regarding the strategic relevance of communication in defining long-term relationships between companies and stakeholders (Cornelissen, 2014).

6. Final remarks, limitations and future directions for research

The increasing competitiveness that companies must face as a consequence of the evolution in social and economic balances is requiring researchers and practitioners to identify new instruments, models and approaches to improve companies' economic performances and ensure their viability (Barile *et al.*, 2013a, 2015c). Among the multiple contributions provided in this direction, interesting stimuli can be derived from the studies related to the engagement of stakeholders in companies' strategies and actions with the aim of building more favourable conditions for a company's viability (Greenwood, 2007).

By developing strong collaborations with stakeholders, companies can acquire more information about market configurations and dynamics, and they have the opportunity to valorise the resources, competencies and capabilities of a large network of actors (Maak, 2007). However, stakeholder engagement is not an easy outcome to obtain and several necessary conditions need to be satisfied (De Chiara, 2015). As proposed in this paper, companies need to be proactive in developing conditions on which to base strong collaborations with their stakeholders. Companies need to offer stakeholders the opportunity to evaluate whether their behaviours and strategies are aligned with their own perspectives; companies also need to better understand the view of stakeholders in order to identify possible points of contact based on information sharing and reciprocal understanding (Del Giudice and Maggioni, 2014; Di Nauta *et al.*, 2015).

To build an effective approach in the light of stakeholder engagement theory, companies may overcome the limitations of traditional competitive approaches by adopting a collaborative relational approach, based on a win-win logic in which all actors have opportunities to achieve their aims (Noland and Phillips, 2010), as suggested by VSA consonance-orientation (Barile *et al.*, 2013b).

In this context, this paper has tried to enrich previous studies regarding stakeholders' engagement by offering a perspective from which to investigate the necessary conditions for developing a strong collaboration between companies and stakeholders. Although an interpretative proposal and the empirical evidence discussed herein only represents the outcome of an exploratory study, they can be considered as a first step to trace future research pathways in order to better investigate the dynamics of the variables identified, studying a larger sample of companies in different cultural contexts with different methodologies. Indeed, the proposed research and the investigated sample cannot be considered representative of the whole investigated phenomenon because the study is based on a non-random sample of companies and is limited to a specific cultural area. In such a line, the findings herein should be verified using different qualitative and quantitative methodologies and tested developing cross-cultural comparisons.

Despite these limitations, several implications emerge from the study both from theoretical and practical points of view.

Considering, in particular, the theoretical point of view, it is possible to stress the need for:

- developing new models, instruments and approaches capable of supporting decision makers and organisations in studying, understanding and managing cognitive dimensions that influence stakeholders' behaviours and decisions;
- extending the research domain of stakeholders' engagement with the aim of including psychological and cognitive variables that affect both companies' and stakeholders' decisions and behaviours;
- better defining the implications and opportunities related to the correct management of key processes for stakeholders' engagement, such as communication and knowledge management.

From a practical viewpoint, it is possible to stress the need for:

- better investigation and understanding of the perspectives and cognitive models of stakeholders;
- defining pathways to align companies' strategies and behaviours to perspectives and cognitive models of stakeholders;
- paying more attention in all the phases of contact between companies and stakeholders, in particular focusing on the pre-conditions of the emergence of a relationship.

Further opportunities are related to the development of a stakeholder engagement view of a company's relational environment. Therefore, further research is required to explore the articulated domain of stakeholder engagement and its multiple pathways and dynamics. In such a line, possible next steps of research will be targeted to verify the proposed hypotheses with reference to a random sample of companies and stakeholders and through the adoption of different qualitative and quantitative approaches.

References

AGUINIS H., GLAVAS A. (2012), "What we know and don't know about corporate social responsibility a review and research agenda", *Journal of Management*, vol. 38, n. 4, pp. 932-968.

ARAÚJO L., GAVA R. (2012), *Proactive Companies: How to Anticipate Market Changes*, Palgrave Macmillan, New York.

BANCA D'ITALIA (2015), Economie regionali. L'economia della Campania, Banca d'Italia, Roma.

BARILE S. (2009a), *Management sistemico vitale*, Giappichelli, Torino.

BARILE S. (2009b, July), "The dynamic of informative varieties in the processes of decision making", in *The 3rd International Conference on Knowledge Generation, Communication and Management,* Orlando, Florida.

BARILE S., SAVIANO M. (2013), "An introduction to a value co-creation model. viability, syntropy and resonance in dyadic interaction", *Syntropy*, n. 2, pp. 69-89.

BARILE S., SAVIANO M. (2017), "Complexity and Sustainability In Management: Insights From A Systems Perspective", in Barile S., Pellicano M., Polese F. (eds.), *Social dynamics in a systems perspective*, New Economic Windows Book Series, (pp. 39-63), Springer International Publishing.

BARILE S., PELS J., POLESE F., SAVIANO M. (2012), "An introduction to the viable systems approach and its contribution to marketing", *Journal of Business Market Management*, vol. 5, n. 2, pp. 54-78.

BARILE S., CARRUBBO L., IANDOLO F., CAPUTO F. (2013a), "From 'EGO' to 'ECO' in B2B relationships", *Journal of Business Market Management*, vol. 6, n. 4, pp. 228-253.

BARILE S., SAVIANO M., POLESE F., DI NAUTA P. (2013b), "Il rapporto impresa-territorio tra efficienza locale, efficacia di contesto e sostenibilità ambientale", *Sinergie*, n. 90, pp. 25-49.

BARILE S., SAVIANO M., CAPUTO F. (2014a), "A systems view of customer satisfaction", in *National Conference "Excellence in quality, statistical quality control and customer satisfaction",* University Campus "Luigi Einaudi", University of Turin, September 18-19.

BARILE S., SAVIANO M., POLESE F. (2014b), "Information asymmetry and co-creation in health care services", *Australasian Marketing Journal*, vol. 22, n. 3, pp. 205-217.

BARILE S., SAVIANO M., CAPUTO F. (2015a), "How Are Markets Changing? The Emergence of Consumers Market Systems", in Dominici G. (Ed.), *The 3rd International Symposium Advances in Business Management. "Towards Systemic Approach"* (pp. 203-207), Busyness Systems. E-book Series, Avellino.

BARILE S., SAVIANO M., IANDOLO F., CAPUTO F. (2015b), "La dinamica della sostenibilità tra vortici e correnti", in *XXXVII Convegno Nazionale AIDEA Sviluppo, sostenibilità e competitività delle aziende: il contributo degli economisti aziendali*, Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore - Piacenza, September 10-12.

BARILE S., SAVIANO M., SIMONE C. (2015c), "Service economy, knowledge, and the need for T-shaped innovators", *World Wide Web*, vol. 18, n. 4, pp. 1177-1197.

BARILE S., LUSCH R., REYNOSO J., SAVIANO M., SPOHRER J. (2016), "Systems, Networks, and Eco-systems in Service Research", *Journal of Service Management*, vol. 27, n. 4, pp. 652-674.

BARILE S., ESPEJO R., PERKO I., SAVIANO M. (eds.) (2018), *Cybernetics and Systems. Social and Business Decisions, Systems Management Book Series,* Giappichelli-Routledge, London. ISBN 978-1-138-59728-0.

BARNEY J.B. (2001), "Resource-based theories of competitive advantage: A ten-year retrospective on the resource-based view", *Journal of Management,* vol. 27, n. 6, pp. 643-650.

BENTLER P.M., BONETT D.G. (1980), "Significance tests and goodness of fit in the analysis of covariance structures", *Psychological Bulletin*, vol. 88, n. 3, pp. 588-606.

BHATTACHARYA C. B., KORSCHUN D., SEN S. (2009), "Strengthening stakeholder-company relationships through mutually beneficial corporate social responsibility initiatives", *Journal of Business Ethics*, vol. 85, n. 2, pp. 257-272.

BRANDON P.R., FUKUNAGA L.L. (2013), "The state of the empirical research literature on stakeholder involvement in program evaluation", *American Journal of Evaluation*.

BROWN J.A., FORSTER W.R. (2013), "CSR and stakeholder theory: a tale of Adam Smith", *Journal of Business Ethics*, vol. 112, n. 2, pp. 301-312.

BUEREN A., SCHIERHOLZ R., KOLBE L.M., BRENNER W. (2005), "Improving performance of customer-processes with knowledge management", *Business Process Management Journal*, vol. 11, n. 5, pp. 573-588.

BUNDY J., SHROPSHIRE C., BUCHHOLTZ A.K. (2013), "Strategic cognition and issue salience: Toward an explanation of firm responsiveness to stakeholder concerns", *Academy of Management Review*, vol. 38, n. 3, pp. 352-376.

BURKE W.W. (2013), *Organization Change: Theory and Practice: Theory and Practice*, Sage Publications, New York.

BYRNE B.M. (2001), "Structural equation modeling with AMOS, EQS, and LISREL: Comparative approaches to testing for the factorial validity of a measuring instrument", *International Journal of Testing*, vol. 1, n. 1, pp. 55-86.

CAPUTO F. (2016), "A focus on company-stakeholder relationships in the light of the Stakeholder Engagement framework", in Vrontis D., Weber Y., Tsoukatos E. (eds.) *Innovation, Entrepreneurship and Digital Ecosystems* (pp. 455-470), EuroMed press, Cyprus.

CAPUTO F. (2018), *Approccio sistemico e co-creazione di valore in sanità,* Edizione Nuova Cultura, Roma.

CAPUTO F., WALLETZKY L. (2017), "Investigating the users' approach to ICT platforms in the city management", *Systems*, vol. 5, n. 1. doi:10.3390/systems5010001.

CAPUTO F., DEL GIUDICE M., EVANGELISTA F., RUSSO G. (2016a), "Corporate disclosure and intellectual capital. The light side of information asymmetry", *International Journal of Managerial and Financial Accounting,* vol. 8, n. 1, pp. 75-96.

CAPUTO F., EVANGELISTA F., RUSSO G. (2016b), "Information Sharing and Communication Strategies: a Stakeholder Engagement view", in Vrontis D., Weber Y., Tsoukatos E. (eds.) *Innovation, Entrepreneurship and Digital Ecosystems* (pp. 436-442), EuroMed press, Cyprus.

CAPUTO F., EVANGELISTA F., RUSSO G., BUHNOVA B. (2017), "A systems view of companies' communication in online social environment", *Journal of Organizational Transformation and Social Change*, vol. 14, n. 1, pp. 21-38.

CARR D., HOWELLS A., CHANG M., HIRJI N., ENGLISH A. (2008), "An integrated approach to stakeholder engagement", *Healthcare Quarterly* (Toronto, Ont.), vol. 12, pp. 62-70.

CARROLL A., BUCHHOLTZ A. (2014), *Business and society: Ethics, sustainability, and stakeholder management,* Nelson Education, London.

CARROLL C.E. (2015), *The handbook of communication and corporate reputation,* John Wiley and Sons, New York.

CORNELISSEN J. (2014), *Corporate communication: A guide to theory and practice*, Sage, New York.

COUSINS P.D. (2002), "A conceptual model for managing long-term inter-organisational relationships", *European Journal of Purchasing and Supply Management*, vol. 8, n. 2, pp. 71-82.

CUMMINGS T., WORLEY C. (2014), *Organization development and change,* Cengage learning, New York.

DE CHIARA A. (2015), "From Stakeholder Engagement to the Collective-Impact Approach for Sustainability Paths in Complex Problems", *Sinergie Italian Journal of Management*, vol. 33, n. 96, pp. 75-91.

DEL GIUDICE M., AHMAD A., SCUOTTO V., CAPUTO F. (2016), "Influences of Cognitive Dimensions on the Collaborative Entry Mode Choice of Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises", *International Marketing Review*, vol. 34, n. 5 (In press).

DEL GIUDICE M., CAPUTO F., EVANGELISTA F. (2016), "How are decision systems changing? The contribution of social media to the management of decisional liquefaction", *Journal of Decision Systems*, vol. 25, n. 3, pp. 214-226.

DEL GIUDICE M., CARAYANNIS E.G., DELLA PERUTA M.R. (2012), "Culture and cooperative strategies: knowledge management perspectives", in Del Giudice M., Carayannis E.G., Della Peruta M.R. (eds.), *Cross-cultural knowledge management* (pp. 49-62), Springer, New York.

DEL GIUDICE M., MAGGIONI V. (2014), "Managerial practices and operative directions of knowledge management within inter-firm networks: a global view", *Journal of Knowledge Management*, vol. 18 n. 5, pp. 841-846.

DEVINNEY T.M., MCGAHAN A.M., ZOLLO M. (2013), "A research agenda for global stakeholder strategy", *Global Strategy Journal*, vol. 3, n. 4, pp. 325-337.

DI FATTA D., CAPUTO F., EVANGELISTA F., DOMINICI G. (2016), "Small world theory and the World Wide Web: Linking small world properties and website centrality", *International Journal of Markets and Business Systems*, vol. 2, n. 2.

DI NAUTA P., MEROLA B., CAPUTO F., EVANGELISTA, F. (2015), "Reflections on the Role of University to Face the Challenges of Knowledge Society for the Local Economic Development", *Journal of the Knowledge Economy*, pp. 1-19.

DOMINICI G., YOLLES M., CAPUTO F. (2017), "Decoding the dynamics of value cocreation in consumer tribes. An Agency Theory approach", *Cybernetics and Systems. An International Journal*, vol. 48, n. 2, pp. 84-101.

EVANGELISTA F., CAPUTO F., RUSSO G., BUHNOVA B. (2016), "Voluntary corporate disclosure in the Era of Social Media", in Caputo F. (Ed.), *The 4rd International Symposium Advances in Business Management. "Towards Systemic Approach"* (pp. 124-128), Business Systems, E-book series, Avellino.

FERNANDEZ-FEIJOO B., ROMERO S., RUIZ S. (2014), "Commitment to corporate social responsibility measured through global reporting initiative reporting: Factors affecting the behavior of companies", *Journal of Cleaner Production,* vol. 81, pp. 244-254.

FERRARIS A., GRIECO C. (2015), "The Role of the Innovation Catalyst in Social Innovation - an Italian Case Study", *Sinergie Italian Journal of Management*, vol. 33 n. 97, pp. 127-144.

FORMISANO V., CAPUTO F., D'AMORE R. (2015), "Tratti evolutivi della società della conoscenza: il contributo degli studi sulle reti nella prospettiva sistemica", *Esperienze d'impresa*, vol. 2, n. 2015, pp. 73-94.

FOSTER D., JONKER J. (2005), "Stakeholder relationships: the dialogue of engagement", *Corporate Governance: The international journal of business in society*, vol. 5, n. 5, pp. 51-57.

FREEMAN R.E. (1984), *Strategic Management: A stakeholder approach*, Pitman, Boston.

GARVEY W.D. (2014), *Communication: the essence of science: facilitating information exchange among librarians, scientists, engineers and students,* Elsevier, Filadelfia, Pennsylvania, Stati Uniti.

GIACOSA E., FERRARIS A., BRESCIANI S. (2017), "Exploring Voluntary External Disclosure of Intellectual Capital in Listed Companies: an Integrated Intellectual Capital Disclosure Conceptual Model", *Journal of Intellectual Capital*, vol. 18, n. 1, pp. 149-169.

GIBBERT M., LEIBOLD M., PROBST G. (2002), "Five styles of customer knowledge management, and how smart companies use them to create value", *European Management Journal*, vol. 20, n. 5, pp. 459-469.

GOLINELLI G.M. (2010), *Viable systems approach (VSA): Governing business dynamics,* Cedam, Padova.

GOLINELLI G.M., BARILE S., SAVIANO M., POLESE F. (2012), "Perspective Shifts in Marketing: Toward a Paradigm Change?", *Service Science*, vol. 4, n. 2, pp. 121-134.

GREENWOOD M. (2007), "Stakeholder engagement: Beyond the myth of corporate responsibility", *Journal of Business Ethics*, vol. 74, n. 4, pp. 315-327.

GRÖNROOS C. (1994), "From marketing mix to relationship marketing: towards a paradigm shift in marketing", *Management Decision*, vol. 32, n. 2, pp. 4-20.

GRÖNROOS C. (1997). "Value-driven relational marketing: from products to resources and competencies", *Journal of Marketing Management*, vol. 13, n. 5, pp. 407-419.

GRÖNROOS C., RAVALD A. (2011), "Service as business logic: implications for value creation and marketing", *Journal of Service Management*, vol. 22, n. 1, pp. 5-22.

GUMMESSON E. (2011), *Total relationship marketing*, Routledge, London.

GUSTAFSSON A., KRISTENSSON P., WITELL L. (2012), "Customer co-creation in service innovation: a matter of communication?", *Journal of Service Management*, vol. 23, n. 3, pp. 311-327.

HANSEN M.T., NOHRIA N. (2004), "How to build collaborative advantage", *MIT Sloan Management Review,* vol. 46, n. 1, pp. 22-30.

HERRERA M.E.B. (2015), "Creating competitive advantage by institutionalizing corporate social innovation", *Journal of Business Research*, vol. 68, n. 7, pp. 1468-1474.

HILL C., JONES G., SCHILLING M. (2014), *Strategic management: theory: an integrated approach*, Cengage Learning, London.

HINKIN T. R. (1995), "A Review of Scale Development Practices in the Study of Organizations", *Journal of Management*, vol. 21, pp. 967-988.

HOLTZHAUSEN D., ZERFASS A. (2014), *The Routledge handbook of strategic communication*, Routledge, London.

HOOLEY G., BRODERICK A., MÖLLER K. (1998), "Competitive positioning and the resource-based view of the firm", *Journal of Strategic Marketing*, vol. 6, n. 2, pp. 97-116.

HU L.T., BENTLER P.M. (1999), "Cutoff criteria for fit indexes in covariance structure analysis: Conventional criteria versus new alternatives", *Structural equation modeling: a multidisciplinary journal*, vol. 6, n. 1, pp. 1-55.

HUNT S. D., MORGAN R. M. (1995), "The comparative advantage theory of competition", *The Journal of Marketing*, Col. 59, pp. 1-15.

ISTAT (2011), *8° Censimento generale dell'industria e dei servizi*, Istat, Roma.

JACKSON J. (Ed.) (2012), *The Routledge handbook of language and intercultural communication,* Routledge, London.

JÖRESKOG K.G., SÖRBOM D. (1996), *PRELIS 2 User's Reference Guide: A Program for Multivariate Data Screening and Data Summarization: a Preprocessor for LISREL,* Scientific Software International, New York.

KANTER R.M. (2011), *How great companies think differently*, Harvard Business Review, Chambridge.

KLEIN P., MAHONEY J., MCGAHAN A., PITELIS C. (2013), "Institutional and organizational governance: design principles and adaptation", *Working paper,* University of Toronto, Toronto, Canada.

LAMMING R. (1993), *Beyond partnership: strategies for innovation and lean supply,* Prentice Hall, London.

LAWRENCE A.T. (2002), "The drivers of stakeholder engagement", *Journal of Corporate Citizenship*, vol. 6, pp. 71-85.

LEU D.J., KINZER C.K., COIRO J.L., CAMMACK D.W. (2004), "Toward a theory of new literacies emerging from the Internet and other information and communication technologies", *Theoretical models and processes of reading*, vol. 5, n. 1, pp. 1570-1613.

LI T., CALANTONE R.J. (1998), "The impact of market knowledge competence on new product advantage: conceptualization and empirical examination", *The Journal of Marketing,* vol. 62, n. 4, pp. 13-29.

LOCKER K., KACZMAREK S. (2013), *Business communication: Building critical skills*, McGraw-Hill Higher Education, New York.

MAAK T. (2007), "Responsible leadership, stakeholder engagement, and the emergence of social capital", *Journal of Business Ethics*, vol. 74, n. 4, pp. 329-343.

MANETTI G. (2011), "The quality of stakeholder engagement in sustainability reporting: empirical evidence and critical points", *Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management*, vol. 18, n. 2, pp. 110-122.

MUFF K. (Ed.) (2014), *The collaboratory: A co-creative stakeholder engagement process for solving complex problems*, Greenleaf Publishing, London.

NOLAND J., PHILLIPS R. (2010), "Stakeholder engagement, discourse ethics and strategic management", *International Journal of Management Review*s, vol. 12, n. 1, pp. 39-49.

PAYNE A., FROW P. (2005), "A strategic framework for customer relationship management", *Journal of Marketing,* vol. 69, n. 4, pp. 167-176.

PAYNE A.F., STORBACKA K., FROW P. (2008), "Managing the co-creation of value", *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, vol. 36, n. 1, pp. 83-96.

PAYNE S.L., CALTON J.M. (2002), "Towards a managerial practice of stakeholder engagement", *Journal of Corporate Citizenship*, vol. 6, pp. 37-52.

PELS J., COVIELLO N.E., BRODIE R.J. (2000), "Integrating transactional and relational marketing exchange: A pluralistic perspective", *Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice*, vol. 8, n. 3, pp. 11-20.

PHILLIPSON J., LOWE P., PROCTOR A., RUTO E. (2012), "Stakeholder engagement and knowledge exchange in environmental research", *Journal of Environmental Management*, vol. 95, n. 1, pp. 56-65.

POLESE F., CAPUTO F., CARRUBBO L., SARNO D. (2016), "The value (co) creation as peak of social pyramid", in Russo-Spena T., Mele C. (eds.), *Proceedings 26th Annual RESER Conference, "What's ahead in service research: new perspectives for business and society"* (pp. 1232-1248). RESER, University of Naples "Federico II",

REINER G. (2009), *Rapid Modelling for Increasing Competitiveness*, Springer, New York.

ROTHAERMEL F.T. (2015), *Strategic management,* McGraw-Hill, New York.

SAVIANO M., CAPUTO F. (2012), "Le scelte manageriali tra sistemi, conoscenza e vitalità", in *XXXV Convegno annuale AIDEA Management senza confini. Gli studi di management: tradizione e paradigmi emergenti,* University of Salerno, 4-5 October, pp. 1-21.

SAVIANO M. (2012), *Condizioni di efficacia relazionale e di performance nelle aziende sanitarie,* Giappichelli Editore, Torino.

SAVIANO M., BARILE S., CAPUTO F. (2017a), "Re-affirming the need for systems thinking in social sciences: A viable systems view of smart city", in Vrontis S., Weber T., Tsoukatos E. (eds.), *Global and national business theories and practice: bridging the past with the future* (pp. 1552-1567). EuroMed Press, Cyprus.

SAVIANO M., BARILE S., SPOHRER J., CAPUTO F. (2017b), "A Service Research Contribution to the Global Challenge of Sustainability", *Journal of Service Theory and Practice*, vol. 27, Issue 5, pp.951-976.

SAVIANO M., CAPUTO F. (2013), "Managerial choices between Systems, Knowledge and Viability", in Barile S. (Ed.), *Contributions to theoretical and practical advances in management. A Viable Systems Approach (VSA)* (pp. 219-242), ARACNE Editrice S.r.l., Roma.

SAVIANO M., CAPUTO F., FORMISANO V., WALLETZKÝ L. (2016a), "From theory to practice: applying systems thinking to Smart Cities", in Caputo F. (Ed.), *The 4rd International Symposium Advances in Business Management. "Towards Systemic Approach"* (pp. 35-40). Business Systems. E-book series, Avellino.

SAVIANO M., POLESE F., CAPUTO F., WALLETZKÝ L. (2016b), *A T-shaped model for rethinking higher education program,* in 19th Toulon-Verona International Conference Excellence in Services - Conference Proceedings, pp. 425-440.

SCANDELIUS C., COHEN G. (2016), "Achieving collaboration with diverse stakeholders-The role of strategic ambiguity in CSR communication", *Journal of Business Research*, vol. 69, n. 9, pp. 3487-3499.

SCOTT S.G., LANE V.R. (2000), "A stakeholder approach to organizational identity", *Academy of Management Review*, vol. 25, n. 1, pp. 43-62.

SHANNON C.E. (1949), "Communication theory of secrecy systems", *Bell Labs Technical Journal*, vol. 2, n. 4, pp. 656-715.

SIANO A. (2012), "La comunicazione per la sostenibilità nel management delle imprese", *Sinergie*, n. 89, pp. 3-23

SIANO A., VOLLERO A., CONFETTO M.G., SIGLIOCCOLO M. (2013), "Corporate communication management: A framework based on decision-making with reference to communication resources", *Journal of Marketing Communications*, vol. 19, n. 3, pp. 151-167.

SLABBERT Y., BARKER R. (2014), "Towards a new model to describe the organisation–stakeholder relationship-building process: A strategic corporate communication perspective", *Communication*, vol. 40, n. 1, pp. 69-97.

STARKEY K., MADAN P. (2001), "Bridging the relevance gap: Aligning stakeholders in the future of management research", *British Journal of Management*, vol. 12, n. s1, pp. S3-S26.

SVENDSEN A. (1998), *The Stakeholder Strategy. Profiting from Collaborative Business Relationships,* Berrett-Koehlert Publishers Inc, San Francisco.

TAMÁSY C., TAYLOR M. (eds.) (2008), *Globalising worlds and new economic configurations*, Ashgate Publishing, Ltd., London.

TASHMAN P., RAELIN J. (2013), "Who and what really matters to the firm: Moving stakeholder salience beyond managerial perceptions", *Business Ethics Quarterly,* vol. 23, n. 4, pp. 591-616.

THORSON E., MOORE J. (2013), *Integrated communication: Synergy of persuasive voices,* Psychology Press, New York.

ULLMAN J.B., BENTLER P.M. (2003), *Structural equation modeling,* John Wiley & Sons, New York.

VARGO S.L., AKAKA M.A. (2012), "Value cocreation and service systems (re) formation: A service ecosystems view", *Service Science*, vol. 4, n. 3, pp. 207-217.

VARGO S.L., MAGLIO P.P., AKAKA M.A. (2008), "On value and value co-creation: A service systems and service logic perspective", *European Management Journal*, vol. 26, n. 3, pp. 145-152.

VERNUCCIO M., CECCOTTI F., PASTORE A. (2012), "Innovation in integrated marketing communication according to network stakeholders. An interpretation through cognitive maps", *Sinergie*, n. 88, pp. 12-37.

VERVEST P., VAN HECK E., PREISS K., PAU L.F. (2005), *Smart business networks*, Springer, Berlin-Heidelberg.

VOS J., ACHTERKAMP M. C. (2015), "Bridging the transactional and relational view on management-stakeholder cooperation", *International Journal of Organizational Analysis,* vol. 23, n. 4, pp. 652-663.

WEST J., SALTER A., VANHAVERBEKE W., CHESBROUGH H. (2014), "Open innovation: The next decade", *Research Policy,* vol. 43, n. 5, pp. 805-811.

Websites

aida.bvdinfo.com

Academic or professional position and contacts

Saviano Marialuisa
Associate Professor of Management
University of Salerno - Italy
e-mail: msaviano@unisa.it

Caputo Francesco
Research Fellow in Management
University of Salerno, Italy
e-mail: fcaputo@unisa.it

Mueller Jens
Associate Professor of Growth Strategies and Governance
Waikato University, New Zealand
e-mail: jens@usainfo.net

Belyaeva Zhanna
Associate Professor of International Business and C(U)SR
Ural Federal University, Russia
e-mail: zh.s.belyaeva@urfu.ru

sinergie
italian journal of management

ISSN 0393-5108
DOI 10.7433/s105.2018.04
pp. 61-80

FONDAZIONE CUEIM

Original research papers

Il contratto di rete nel settore dell'auto: uno strumento performante in un contesto turbolento

Received
16th June 2016
Revised
12th July 2017
Accepted
20th February 2018

Anna Cabigiosu - Anna Moretti - Michela Pacella

Abstract

Obiettivo del paper: *In un contesto generale di crisi economica si discute l'impatto che il contratto di rete può avere sulla performance delle piccole e medie imprese del settore automotive che vi aderiscono.*

Metodologia: *L'analisi empirica proposta in questo articolo si basa sull'analisi quantitativa dei dati di performance delle imprese italiane del settore automotive. È stata sviluppata una regressione lineare robusta utilizzando i dati di Infocamere sulle imprese in rete e i dati provenienti dalla banca dati AIDA sulle loro performance.*

Risultati: *I risultati dello studio indicano che le imprese in rete registrano performance superiori rispetto alle imprese non in rete e che la relazione tra adesione alla rete e performance è più forte all'aumentare degli anni di collaborazione; un interessante risultato suggerisce come tale effetto positivo si riduca all'aumentare del numero di imprese aderenti al contratto di rete.*

Limiti della ricerca: *Le imprese in rete del settore auto sono ancora un numero esiguo e appartengono a diversi settori produttivi. Inoltre, la finestra temporale su cui è stata sviluppata l'analisi empirica risulta piuttosto ristretta vista la recente introduzione dello strumento normativo del contratto di rete.*

Implicazioni pratiche: *Il lavoro di ricerca suggerisce di strutturare la rete privilegiando un numero contenuto di partner e di dare alla rete un orizzonte sufficientemente lungo per permetterle di raggiungere gli obiettivi prefissati e per permettere alle imprese coinvolte di individuare i meccanismi di coordinamento più adatti.*

Originalità del paper*: Lo studio è uno dei primi contributi che evidenzia la relazione tra il contratto di rete e la performance delle imprese, aggiungendo una maggiore comprensione anche delle dimensioni organizzative rilevanti.*

Parole chiave: contratto di rete; reti di imprese; industria automotive

The "network contract" in the automotive industry: a performing means in a turbolent setting

Purpose of the paper: *The paper debates the relevance of the 'network contract' during the economic crisis in enhancing SMEs' performance in the automotive industry.*

Methodology: *We explore through a quantitative analysis the correlation between having signed a 'network contract' and the firms' performance by developing a linear robust regression analysis and relying on the Infocamere (for network contracts) and AIDA (for firms' performance) datasets.*

Results: *Our results show that companies that signed a 'network contract' have better performance; moreover, the correlation is stronger for firms that signed sooner the 'network contract', while the positive effect of this contract is negatively moderated by the number of firms being part of the network.*

Research limitations: *Today we still have a limited number of 'network contracts' in the automotive industry; furthermore, companies belong to different economic sectors. The analysis is developed over a limited time span because of the only recent introduction of the network contract.*

Practical implications: *Our research suggests that the most performing contracts are those involving fewer partners that collaborate for longer. The longer the collaboration, the higher the opportunities to reach common goals and to identify effective coordination mechanisms.*

Originality of the paper: *This survey is one of the first contributions showing the relationship between the "network contract" and firms' performance, providing a deeper understanding of the relevant organizational dimensions.*

Key words: network contract; inter-organizational networks; automotive industry

1. Introduzione

Fenomeni quali l'innovazione tecnologica, la globalizzazione dei mercati, l'internazionalizzazione della *supply chain* e lo sviluppo delle economie dei Paesi emergenti rappresentano le sfide principali con cui le imprese italiane, per il 99% medio-piccole, faticano a confrontarsi per la difficoltà a reperire risorse e competenze. In questo contesto, con la Legge 33 del 2009, il legislatore italiano ha pensato di dotare le nostre imprese di un nuovo strumento di aggregazione orientato a favorirne la crescita e le *performance*: il contratto di rete. Il contratto di rete è uno strumento che mira a facilitare i processi di aggregazione e convergenza attorno ad obiettivi comuni tra i quali, ad esempio, l'internazionalizzazione e l'innovazione.

Il contratto di rete è uno strumento utile quando "più imprenditori" vogliono perseguire "lo scopo di accrescere, individualmente e collettivamente, la propria capacità innovativa e la propria competitività sul mercato" e "si obbligano, sulla base di un programma comune di rete, a collaborare in forme e in ambiti predeterminati attinenti all'esercizio delle proprie imprese ovvero a scambiarsi informazioni o prestazioni di natura industriale, commerciale, tecnica o tecnologica ovvero ancora ad esercitare in comune una o più attività rientranti nell'oggetto della propria impresa" (legge 33 del 2009). Nell'intenzione del legislatore, quindi, la partecipazione ad una rete di imprese si configura come un impegno di medio-lungo termine che, se ben strutturato, ha le potenzialità per assicurare alle PMI una significativa crescita (alimentata dai processi di apprendimento collettivo interni alla rete), soprattutto in termini di innovazione e competitività. La finalità è quella di incentivare le imprese italiane a fare sistema, in modo da superare attraverso la collaborazione i limiti strutturali che più volte sono stati identificati come una delle cause della ridotta competitività sul mercato internazionale (Iamiceli, 2009).

L'introduzione del contratto di rete avviene a valle di un periodo in cui il settore dell'auto, uno dei cardini dell'economia italiana, ha affrontato un periodo di profonda ristrutturazione del suo modello di business incentrato sul ruolo di Fiat come motore di crescita e fulcro della divisione del lavoro all'interno della catena del valore. L'osservatorio sulla filiera autoveicolare italiana (2013) mostra come dal 2007 in poi il numero di immatricolazioni a livello mondiale cresca ma in Europa e in Italia le vendite calino sempre di più anno dopo anno dal 2007 al 2013. Bisogna aspettare il 2014 per avere un 1% di crescita nelle vendite ma il saldo 2007-2014 è ancora negativo (-20%) (Osservatorio sulla componentistica automotive italiana, 2016). In questo contesto Fiat continua il suo processo di internazionalizzazione mentre la filiera nazionale è in difficoltà per il continuo calo della produzione finale e per le imprese del settore dell'auto è necessario ritrovare competitività per attrarre investimenti da nuove case produttrici.

Il principale studio di settore a livello nazionale documenta come queste imprese guardino all'internazionalizzazione e all'innovazione per sopravvivere (Osservatorio della filiera autoveicolare, 2013). Il settore dell'auto rappresenta quindi il setting ideale per testare la capacità del contratto di rete di rispondere alle esigenze delle nostre imprese di aggregazione attorno ad obiettivi di comune interesse. Infatti, mentre il settore dell'auto è in crescita a livello mondiale, è la dimensione piccola e locale delle nostre imprese ad impedire loro di beneficiare di questo *trend* e la mancanza di risorse e competenze per mutare la loro strategia. Gli studi sul contratto di rete ad oggi pubblicati hanno approfondito la natura e diffusione dei contratti di rete in questo settore e diversi casi studio hanno analizzato come i contratti di rete sono applicati, i loro punti di forza e di debolezza (Tunisini *et al.*, 2013). Tuttavia, ad oggi, manca un'evidenza empirica quantitativa decisiva sulla loro efficacia. La domanda che appare ancora senza una risposta, quindi, è se in uno scenario di crisi locale e di opportunità globale il contratto di rete abbia migliorato la *performance* delle imprese impegnate nella competizione nel settore automotive.

Questo articolo, utilizzando i dati Infocamere (3 Luglio 2015) sulle imprese in rete e i dati di AIDA sulle loro *performance* analizza l'efficacia dei contratti di rete utilizzando come universo le imprese appartenenti alla filiera dell'auto. Questo studio mira quindi a contribuire al dibattito sul contratto di rete come strumento a supporto alle nostre imprese. In particolare l'articolo discuterà il contratto di rete all'interno della più vasta letteratura sulle reti di imprese e calerà lo strumento nel contesto del settore automotive.

I risultati dello studio indicano che le imprese in rete performano meglio delle imprese non in rete e che esiste un effetto di esperienza che rende la relazione tra rete e *performance* più forte per le imprese che da maggior tempo sono in rete. Tuttavia, la dimensione della rete modera negativamente l'effetto del contratto di rete, suggerendo che i costi di coordinamento tra un numero maggiore di imprese non siano compensati dai benefici apportati da ciascun membro aggiuntivo della rete. L'articolo è organizzato come segue. Nella prima parte introdurremo il contratto di rete e ne presenteremo i tratti essenziali. A seguire sintetizzeremo l'evoluzione

del settore auto negli ultimi anni. Seguiranno la presentazione dei dati, della metodologia di indagine e dei risultati. Discussioni e conclusioni concludono l'articolo.

2. Reti di imprese e il contratto di rete

Reti di imprese e performance

Il fenomeno delle reti di imprese è studiato da diversi anni negli studi organizzativi, e in letteratura sono stati individuati numerosi benefici associati a tale forma organizzativa (Podolny and Page, 1998), tra i quali: benefici economici (Uzzi, 1997; Powell *et al.,* 1999), apprendimento e sviluppo della conoscenza (innovazione) (Powell *et al.,* 1996), legittimazione e status (Podolny and Page 1998), riduzione dell'incertezza (Podolny 2001), ecc. La rete permette alle aziende non solo di mantenere la propria specializzazione ma anche, tramite l'aggregazione, di raggiungere economie di scala e "di agglomerazione" (Bell, 2005). Infatti, collaborando le imprese possono sommare la propria capacità produttiva con quella dei propri partner e garantire in questo modo una maggiore disponibilità di volumi di produzione. A lungo la letteratura si è concentrata sul tema dei costi di transazione (Williamson, 1979) quale spiegazione principale dell'emergere delle forme organizzative reticolari. Nonostante tale approccio sia ormai stato superato, i costi di transazione rimangono uno dei benefici economici associati alle collaborazioni inter-organizzative. Gulati (1995) evidenzia come i costi di transazione legati a questa tipologia di collaborazioni diminuiscano al crescere della ripetizione delle interazioni fra le parti; queste infatti permettono di sviluppare fiducia reciproca e di conseguenza di diminuire il timore dell'insorgere di comportamenti opportunistici. Il modello della rete permette di rendere più bassi i costi di transazione in quanto le parti hanno un'approfondita conoscenza reciproca e hanno sviluppato un elevato grado di fiducia. Inoltre, la costituzione di una rete di imprese permette da un lato di suddividere i rischi tra le aziende del *network* e dall'altro lato di concentrare gli investimenti del singolo partecipante nel proprio core business, lasciando alla rete gli investimenti nelle attività condivise. Tra i benefici economici associati alla forma organizzativa reticolare è stato riconosciuto, tra gli altri, una maggiore facilità di accesso al credito.

L'appartenenza di un'impresa a una rete può incidere anche sulle condizioni di accesso al credito poiché rappresenta un'informazione significativa per la valutazione del rischio. L'adesione al programma comune finalizzato al miglioramento della competitività e della capacità innovativa può infatti influire positivamente sulle *performance* economiche e finanziarie, che determinano la capacità di rimborso dei finanziamenti concessi. La banca può anche promuovere la formazione di nuove reti, sfruttando le informazioni disponibili sulla clientela, così come può assumere il ruolo di aderente a una rete. Per quanto riguarda la promozione delle reti, la banca può favorire le relazioni fra imprese clienti che potrebbero trarre beneficio da questa forma di aggregazione, nell'ipotesi che tali relazioni contribuiscano a migliorare le *performance* delle imprese stesse e quindi a ridurre i rischi per la banca; tale attività può

realizzarsi anche fornendo consulenza legale per la scelta della tipologia di contratto di rete più adatto. Inoltre, la banca può partecipare alla rete mettendo a disposizione delle altre imprese aderenti non solo i propri servizi finanziari, ma anche un supporto informativo e logistico, per esempio allo scopo di promuovere l'ingresso della rete in nuovi mercati geografici (Cabigiosu e Proto, 2015).

Per quanto riguarda i benefici legati allo sviluppo della conoscenza e all'apprendimento, il focus è sulla dinamica secondo la quale ogni azienda aderente ad una rete di imprese mette a disposizione il proprio bagaglio tecnico e di conoscenza affinché vi possano accedere facilmente e con costi relativamente bassi anche i partner. Una grande potenzialità della rete è proprio quella di permettere l'aggregazione di organizzazioni operanti in settori industriali diversi e in aree geografiche diverse favorendo così uno scambio di tecnologie e processi che è una delle principali fonti dell'innovazione sviluppata in rete. Quanto più le imprese sono disposte a scambiarsi informazioni, tanto maggiore è l'apprendimento reciproco, quanto maggiore è l'apprendimento reciproco tanto più le imprese saranno in grado di integrare le proprie conoscenze per incrementare il valore del prodotto finale (Mason *et al.,* 2012). Inoltre all'aumentare del grado di conoscenza fra gli attori della filiera i meccanismi di coordinamento instaurati fra di loro si fanno più informali, diretti e meno burocratici e questo porta le imprese a diminuire la percezione del rischio di opportunismo nella collaborazione (Bradach e Eccles, 1989). In modo più marcato rispetto a quanto può fare un'azienda che opera autonomamente, l'impresa in rete ha la possibilità di diversificare le proprie competenze mantenendo al contempo una forte specializzazione. Pertanto la forma organizzativa a rete si propone come uno strumento flessibile e quasi completamente adattabile alle esigenze specifiche di chi decide di adottarlo. La possibilità di sfruttare le sinergie derivanti da competenze complementari rispetto ai *partner* della rete facilita le aziende nel raggiungere nuovi mercati (Alegre e Chiva, 2008). Certamente sono necessari gli apporti di capitale per finanziare i progetti e le attività comuni, ma è altrettanto fondamentale che siano investite risorse quali le competenze (tecniche, di processo e di mercato), il capitale umano ed infine la fiducia reciproca tra le parti che costituisce il collante fondamentale dell'aggregazione (Provan e Sydow, 2008). Le risorse messe in comune e gli investimenti fatti nella rete sono fondamentali per permettere anche alle PMI di inseguire strategie di crescita basate sull'innovazione e impegnarsi in progetti di sviluppo più complessi che individualmente non potrebbero pensare di sostenere.

Il contratto di rete e la performance

L'analisi della letteratura sulle reti di imprese permette di comprendere perché il Legislatore ha visto in questa forma di aggregazione una possibile risposta alle sfide che oggi le nostre PMI affrontano. A partire dagli anni '90 il contesto economico mondiale ha cominciato a caratterizzarsi sempre più per la turbolenza degli scenari competitivi e da reti lunghe di fornitura. Inizia quindi ad emergere la consapevolezza che, per rimanere competitive nel mercato globale, le imprese di piccole dimensioni non possono più continuare ad operare autonomamente con forme di collaborazione

destrutturate ed estemporanee ma devono iniziare ad aggregarsi attorno a specifici obiettivi per condividere risorse e sfruttare in modo sinergico e sistematico le loro competenze complementari. Storicamente la dimensione medio-piccola delle imprese è una delle principali caratteristiche del tessuto industriale nazionale. Tale struttura del tessuto industriale italiano è stata, almeno fino ad inizio millennio, proprio uno dei punti forza del nostro sistema Paese. Infatti le PMI italiane erano sempre riuscite, in parte lavorando indipendentemente e in parte aggregandosi nei distretti, a garantire flessibilità nella produzione, rapido adattamento alle richieste del cliente e qualità del prodotto finale generalmente superiore rispetto ai concorrenti; esse potevano inoltre contare su notevoli *performance* in termini di *export* derivanti dalla competitività dei prezzi e dalla qualità riconosciuta dai clienti al prodotto italiano (Ricciardi, 2013). Tuttavia la crisi del 2007 ha messo in difficoltà soprattutto il comparto delle PMI. In un contesto di forte competitività internazionale e di calante competitività del sistema Italia, le PMI risultano tra le più colpite dalla crisi sia per la scarsa capacità di avviare percorsi di crescita ed innovazione sia per la difficoltà di accesso al credito (Serio e Visconti, 2015). Le difficoltà delle PMI italiane hanno fatto emergere la consapevolezza che non potessero più rimanere competitive continuando ad agire individualmente e contando solamente sulle proprie risorse. Le piccole imprese non si dimostravano più adeguate a sostenere i livelli di innovazione richiesti da un mercato la cui dimensione era ormai globale (Bell, 2005). In un contesto globale i clienti preferiscono interfacciarsi con pochi e grandi fornitori e non con una costellazione di piccole imprese specializzate in poche fasi del processo produttivo. Tali esigenze per il rilancio della competitività dell'industria italiana sono state intercettate anche a livello legislativo, e il contratto di rete viene introdotto proprio per dare risposta al nuovo contesto (Capuano, 2015; Tunisini *et al.*, 2013). Si va verso un nuovo fenomeno aggregativo delle imprese, nel quale viene conservato il principio dell'integrazione funzionale tra i partner, mentre i concetti della territorialità e della specializzazione produttiva non sono più determinanti. L'oggetto del contratto di rete può comprendere qualsiasi attività purché sia svolta in collaborazione. Le imprese che decidono di costituirsi in rete devono definire un programma di rete, in cui siano indicati gli obiettivi della collaborazione, la durata, i diritti e gli obblighi delle parti e le modalità di esecuzione delle attività svolte per perseguire lo scopo comune. Non sono obbligatori invece l'organo comune (elemento di governo della rete e di interfaccia con gli stakeholder esterni) e il fondo patrimoniale comune. Infine, le imprese possono decidere se attribuire o meno personalità giuridica alla rete. Il Contratto di Rete di per sé lascia quindi ampio spazio all'autonomia negoziale delle parti, le quali sono libere di definire praticamente ogni aspetto della loro collaborazione nella rete. Il contratto di rete propone alle PMI di aggregarsi senza perdere la propria individualità e potendo parallelamente continuare a svolgere le attività della propria azienda. Al tempo stesso il contratto dà loro la possibilità di stabilire un rapporto strutturato, nel quale mettere in comune risorse e competenze per tentare di raggiungere gli obiettivi prefissati.

Per quanto riguarda gli studi empirici sull'associazione tra l'adesione ad un contratto di rete e la *performance* d'impresa, le principali ricerche

svolte a livello nazionale che possono essere prese come riferimento per un quadro generale sono quelle dell'osservatorio sui contratti di rete realizzati dal MISE (Ministero dello Sviluppo Economico). Nel 2012 è emerso che l'adesione delle imprese ai contratti di rete ha avuto un effetto positivo sulla loro *performance*. Oltre il 38,5% delle imprese intervistate ha segnalato un incremento del fatturato e il 33,3% un incremento degli investimenti. Inoltre, quasi la metà delle imprese intervistate prevede di aumentare ulteriormente fatturato e investimenti. Infine, il 24,8% delle imprese segnala una flessione dei costi di produzione. Tuttavia la ricerca non permette di quantificare l'effetto dell'appartenenza ad una rete sulle variabili di *performance* sopra elencate. Il Quarto Osservatorio Intesa Sanpaolo-Mediocredito Italiano sulle reti d'impresa, pubblicato a marzo 2014, analizza la *performance* al 2012 delle imprese entrate in rete nel 2011 tramite statistiche descrittive e modelli econometrici (Intesa Sanpaolo, Mediocredito Italiano, 2014). La *performance* delle imprese in rete è misurata come aumento del fatturato e dell'EBITDA nel biennio. I dati suggeriscono una correlazione positiva ma non significativa tra l'appartenenza dell'impresa alla rete e la sua *performance* economica. Il Quinto Osservatorio (novembre 2014) analizzando le statistiche descrittive suggerisce segnali ancora molto deboli: nel biennio 2012-2013 le imprese che erano già in rete nel 2011 hanno mostrato un calo del fatturato solo di poco inferiore a quello delle imprese non in rete. Sul fronte reddituale (EBIDTA margin) i dati mostrano un recupero maggiore di due decimi di punto percentuale per le imprese coinvolte in rete. Per quanto riguarda la letteratura scientifica, Bartoli *et al.* (2013) mettono in relazione l'adesione a un contratto di rete con la *performance* di impresa misurata come media pesata delle seguenti variabili: innovazione di prodotto, di processo, export, investimenti diretti esteri, e percentuale di impiegati laureati. La ricerca mostra l'esistenza di una correlazione significativa e positiva tra l'appartenenza a una rete e la *performance* della singola impresa. Tuttavia, gli autori non possono parlare di relazioni causa-effetto tra l'appartenenza alla rete e la *performance* dell'impresa in rete. I risultati ad oggi disponibili suggeriscono l'importanza di esplorare ulteriormente il tema della *performance* delle imprese in rete poiché mancano indicazioni più precise sulla relazione tra l'appartenenza di un'impresa ad una rete e la *performance* economica delle singole imprese. In particolare mancano studi quantitativi longitudinali a livello di settore in grado di contestualizzare l'efficacia della rete, e le condizioni di questa efficacia. Infatti, gli studi sopra citati si riferiscono all'intera popolazione delle imprese in rete. Inoltre, essendo il contratto di rete uno strumento recente molti studi guardano agli effetti della creazione di una rete l'anno successivo mentre la natura di queste collaborazioni, come lo sviluppo di nuovi prodotti, richiedono più tempo per avere effetto sugli indicatori di *performance* delle imprese. In sintesi, il contratto di rete può, teoricamente, portare numerosi benefici essendo uno strumento volto a rafforzare e istituzionalizzare la collaborazione tra imprese, collaborazione che la letteratura sulle reti di imprese ritiene essere un driver rilevante per la crescita (Brunetta *et al.*, 2015). In particolare la collaborazione strutturata è importante: a) in contesti caratterizzati da elevata complessità del prodotto,

divisione del lavoro e specializzazione delle imprese poiché favorisce l'integrazione di conoscenze e competenze complementari. Infatti, prodotti complessi che includono molte componenti con tecnologie di prodotto e processo distanti tra loro difficilmente possono essere prodotti da un'unica impresa ricorrendo ad un modello di elevata integrazione verticale. Tuttavia, il mercato non consente di raggiungere il livello di controllo e collaborazione tra partner necessari per gestire progetti complessi e incerti; b) in contesti dinamici e turbolenti in cui da un lato le imprese devono innovare la loro offerta frequentemente e dall'altro, senza collaborazioni strutturate, rischierebbero di fronteggiare costi di transazione elevanti a causa dell'incertezza dell'output; c) in contesti in cui le imprese hanno incentivi rilevanti alla collaborazione, quali ad esempio i mercati ove vi sia la possibilità di incrementare la propria quota di mercato in un contesto generale di crescita economica; d) in contesti globali in cui attraggono commesse le imprese medio-grandi con un'offerta ampia e completa e con le competenze necessarie per gestire relazione di fornitura transnazionali. Tutte queste condizioni di contesto suggeriscono come il settore automotive sia un *setting* empirico ideale per l'esplorazione di queste domande di ricerca, nonché di particolare interesse vista la sua rilevanza per l'economia nazionale. Allo stesso tempo il contratto di rete costituisce un *unicum* nel panorama internazionale poiché le nostre conoscenze non ci permettono di individuare uno strumento di aggregazione formale comparabile in altri contesti. In questo senso, l'esistenza del contratto di rete offre un'occasione unica per esplorare con maggior rigore il tema della *network performance*, tema che in letteratura è stato affrontato facendo riferimento solo a strumenti organizzativi quali le alleanze strategiche, le *joint ventures*, o i contratti di *outsourcing*. Il riferimento a questi tipi particolari di relazioni organizzative, tuttavia, esclude l'investigazione di forme di collaborazione più *soft* (dove i partner hanno maggiore autonomia e discrezionalità nella scelta del modo di contribuire all'attività congiunta) che pur caratterizzano lo scenario economico attuale. Non esiste dunque una letteratura che discute se e in che misura l'adesione a forme di *network* formalmente riconosciuti che permettano la totale autonomia delle imprese aderenti, e dotati di ampia flessibilità nell'oggetto dell'aggregazione, nelle forme di governo e di coordinamento delle parti nonché nella durata contrattuale sia in grado di produrre un miglioramento delle *performance* delle imprese aderenti a questa iniziativa.

Lo scarso approfondimento del tema della *performance* dei *network* da parte della letteratura scientifica, dovuta principalmente alle difficoltà di tipo empirico, ha fatto sì che solo di recente vi siano stati dei tentativi di analizzare il fallimento dei *network* (Schrank e Whitford, 2011, Moretti e Zirpoli 2016a, Moretti 2017), senza l'analisi dei quali qualsiasi studio sull'efficacia dell'aggregazione potrebbe soffrire di un importante *bias* di misurazione e selezione del campione. Per le suddette ragioni, in questo articolo utilizziamo un approccio esplorativo per dirimere il tema sull'efficacia o meno dei contratti di rete rispetto alla *performance* economica con un focus sulle imprese della filiera automotive che hanno sottoscritto un contratto di rete tra il 2011 e il 2013. L'articolo ha dunque l'obiettivo di migliorare la comprensione che oggi abbiamo di questo

strumento rispetto alla sua efficacia esplorando "se" il contratto di rete è correlato a migliori *performance* economiche delle imprese e, aiutati da un set di variabili di controllo, "quando" ciò accade. In questo modo l'articolo può contribuire al dibattito esistente sui *network* aggiungendo un tassello a quella parte di letteratura che discute se e in che misura i *network* formali sono performanti e quando questo accade.

3. Il contesto empirico

Le evoluzioni recenti dell'industria automobilistica italiana

La crisi economica iniziata nel 2007 ha avuto importanti influenze anche sul settore dell'auto. Negli Stati Uniti e negli stati dell'Europa Occidentale il settore ha conosciuto forti rallentamenti della domanda e della produzione che si è in parte spostata nei Paesi emergenti, quelli che tipicamente vengono identificati come BRIC (Brasile, Russia, India, Cina), che hanno fatto leva principalmente su bassi costi di produzione e politiche monetarie, fiscali e legislative favorevoli per attrarre la produzione dei grandi *carmaker* internazionali. Naturalmente nemmeno in Italia il mercato dell'auto è uscito indenne dalla crisi. In questo arco di tempo, il gruppo FIAT, principale assemblatore di automobili nazionale, ha completato il processo di evoluzione che, partendo dall'acquisizione del 20% delle azioni della Chrysler nel 2009, l'ha portata a costituire il nuovo gruppo FCA (Fiat Chrysler Automobiles). Ha dunque assunto definitivamente una dimensione internazionale, spostando all'estero la propria sede. La maggior parte delle quote di vendite di FIAT degli ultimi anni sono state realizzate in Paesi extra-europei, e pertanto riguardano autoveicoli prodotti perlopiù in stabilimenti esteri, quindi con un coinvolgimento decrescente dei fornitori nazionali. L'aumento delle vendite Fiat all'estero non è quindi di per sé un aspetto negativo per i fornitori italiani, se questo non avesse condotto ad una rilocalizzazione della produzione.

Tab. 1: Produzione nazionale di autoveicoli, scomposta per categoria, dal 2002 al 2012 (in migliaia di unità prodotte)

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
VIC*	313	319	373	365	182	265	305	274	270	297	351	390
Auto	726	893	911	659	661	573	486	396	388	401	633	713
Totale	1038	1212	1284	1024	843	838	790	671	658	698	1014	1103

* VIC veicoli industriali e commerciali

Fonte: ANFIA

Dal 2008 al 2012 la produzione nazionale, che nel 2007 aveva lambito la quota degli 1,3 milioni di unità, si è dimezzata perdendo 613 mila vetture assemblate. Le auto sono passate da 911 mila unità a 396 mila del 2012 (-56%). Meglio è andata ai veicoli industriali e commerciali che dal

record storico del 2007 (373mila veicoli) sono passati alle 274mila unità del 2012 (-26%) (Osservatorio della filiera autoveicolare 2013). Dal 2013 si osserva un'inversione di tendenza che porta nel biennio 2015-2016 ad una variazione percentuale positiva del 9%. Negli anni oggetto di questo studio (2011-2013) i mercati emergenti erano diventati il vero traino della crescita e tutta la relazione della filiera con il gruppo Fiat è andata così cambiando. Il 2012 ha fortemente spinto il processo di indipendenza di Fiat dal contesto italiano. Fiat nel 2012 ha venduto complessivamente 200 mila autoveicoli in più che nel 2011, ma l'ha fatto con i marchi Chrysler e per lo più non in Europa. Di conseguenza, gli ordini ai fornitori nazionali non hanno che potuto assottigliarsi. Tale processo di progressivo orientamento dei fornitori italiani verso i *carmaker* stranieri è stato confermato anche dagli ultimi due rapporti dell'Osservatorio sulla componentistica automotive Italiana, relativi agli anni 2015 e 2016 (Moretti e Zirpoli, 2016b). Nel nostro Paese il settore automotive è stato caratterizzato per lungo tempo da un insieme di fornitori e subfornitori messi bene in fila dietro l'unico grande assemblatore presente in Italia, il gruppo Fiat, determinante per i loro destini (Whitford e Enrichietti, 2005; Zirpoli, 2010). Fiat determinava le traiettorie tecnologiche dei suoi fornitori e non di rado le finanziava e/o le sosteneva con l'assistenza tecnica delle sue unità di ingegneria. Ma in pochi anni il contesto del mercato dell'auto è mutato. Fiat ha effettuato una drastica diminuzione del numero dei suoi fornitori diretti mentre i mercati emergenti sono diventati traino della crescita. Tutte le case automobilistiche hanno cercato di globalizzarsi e di persuadere i propri fornitori a scegliere traiettorie di globalizzazione. La relazione locale e semi esclusiva della filiera con il gruppo Fiat è andata così cambiando. Come Fiat anche gli altri grandi carmaker europei iniziano a interfacciarsi con un numero ristretto di grandi fornitori (*first tier*) in grado di fornire moduli o sottosistemi completi. A loro volta i *first tier* si interfacciano con selezionati *second tier*, e lo stesso fanno questi ultimi con i successivi livelli di quella che è definita come la rete verticale della fornitura automotive (Whitford e Zirpoli, 2016; Zirpoli, 2010; Whitford, 2005). In questo contesto la capacità dei fornitori di offrire moduli di prodotto/servizio il più possibile completi e le loro competenze di ricerca e sviluppo sono fonte di vantaggio competitivo, soprattutto nella ricerca di nuovi clienti a livello europeo dato che Fiat non è più una fonte di competitività sufficiente. Indubbiamente, la strategia di internazionalizzazione di Fiat ha obbligato i fornitori ad aprirsi al mercato internazionale (Balcet, 2002) e anche l'esclusione di alcune imprese dalla fornitura a Fiat è stato un forte stimolo per ricercare nuovi mercati (Bianchi *et al.,* 2001). Nel corso degli ultimi anni tutti i settori che compongono la filiera hanno fatto sforzi in questa direzione ottenendo risultati positivi. Alcuni, come gli specialisti, fanno leva sui contenuti qualitativi e di innovazione delle loro componenti, per poter fornire prodotti difficilmente disponibili sul mercato. Parallelamente i produttori di parti e componenti più semplici sono coloro che hanno fatto segnare i progressi più significativi in tema di penetrazione commerciale all'estero. Sono riusciti ad aumentare la qualità dei propri prodotti, ma soprattutto a farla conoscere e venderla oltre confine. Vi sono poi i fornitori di servizi di E&D (Engineering & Design), storicamente portati a guardare oltre confine, sia

grazie a elementi di eccellenza storica apprezzati dai clienti esteri, sia per caratteristiche del prodotto stesso, più facilmente eseguibile qui per clienti lontani ed esportabile a costi bassi o nulli. Infine vi sono i fornitori più vicini alle linee di produzione finale. Questi sono tradizionalmente fornitori di moduli e sistemi, che per motivazioni logistiche (lavorazioni just in time) o di prodotto (il cui trasporto per caratteristiche - volumetriche o di fragilità - non è economicamente sostenibile) hanno sempre privilegiato la produzione destinata a stabilimenti produttivi di prossimità. Anche questi ultimi però hanno dovuto cambiare le proprie abitudini e puntare su prodotti che fossero anche vendibili sui mercati esteri, magari sfruttando le reti internazionali già esistenti all'interno del proprio gruppo industriale di appartenenza. In questa nuova prospettiva la forma organizzativa a rete sembra capace di offrire soluzioni efficaci ed efficienti a molte delle criticità che caratterizzano soprattutto le micro imprese, spesso non in grado di superare individualmente le sfide imposte dalla competizione internazionale. Se i primi passi si stanno muovendo in questa direzione, la prossima sezione dell'articolo è volta ad indagare se vi siano dei primi segnali di effettiva conferma dell'associazione tra adesione ad un contratto di rete e miglioramento della *performance* aziendale, ed eventualmente se vi siano alcune condizioni in grado di descrivere in modo più chiaro questa associazione.

4. Dati e metodologia

L'analisi empirica del presente lavoro di ricerca è basata sull'analisi dei dati di *performance* delle imprese italiane appartenenti alla filiera automotive. Il database è stato costruito a partire dalla banca dati AIDA, selezionando le imprese (le sole società italiane obbligate a depositare il bilancio, i cui dati sono raccolti nella suddetta banca dati) sulla base dei codici Ateco 2007 indicati dall'Osservatorio Nazionale della Filiera Autoveicolare Italiana come i codici di pertinenza dell'industria dell'auto (Osservatorio della Filiera Autoveicolare Italiana, 2015). Poiché però le imprese appartenenti al settore dell'auto costituiscono un sottoinsieme dei codici Ateco indicati, abbiamo ulteriormente filtrato le imprese appartenenti a questi codici analizzando le attività svolte, così come descritte in AIDA, utilizzando parole chiave quali "auto*", "automotive", "veicoli", "*car". Il database così ottenuto, contenente 1811 imprese, è stato incrociato con i dati sui contratti di rete pubblicati da Infocamere a Luglio 2015 (Infocamere, 3 Luglio 2015), registrando le imprese che formalmente hanno aderito ad un contratto di rete tra il 2011 e il 2015. Il risultato di queste operazioni è un *dataset* contenente le informazioni anagrafiche delle imprese della filiera automotive italiana (collocazione, dimensione, codice Ateco 2007), i principali indicatori di *performance* economica per il triennio 2011-2014 (ricavi delle vendite, EBITDA, ROS, ROA, ROE, dipendenti, ROI), e le informazioni relative all'appartenenza (o meno) ad una rete d'impresa e le sue caratteristiche (dimensioni, obiettivo/i dichiarati) nello stesso triennio di riferimento. L'analisi si propone di indagare in modo esplorativo se vi sia una relazione tra l'adesione ad una

forma organizzativa a rete e la *performance* delle singole imprese aderenti. Al fine di indagare l'esistenza di questa relazione, i dati sono stati analizzati sviluppando una regressione lineare robusta, attraverso il *software* di analisi statistica STATA. In particolare, sono stati considerati come variabili dipendenti due tra i principali indicatori di *performance* delle imprese, nella loro variazione sul triennio 2011-2014: l'indice EBIDTA (indice di redditività dell'impresa basato esclusivamente sulla gestione operativa, che esclude quindi i risultati dell'impresa provenienti dalla sua gestione finanziaria e fiscale), e il ROE (indice di rendimento del capitale proprio, indicatore di sintesi dell'attività economica dell'impresa). Come principali variabili esplicative sono state prese in considerazione le seguenti variabili. *Anni rete*, variabile categorica da 0 a 3 per indicare gli anni di appartenenza di un'impresa alla rete; il valore 0 rappresenta le imprese non in rete, 1 per le imprese che hanno firmato il contratto di rete nel 2013, 2 per le imprese che lo hanno firmato nel 2012, e 3 per i contratti di rete stipulati nel 2011. *Dimensione rete,* variabile che indica il numero totale di membri della rete alla quale appartiene l'impresa. *Dipendenti 2011*, è una variabile di controllo per la dimensione dell'impresa per la quale è stato utilizzato come proxy il numero di dipendenti al 2011. *Ateco*, è una variabile di controllo categorica da 0 a 3 rappresentativa del settore produttivo dell'impresa, dove il codice 1 è assegnato alle imprese produttrici di materie prime e semilavorati delle industrie chimiche, plastiche e metallurgiche, il codice 2 alle imprese fabbricatrici di apparecchi elettronici, macchinari, e autoveicoli, e il codice 3 alle imprese di servizi di consulenza, progettazione e comunicazione. Il codice 0 raggruppa le altre imprese classificate con codici Ateco residuali. Le ultime due variabili di controllo sono volte a catturare l'effetto che le variabili "di contesto", ovvero le caratteristiche specifiche di una singola impresa, potrebbero avere sulla *performance* d'impresa. Le variabili di controllo sono quindi inserite al solo fine di rendere più chiaro e facilmente interpretabile il coefficiente delle variabili indipendenti sulle quali si vuole concentrare questo studio, ovvero quelle relative al contratto di rete.

5. Risultati

Al 3 luglio 2015 risultano registrati in Camera di Commercio 2.254 contratti di rete (Infocamere, 2015), di cui 289 a soggettività giuridica[1], costituiti da 11.454 imprese. Sul totale, le reti d'impresa espressamente costituite per operare nell'industria automotive sono 47, di cui 5 con soggettività giuridica. Le reti d'impresa appartenenti al settore automotive contano nel complesso un totale di 125 imprese, collocate in maggioranza nelle regioni Emilia-Romagna, Piemonte, Liguria, e Lombardia. Le successive tabelle 2 e 3 riportano rispettivamente le statistiche descrittive le correlazioni tra le variabili utilizzate nei modelli di regressione. Come è possibile evincere dalla tabella 2, i dati di *performance* non erano disponibili

[1] La soggettività giuridica prevede la presenza contestuale del fondo patrimoniale e del soggetto esecutore, l'indicazione di una sede, e l'iscrizione del contratto di rete nella sezione ordinaria del registro delle imprese del luogo dove ha sede la rete.

per tutte le imprese appartenenti al *dataset*, ma rispettivamente per 1332 (*EBIDTA*) e per 1201 (*ROE*) imprese su 1811. Il numero di dipendenti, utilizzato come proxy per la dimensione delle imprese, suggerisce come in media il *dataset* si riferisca a imprese di medie dimensioni, tuttavia con una significativa variabilità tra le imprese considerate. La matrice di correlazione (tabella 3) evidenzia come vi sia una positiva e significativa correlazione tra la dimensione della rete e gli anni di esperienza di rete. Come riporta la successiva tabella 4, tale elevata correlazione è spiegata dal fatto che le reti attivate nel 2011 (con 3 anni di esperienza) erano in media significativamente più grandi delle reti attivate nel 2012 e nel 2013: 13 membri in media per le reti 2011, 6 per le reti del 2012, 8,5 per le reti del 2013.

Tab. 2: Statistiche descrittive

	count	mean	sd	min	max
ebidta_1411	1332	-2,05	51,35	-1758	185
roe_1411	1201	-1,9	42,38	-832	292
Anni rete	1810	0,12	0,5	0	3
Ateco	1811	1,87	0,61	0	3
Dimensione rete	125	8,59	6,44	2	23
Dipendenti 2011	1677	100,59	462,4	0	7474

Fonte: nostra elaborazione

Tab. 3: Matrice di correlazione

	ebidta_1411	roe_1411	Anni rete	Ateco	Dim. rete	Dip. 2011
ebidta_1411	1					
roe_1411	0.533***	1				
Anni rete	0,00875	0,0115	1			
Ateco	-0,0132	0,0286	-0.0923***	1		
Dimensione rete	0,00613	0,00981	0.772***	-0,0164	1	
Dipendenti 2011	0,00123	-0,0119	-0,00993	-0,0479	-0,00831	1

* p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001

Fonte: nostra elaborazione

Tab. 4: Dimensione rete per anni di esperienza in rete

Anni rete/Dim.rete	count	mean	sd	min	max
1 Anno	54	8,5	7,3	2	23
2 Anni	44	6,1	2,6	3	9
3 Anni	27	13,0	6,8	2	18

Fonte: nostra elaborazione

La successiva tabella 5, propone alcune analisi descrittive del nostro campione (imprese automotive in rete) e del campione di controllo (imprese automotive non in rete), in particolare relative al settore di attività (classificato così come descritto al precedente paragrafo 4), del numero di

dipendenti, e del fatturato. Come emerge dalla tabella 5, le imprese in rete sono per lo più di piccole dimensioni per quanto riguarda il numero di addetti, e appartengono alle classi di fatturato medio-alte. Sono distribuite equamente tra i diversi settori di attività. Rispetto alle imprese non in rete, dal punto di vista dimensionale non si notano particolari differenze: il campione complessivamente sembra rappresentativo dell'universo. Al contrario, il campione vede largamente sottorappresentata la categoria di imprese fabbricatrici di apparecchi elettronici, macchinari, e autoveicoli, che costituiscono il 70% delle imprese non in rete.

Tab. 5: Analisi descrittive campione

	In rete	Non in rete
Attività		
0	20%	1%
1	25%	19%
2	28%	70%
3	27%	10%
Dipendenti		
<50	50%	60%
51-100	10%	8%
101-500	7%	8%
501-1000	2%	1%
>1000	2%	1%
n.d.	29%	22%
Fatturato (mgl€)		
0-100	6%	5%
101-500	6%	12%
501-1000	10%	8%
1001-50000	41%	47%
>50000	7%	6%
n.d.	30%	22%
Totale	100%	100%

Fonte: nostra elaborazione

Per indagare la relazione tra l'appartenenza ad una rete di impresa (e sue caratteristiche) e la *performance* delle singole imprese, è stato sviluppato un modello di regressione lineare multipla (uno per ciascuna variabile di *performance*), che assume la forma generica:

$$y_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 x_{i1} + \beta_2 x_{i2} + \ldots + \beta_4 x_{i4} + e_i \quad i=1,\ldots,n.$$

I modelli sono stati stimati con l'uso dello stimatore Sandwich della varianza (Huber, 1967; White, 1980; 1982), robusto rispetto ad alcuni tipi di errori di specificazione delle osservazioni, ad esempio quando i dati non provengono da un campione casuale o la distribuzione delle variabili non è indipendente e identicamente distribuita (i.i.d.). Vista la significatività della correlazione tra le variabili *Anni rete* e Dimensione rete è stato effettuato il test VIF (Variance Inflation Factors) per verificare eventuali problemi di multicollinearità nella stima dei coefficienti della regressione lineare.

Essendo il test negativo per le variabili interessate, le regressioni sono state effettuate includendo sia la variabile *Anni rete* che la variabile Dimensione rete. I risultati delle stime sono presentati alla successiva tabella 6.

Tab. 6: Regressione lineare multipla per EBIDTA e ROE

	EBIDTA b/se	**ROE b/se**
Anni rete=1	1,781 -1,28	2.818* -1,84
Anni rete=2	1,69 -1,43	2,278 -1,81
Anni rete=3	3.853** -2,23	4.764*** -2,37
Dimensione rete	-0,152 -0,12	-0,073 -0,08
Ateco=1	1.545*** -0,77	-4,121 -3,33
Ateco=2	-2,29 -1,87	-0,226 -1,83
Ateco=3	1,131 -0,79	0,049 -1,43
Dip.2011	0 0	-0,001 0
constant	-1,045 -0,73	-0,91 -1,49
N.obs	1318	1191
R-sqr	0	0
dfres	1309	1182

* p<0.15, ** p<0.10,***p<0.05

Fonte: nostra elaborazione

Come evidenziato dalla tabella 6, l'effetto di appartenere ad una rete sulla *performance* d'impresa sembra essere significativo e positivo, in modo consistente sui due indicatori di *performance* economica presi in considerazione. In particolare, le reti formate nel 2011 sembrano avere un'influenza positiva sulla *performance* aziendale, evidenziando come le imprese in rete raggiungano livelli di *performance* significativamente superiori rispetto alle imprese non in rete. Inoltre, vista la significatività della variabile relativa al settore di appartenenza dell'impresa, i modelli di regressione sono stati testati per ciascun codice Ateco, confermando la rilevanza delle variabili di rete (esperienza e dimensione) nello spiegare la *performance* d'impresa. Stante la correlazione elevata tra la variabile relativa all'esperienza di rete e quella relativa alla dimensione della rete, si è ritenuto necessario indagare ulteriormente tale relazione reiterando le regressioni con l'introduzione del termine di interazione tra le due variabili. La forma generica del modello sarà quindi la seguente:

$$y_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 x_{i1} + \beta_2 x_{i2} + \beta_3 (x_{i1} \times x_{i2}) + \ldots + \beta_5 x_{i5} + e_i \quad i=1,\ldots,n.$$

dove β_3 rappresenta l'effetto congiunto delle variabili anni e dimensione della rete. I risultati delle stime dei parametri sono presentati alla tabella

7. La significatività del termine di interazione suggerisce come l'effetto dell'esperienza di rete sulla *performance* dell'impresa sia diverso per diversi livelli della dimensione della rete. I coefficienti delle singole variabili (*Anni rete* e *Dimensione rete*) non possono più essere considerati come l'effetto unico della variabile sulla *performance* in quanto distribuito tra tutti i termini moltiplicati per ciascuna delle variabili. Il coefficiente di *Anni rete*=1, ad esempio, potrà essere considerato l'effetto dell'esperienza di rete solo quando la dimensione sia uguale a 0 (le imprese non in rete). Il segno negativo di entrambi i coefficienti delle variabili interagite rileva come la variabile relativa alla dimensione della rete riduca l'effetto positivo dell'esperienza di rete sulla *performance*. Come rappresentato dalla figura 1, dove è stata presa a titolo di esempio la variabile interagita *Anni rete*=1 (reti 2013) e *Dimensione rete,* la relazione tra l'esperienza di rete e la variabile di *performance* è maggiormente positiva per le reti di piccole dimensioni: al crescere della dimensione della rete, la relazione tra l'appartenere ad una rete d'impresa e la *performance* rimane positiva, ma con un coefficiente inferiore (la retta continua, che rappresenta le imprese appartenenti a reti di dimensioni maggiori, è meno inclinata della retta tratteggiata, che rappresenta le imprese appartenenti a reti di minori dimensioni). Ciò suggerisce come una dimensione maggiore della rete di imprese comporti una riduzione dell'effetto positivo dell'appartenenza alla rete sulla *performance* delle singole imprese.

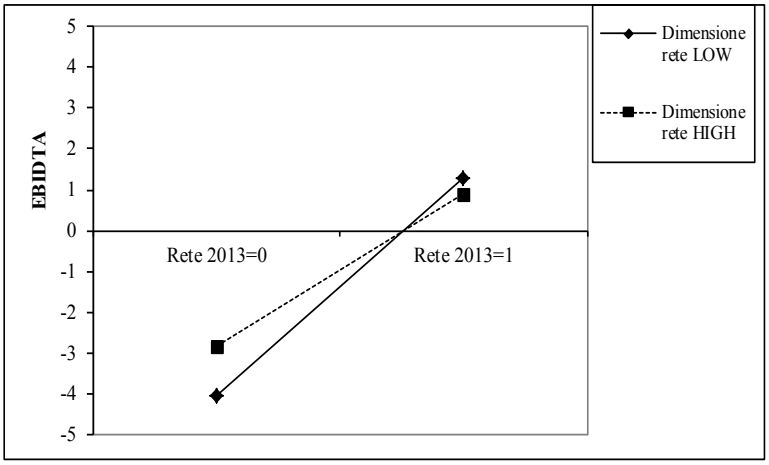
Tab. 7: Regressione lineare multipla per EBIDTA e ROE con termine di interazione

	EBIDTA b/se	**ROE b/se**
Anni rete=1	2.259* -1,42	3.609* -2,24
Anni rete=2	2,268 -2,08	2,163 -1,76
Anni rete=3	-1.603** -0,84	-1,728 -1,38
Dimensione rete	0.204*** -0,09	0.351* -0,22
Annirete1*Dim.rete	-0.410*** -0,19	-0.515** -0,27
Annirete2*Dim.rete	-0.449** -0,27	-0,404 -0,4
Ateco=1	1.673*** -0,8	-3,96 -3,29
Ateco=2	-2,162 -1,88	-0,048 -1,89
Ateco=3	1.339* -0,83	0,356 -1,54
Dip.2011	0 0	-0,001 0
constant	-1.180* -0,76	-1,096 -1,56
N.obs	1318	1191
R-sqr	0	0
dfres	1307	1180

* p<0.15, ** p<0.10,***p<0.05

Fonte: nostra elaborazione

Fig. 1: Effetto dell'interazione tra dimensione ed esperienza di rete sull'EBIDTA



Fonte: nostra elaborazione

6. Discussioni e conclusioni

I risultati presentati alla precedente sezione offrono interessanti spunti di riflessione sullo strumento del contratto di rete utilizzato nel settore automotive. In particolare, obiettivo del presente lavoro di ricerca era quello di indagare la relazione tra il contratto di rete e la *performance* di impresa, e da questo punto di vista i risultati dell'analisi dei dati offrono una conferma sulla presenza di una relazione positiva tra la *performance* economica aziendale e l'adesione ad una rete di imprese (Williamson, 1979; Uzzi, 1997; Powell *et al.,* 1996).

Le regressioni presentate sugli indici *EBIDTA* e *ROE*, infatti, mostrano coefficienti positivi e significativi per la variabile categorica *Anni rete*, mostrando anche una crescente magnitudo al crescere degli anni di esperienza in rete: da più anni l'impresa ha aderito ad una rete, più alto è l'effetto di tale adesione sulla *performance*. Questo risultato conferma dunque quelle che sono le ipotesi formulate in letteratura (Podolny e Page, 1998), nonché quelle alla base dell'intenzione del legislatore che ha promosso lo strumento del contratto di rete per incentivare lo sviluppo economico delle PMI italiane. Per quanto riguarda i fornitori *automotive*, i risultati suggeriscono che la direzione dell'aggregazione sia senz'altro quella giusta in un'ottica di maggior efficienza ed efficacia nella gestione. Ad un ulteriore approfondimento delle analisi è emerso un altro importante risultato: i risultati delle analisi qui presentate dimostrano come la maggior dimensione della rete in realtà eserciti un "effetto freno" sull'impatto positivo dell'adesione alla rete sulla *performance* aziendale. In particolare i dati sui fornitori automotive italiani qui analizzati suggeriscono che più a lungo un'impresa partecipi ad una rete inter-organizzativa, più alto sia l'effetto sulla *performance*; ma tale effetto positivo si riduce all'aumentare del numero di imprese aderenti al contratto di rete. Tale conclusione suggerisce che i costi di coordinamento e di collaborazione (Williamson,

1979) tra le imprese siano in qualche modo superiori rispetto ai benefici apportati dalle risorse e competenze degli ulteriori membri aderenti (Powell *et al.* 1996, Powell *et al.* 1999).

Questo studio ha dunque rilevanti implicazioni di *policy* poiché mostra come lo strumento di rete possa essere efficace in settori complessi e turbolenti come l'automotive che però, nel loro complesso e a livello globale, sono in crescita. Inoltre, questa ricerca suggerisce come strutturare la rete, privilegiando un numero contenuto di partner, e l'importanza di dare alla rete un orizzonte sufficientemente lungo per permetterle di raggiungere gli obiettivi prefissati e per permettere alle imprese coinvolte di condividere competenze, risorse e creare tra loro meccanismi di integrazione performanti. Ai *policy makers* si presenta dunque una doppia sfida. La prima è aiutare le imprese in rete a comprendere a livello micro come dividere, coordinare, controllare e pianificare il loro lavoro. La seconda è identificare le caratteristiche strutturali e anagrafiche delle reti più performanti. Ad esempio lo studio di Foresti (2015) mostra che la partecipazione a reti rafforza la competitività e le *performance* soprattutto delle imprese più piccole e con poche competenze immateriali ma inserite in reti guidate da soggetti capofila. La domanda di ricerca che si delinea è dunque non solo "se" partecipare ad una rete convenga ma anche "come" strutturare e gestire la rete. Naturalmente lo studio presenta dei limiti. Le imprese in rete nell'auto sono ancora poche e appartengono a diversi settori produttivi. I codici Ateco considerati risultano in alcuni casi significativi suggerendo, nel complesso, la necessità di sviluppare in futuro altri studi settoriali. Lo studio della relazione tra contratto di rete e *performance* in altri settori permetterà di comprendere se e quanto i risultati di questa ricerca potranno essere estesi ad altri contesti. Inoltre nei prossimi anni saranno disponibili altri dati che renderanno possibile comprendere meglio l'impatto dell'esperienza in rete sulla sua *performance*. In particolare sarà possibile integrare il modello con variabili di controllo dell'impresa (variabili relative alla *corporate governance*, alle caratteristiche del management, etc.) e della rete (variabili relative alla struttura della rete, all'ambito operativo della rete, agli obiettivi della rete, ecc.). Infine, come suggerito da Cabigiosu e Proto (2015), l'analisi dettagliata dell'impatto della rete sulla *performance* delle imprese potrebbe considerare anche gli obiettivi della rete. In particolare gli autori distinguono tra reti generaliste, che dichiarano di perseguire contemporaneamente diversi obiettivi (spesso sono create per progettare, produrre e commercializzare congiuntamente prodotti e servizi), e reti specialiste focalizzate su obiettivi molto specifici, come la commercializzazione di un prodotto in una specifica area geografica o lo sviluppo congiunto di un brevetto. Reti generaliste e specialiste potrebbero beneficiare diversamente dall'appartenenza alla rete e diverse potrebbero essere le variabili di *performance* da considerare.

Bibliografia

ALEGRE J., CHIVA R. (2008), "Assessing the impact of organizational learning capability on product innovation performance. An empirical test", *Technovation*, vol. 28, n. 6, pp. 315-326.

BALCET G. (2002), "I limiti della globalizzazione mirata di Fiat Auto", *Economia e Politica Industriale*, vol. 29, n. 116, pp.87-100.

BARTOLI F., FERRI G., MURRO P., ROTONDI Z. (2013), "Reti d'impresa, performance e assetti banca-impresa", *Bancaria*, n. 1, pp. 57-78.

BELL G. (2005), "Clusters, networks, and firm innovativeness", S*trategic Management Journal,* vol. 26, n. 3, pp. 287-295.

BIANCHI R., ENRIETTI A., LANZETTI R. (2001), "The technological car district in Piedmont: definitions, dynamic, policy", *International Journal of Automotive Technology and Management,* vol. 1, n. 4, pp. 397-415.

BRADACH J.L., ECCLES R.G. (1989), "Price, authority, and trust - From ideal types to plural forms", *Annual Review of Sociology,* vol. 15, pp. 97-118.

BRUNETTA F., CENSI A., RULLANI F., VICENTINI F. (2015), "Le reti d'impresa per aumentare la competitività. L'esperienza dei contratti di rete nel bresciano", *Sinergie Italian Journal of Management*, vol. 33, n. 98, pp. 261-285.

CABIGIOSU A., PROTO A. (2015), "Le reti di imprese: accesso al credito e misurazione delle performance", *Bancaria*, vol. 2, pp. 70-83.

CAPUANO G. (2015), "La "mesoeconomia" del contratto di rete: tra teoria e analisi empirica", *Economia e Società Regionale,* vol. 2015/2, n. 2, pp. 42-59.

FORESTI G. (2015), "I contratti di rete in Italia. Prime evidenze sulla loro efficacia", *Economia e Società Regionale*, vol. 2015/2, n. 2, pp. 76-93.

GULATI R. (1995), " Does Familiarity breed trust? The implications of reapeted ties for contractualchoice in alliances", *Academy of Management Journal,* vol. 38, n. 1, pp. 85-112.

HUBER P.J. (1967), "The behavior of maximum likelihood estimates under nonstandard conditions", in *Proceedings of the fifth Berkeley symposium on mathematical statistics and probability*, vol. 1, n. 1, pp. 221-233.

IAMICELI P. (2009), *Le reti di imprese e i contratti di rete*, G. Giappichelli, Torino.

MASON K., OSHRI I., LEEK S. (2012), "Shared learning in supply networks: evidence from an emerging market supply network", *European Journal of Marketing*, vol. 46, n. 11/12, pp. 1743-1762.

MORETTI A. (2017), *The Network Organization. A Governance perspective on structure, dynamics, and performance*, Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke.

MORETTI A., ZIRPOLI F. (2016a), "A Dynamic Theory of Network Failure: The Case of the Venice Film Festival and the Local Hospitality System", *Organization Studies*, vol. 37, n. 5, pp. 607-633.

MORETTI A., ZIRPOLI F. (a cura di, 2016b), *Osservatorio sulla componentistica automotive italiana 2016,* ed. Ca' Foscari, vol. 1, Venezia.

PODOLNY J.M. (2001), "Networks as the Pipes and Prisms of the Market", *American Journal of Sociology*, vol. 107, n. 1, pp. 33-60.

PODOLNY J.M., PAGE K.L. (1998), "Network Forms of Organization", *Annual Review of Sociology,* vol. 24, pp. 57-76.

POWELL W.W., KOPUT K.W., SMITH-DOERR L. (1996), "Interorganizational Collaboration and the Locus of Innovation: Networks of Learning in Biotechnology", *Administrative Science Quarterly,* vol. 41, n. 1, pp. 116-145.

POWELL W.W., KOPUT K.W., SMITH-DOERR L., OWEN-SMITH J. (1999), "Network Position and Firm Performance: Organizational Returns to Collaboration in the Biotechnology Industry", *Research in the Sociology of Organizations,* vol. 16, n. 1, pp. 129-159.

PROVAN K.G., SYDOW J. (2008), "Evaluating inter-organizational relationships", in Copper S., Ebers M., Huxham C., Ring P.S. (eds), *Handbook of Inter-organizational Relations,* Oxford, pp. 691-708.

RICCIARDI A. (2013), "I distretti industriali italiani: recenti tendenze evolutive", *Sinergie*, n. 91, pp. 21-58.

SCHRANK A., WHITFORD J. (2011) "The Anatomy of Network Failure", *Sociological Theory*, vol. 29, n. 3, pp. 151-177.

SERIO L., VISCONTI F. (2015), "La competitività delle PMI in un'economia senza confini: sfide strategiche e modelli di sviluppo", *Quaderni di ricerca sull'artigianato,* vol. 1/2015, pp. 3-24.

TUNISINI A., CAPUANO G., ARRIGO T., BERTANI R. (2013), *Contratto di rete. Lo strumento Made in Italy per integrare individualità e aggregazione*, Franco Angeli, Milano, pp. 1-144.

UZZI B. (1997), "Social Structure and Competition in Interfirm Networks: The Paradox of Embeddedness", *Administrative Science Quarterly,* vol. 42, n.1, pp. 35-67.

WHITE H. (1980), "A heteroskedasticity-consistent covariance matrix estimator and a direct test for heteroskedasticity", *Econometrica: Journal of the Econometric Society,* vol. 48, n. 4, pp. 817-838.

WHITE H. (1982), "Maximum likelihood estimation of misspecified models", *Econometrica: Journal of the Econometric Society,* vol. 50, n. 1, pp. 1-25.

WHITFORD J., ENRICHETTI A. (2005), "Surviving the fall of King: The regional institutional implications of crisis at Fiat Auto", *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research,* vol. 29, n. 4, pp. 771-795.

WHITFORD J. (2005), *The New Old Economy. Networks, Institutions, and the Organizational Transformation of American Manufacturing,* Oxford University Press, Oxford.

WHITFORD J., ZIRPOLI F. (2014), "Pragmatism, practice, and the boundaries of organization", *Organization Science,* vol. 25, n. 6, pp. 1823-1839.

WHITFORD J., ZIRPOLI F. (2016) "The Network Firm as a Political Coalition", *Organization Studies*, vol. 37, n. 9, pp. 1227-1248 .

WILLIAMSON O.E. (1979), "Transaction-Cost Economics: The Governance of Contractual Relations", *Journal of Law and Economics,* vol. 22, n. 2, pp. 233-261.

ZIRPOLI F. (2010), *Organizzare l'innovazione. Strategie di esternalizzazione e processi di apprendimento in Fiat Auto,* Il Mulino, Bologna, pp. 1-216.

Internet websites

Il quarto Osservatorio Intesa Sanpaolo-Mediocredito Italiano sulle reti d'impresa, Direzione Studi e Ricerche, Marzo 2014, *http://www.foragri.com/public/Section/Reti%20di%20impresa%20in%20Italia%202014.pdf*

Il quinto Osservatorio Intesa Sanpaolo-Mediocredito Italiano sulle reti d'impresa, Direzione Studi e Ricerche, Novembre 2014, *http://www.portale-infrastrutture.it/writable/documenti/osservatorioretidiimpresa_novembre2014.pdf*

Infocamere, 2015 *http://contrattidirete.registroimprese.it/reti/*

Osservatorio sulla filiera autoveicolare italiana 2013, Step Ricerche Srl in collaborazione con l'Ufficio Studi della Cciaa di Torino, quello della Camera di Commercio di Chieti e della camera di Commercio di Modena, *http://www.starnet.unioncamere.it/download.php?id=24145*

Academic or professional position and contacts

Anna Cabigiosu
Assistant Professor in Management
University Ca' Foscari, Venice - Italy
e-mail: anna.cabigiosu@unive.it

Anna Moretti
Assistant Professor in Management
University Ca' Foscari, Venice - Italy
e-mail: anna.moretti@unive.it

Michela Pacella
Research collaborator
CAMI - Center for Automotive and Mobility Innovation
University Ca' Foscari, Venice - Italy
e-mail: michela.pacella@unive.it

sinergie
italian journal of management

ISSN 0393-5108
DOI 10.7433/s105.2018.05
pp. 83-103

FONDAZIONE CUEIM

Creatività vs patrimonio culturale? The winner takes it all[1]

Received
9th January 2017
Revised
12th July 2017
Accepted
16th January 2018

Mara Cerquetti

Abstract

***Obiettivo del paper**: Il presente contributo analizza le origini, le caratteristiche e gli effetti dello slittamento verso la creatività a cui si è assistito nelle politiche culturali a livello europeo nel corso degli ultimi vent'anni, al fine di comprenderne l'impatto sulla gestione del patrimonio culturale e dei musei.*

***Metodologia**: Il lavoro verifica i risultati della ricognizione della letteratura su questo tema attraverso l'analisi del caso del Regno Unito, paese europeo in cui ha avuto origine l'approccio basato sulla creatività. Dopo aver ripercorso il dibattito scientifico sulle industrie culturali e creative (ICC), vengono messi in luce la nascita e lo sviluppo dell'economia creativa. La ricerca è basata sull'esame dettagliato di articoli scientifici, documenti di policy e report e convalidata da alcune interviste in profondità ad un campione di musei londinesi.*

***Risultati**: I risultati della ricerca rivelano come lo spostamento verso la creatività abbia concorso alla marginalizzazione del cultural heritage nelle politiche culturali in favore delle ICC stricto sensu e alla conseguente affermazione di modelli che non sempre tengono conto della specificità e del valore delle risorse locali. Limiti sono stati registrati anche nel conseguimento degli obiettivi di inclusione sociale e democratizzazione culturale e nella promozione della cross-fertilization tra i diversi settori culturali.*

***Limiti della ricerca:** Il lavoro ha i limiti della ricerca qualitativa. Un suo ulteriore sviluppo, oltre all'ampliamento dell'oggetto dell'indagine, potrebbe comprendere l'analisi dei risultati della programmazione culturale europea.*

***Implicazioni pratiche:** Il contributo fornisce suggerimenti a policy makers e manager pubblici e privati operanti nel settore culturale proponendo di esplorare modelli alternativi basati sulla valorizzazione delle risorse place-specific ai fini dello sviluppo sostenibile nel contesto glocale.*

***Originalità del paper:** Nel contesto del crescente entusiasmo verso forme di sviluppo creative-driven la ricerca mette in luce alcuni limiti dei modelli predominanti.*

Parole chiave: patrimonio culturale; musei; industrie culturali e creative; politiche culturali

[1] La ricerca da cui nasce questo lavoro è stata finanziata dall'Università di Macerata nel 2015 attraverso il "BANDO GIOVANI RICERCATORI - a.a. 2014-2015". L'autrice ringrazia l'ICCE - Institute for Creative and Cultural Entrepreneurship, Goldsmiths University of London, per l'ospitalità nel periodo da gennaio ad aprile 2016. Un ringraziamento speciale va ai musei che hanno partecipato alla ricerca, in particolare alle persone che hanno accettato di essere intervistate.

sinergie
italian journal of management
Vol. 36, N. 105, 2018

Creativity vs cultural heritage? The winner takes it all

Purpose of the paper: *The paper analyses the origins, features and effects of the shift towards creativity in cultural policy over the last twenty years, aiming at understanding its impact on cultural heritage and museum management.*

Methodology*: The research verifies the findings of the literature review on this matter analysing the case of the UK as the European country where the creativity-based approach was born. After going over the scientific debate on cultural and creative industries (CCI), the beginning of creative economy and its development are pointed out. The research is based on the deep examination of scientific articles, policy documents and reports and strengthened by some in-depth interviews to a sample of museum managers in London.*

Results*: The research results reveal that the shift towards creativity has marginalised cultural heritage in cultural policy in favour of CCI stricto sensu, determining the predominance of models that do not consider the specificity and value of local resources. Goals of social inclusion, democratization of culture and cross-fertilization between different cultural sectors too have not been fully achieved.*

Research limitation: *This paper has the limitations of the qualitative research. A further development could encompass the widening of the field of investigation and the analysis of the results of European cultural programmes.*

Practical implications: *The paper provides advice to policy makers and public and private cultural managers, suggesting the opportunity of a deeper exploration of alternative models based on the enhancement of place-specific resources and aimed at promoting sustainable development in the glocal context.*

Originality of the paper: *In the context of an increasing enthusiasm towards creative-driven approaches the research highlights some limits of the prevailing models.*

Key words: cultural heritage; museums; cultural and creative industries; cultural policies

> Se c'è un continuo arricchimento di termini tratti dagli studi specializzati (processo da tempo in atto nell'italiano), quello che è acquisito dalla lingua non è il rigore lessicale ma sono solo le sue immagini sonore, non è la soddisfazione di stringere la realtà in modo che non scappi ma è un nuovo sistema di allusioni, non è la fondamentale democraticità di un rapporto tecnico con le cose ma un nuovo accento dell'Autorità.
>
> (Calvino, 1995 [1965], p. 147)

1. Introduzione

"Ma come parla? […] Chi parla male, pensa male e vive male. Bisogna trovare le parole giuste: le parole sono importanti!", gridava ad una giornalista Michele Apicella in un'ormai celebre scena di "Palombella rossa", film del 1989 diretto e interpretato da Nanni Moretti. Nell'arco degli ultimi vent'anni, nelle scienze sociali il valore delle parole è stato oggetto di vari studi, che hanno preso in esame ora il potere discriminante del linguaggio (Butler, 1997) ora, e più di recente, il "cedimento linguistico" a cui si sta assistendo nell'era della finanza derivata (Appadurai, 2015). Il linguaggio viene così riconosciuto come un potente strumento per re-inventare l'ordine del mondo sostituendone gli ideali di riferimento (Caust, 2003, p. 56).

Lungo il solco di questa sensibilità alle parole, il presente contributo riflette sul linguaggio che a partire dalla fine degli anni '90 del Novecento si è progressivamente imposto nelle politiche culturali e sulla *Weltanschauung* che lo sottende, concentrandosi sulle implicazioni per il management culturale. In particolare il lavoro focalizza l'attenzione sul ruolo crescente della creatività nelle politiche culturali e sulla progressiva emergenza delle industrie culturali e creative (ICC), per comprenderne l'effetto sulla gestione del *cultural heritage* e degli istituti culturali preposti alla sua conservazione e valorizzazione come i musei. Tenendo conto delle più recenti innovazioni concettuali condivise a livello internazionale, in questa sede per *cultural heritage* o eredità culturale[2] si intende

> un insieme di risorse ereditate dal passato che le popolazioni identificano, indipendentemente da chi ne detenga la proprietà, come riflesso ed espressione dei loro valori, credenze, conoscenze e tradizioni, in continua evoluzione. Essa comprende tutti gli aspetti dell'ambiente che sono il risultato dell'interazione nel corso del tempo fra le popolazioni e i luoghi (Council of Europe, 2005, art. 2).

Dopo aver analizzato i contenuti e gli obiettivi delle più recenti politiche europee in materia, la ricerca prende in esame alcuni rapporti prodotti a livello nazionale, mettendo in luce la confusione di termini e di categorie che li contraddistingue. Considerata l'influenza che certe classificazioni hanno negli investimenti, nell'orientamento delle politiche culturali e nella definizione delle strategie manageriali, si ripercorre l'affermarsi della creatività prima e delle ICC poi nelle politiche culturali, con particolare riferimento al dibattito scientifico che ha accompagnato l'utilizzo e l'evoluzione di certi concetti nell'ambito degli studi economico-gestionali. Centrale in questo dibattito è stato il contributo degli studi anglosassoni e, in Europa, delle politiche avviate in Gran Bretagna a partire dalla seconda metà degli anni '90 del Novecento fino alla fine del primo decennio del XXI secolo. Per molti studiosi, infatti, è stato a seguito della vittoria dei New Labour nel 1997 che si è assistito ad un decisivo slittamento semantico e che il termine "industrie creative" ha conquistato la supremazia nelle politiche pubbliche (Galloway e Dunlop, 2007, p. 18). Questo orientamento viene indagato prendendo in esame articoli scientifici, rapporti di ricerca e documenti di *policy* e ulteriormente verificato attraverso alcune interviste in profondità ad un campione di musei londinesi, diversi per titolo proprietario, dimensioni e tipologia delle collezioni.

L'obiettivo è quello di comprendere se l'attuale attenzione ai settori culturali e creativi costituisca un'opportunità o una minaccia per il patrimonio culturale in paesi, come l'Italia, in cui la sua capillare diffusione

[2] Considerando la sua diffusione nel linguaggio comune, nel presente contributo l'espressione "patrimonio culturale" viene utilizzata nell'accezione (più ampia) dell'inglese *cultural heritage* (letteralmente "eredità culturale"). *Stricto sensu,* nel contesto giuridico italiano, il patrimonio culturale ha però una nozione più circoscritta, coincidente con l'insieme dei beni culturali e paesaggistici di cui all'art. 2 del Codice dei beni culturali e del paesaggio (D. Lgs. 22 gennaio 2004, n. 42), e non comprende dunque il patrimonio culturale immateriale incluso invece nella nozione di *cultural heritage* (Cammelli, 2017, pp. 16-17).

costituisce un vantaggio competitivo inimitabile a livello internazionale. Nello specifico, da un lato, si cercherà di capire se nell'attuale dibattito il *cultural heritage* sia stato marginalizzato e se le politiche culturali siano diventate esclusivamente le politiche delle ICC; dall'altro, se lo slittamento verso la creatività abbia promosso la *cross-fertilization* tra diversi settori aiutando le organizzazioni operanti nel settore del patrimonio culturale a migliorare le loro performance e a raggiungere la propria missione.

Nella parte conclusiva del lavoro si propone una possibile declinazione dell'approccio emergente che non perda di vista le risorse idiosincratiche di un territorio, ovvero i *place-specific assets* sui quali poter innestare strategie di sviluppo sostenibile e duraturo a livello locale, ma in ottica globale (Oakley, 2004).

2. Culturale o creativo? Questo è il problema

2.1 La strategia europea per i settori culturali e creativi

Nell'aprile del 2010, in linea con la strategia "Europa 2020" e alcune delle sue "iniziative faro"[3], la Commissione Europea ha pubblicato il Libro Verde sulle ICC, *Unlocking the potential of cultural and creative industries* ("Le industrie culturali e creative, un potenziale da sfruttare"), al fine di promuovere un approccio strategico che faccia dell'"eccezionale patrimonio culturale [europeo] la base di una solida economia creativa e della coesione della società" (Commissione Europea, 2010, p. 4). In tale documento si opta per il termine "industrie" al posto di "settori", adottando al contempo una nozione ampia e *sui generis* di ICC[4], comprensiva del patrimonio culturale e del settore pubblico.

Puntando a promuovere la *cross-fertilization* tra le diverse componenti del settore culturale e creativo, il Libro Verde non mette in luce, pur

[3] Si vedano in particolare: "L'Unione per l'innovazione", "Un'agenda europea del digitale", "Un'agenda per nuove competenze e nuovi posti di lavoro" e "Una politica industriale per l'era della globalizzazione".

[4] Secondo la definizione fornita dal Libro Verde "le 'industrie culturali' sono le industrie che producono e distribuiscono beni o servizi che, quando vengono concepiti, sono considerati possedere un carattere, un uso o uno scopo specifici che incorporano o trasmettono espressioni culturali, quale che sia il loro valore commerciale. Oltre ai settori tradizionali delle arti (arti dello spettacolo, arti visive, patrimonio culturale - compreso il settore pubblico), questi beni e servizi comprendono anche i film, i Dvd e i video, la televisione e la radio, i giochi video, i nuovi media, la musica, i libri e la stampa. Questo concetto è definito in relazione alle espressioni culturali nel contesto della convenzione UNESCO sulla protezione e la promozione della diversità delle espressioni culturali (2005). Le 'industrie creative' sono le industrie che utilizzano la cultura come input e hanno una dimensione culturale, anche se i loro output hanno un carattere principalmente funzionale. Comprendono l'architettura e il design, che integrano elementi creativi in processi più ampi, e sottosettori come il design grafico, il design di moda o la pubblicità. A un livello più periferico, molti altri settori, tra l'altro quelli del turismo e delle nuove tecnologie, si basano sulla produzione di contenuti per il loro sviluppo e sono quindi in certa misura interdipendenti con le industrie culturali e creative. Questi settori non sono compresi esplicitamente nel concetto di industrie culturali e creative utilizzato in questo Libro verde" (Commissione Europea, 2010, p. 6).

distinguendole, le differenze tra *cultural heritage* e *performing arts*, tra industrie culturali e industrie creative. Nello specifico la strategia promossa in questo documento non considera i differenti bisogni e le caratteristiche distintive delle diverse organizzazioni operanti nel settore culturale e creativo, a partire dalle differenze tra beni pubblici, caratterizzati da non rivalità e non escludibilità dal consumo, e in grado di generare esternalità positive non remunerate all'atto dello scambio (es. patrimonio culturale), e beni privati, caratterizzati da rivalità ed escludibilità e scambiati ad un prezzo di mercato (es. media e stampa), o più in generale tra attività culturali "profittevoli" e "non profittevoli", da alcuni ritenute sostanziali per decidere le politiche settoriali più appropriate (Valentino, 2012, p. 61). Altra differenza trascurata, e connessa alle precedenti, è quella tra il patrimonio culturale, come testimonianza materiale e immateriale dell'umanità e del suo ambiente, e l'arte e le attività culturali svolte nel presente, che non necessariamente entreranno a far parte del patrimonio culturale europeo.

Lo stesso approccio è oggi condiviso da "Europa Creativa", il programma dell'Unione Europea per i settori culturali e creativi 2014-2020, finalizzato a promuovere e a salvaguardare la diversità linguistica e culturale europea e a rafforzare la competitività del settore culturale e creativo per favorire una crescita economica intelligente, sostenibile e inclusiva. Come da alcuni suggerito, ci sarebbe da capire se alla base di tale approccio indifferenziato non vi sia la volontà di dare maggior peso al settore industriale culturale e creativo *stricto sensu*. All'origine potrebbero esservi "le pressioni dei paesi del centro-nord Europa (molto più presenti nel settore delle CCI [*Cultural and Creative Industries*] che non del patrimonio culturale rispetto ai paesi del centro-sud Europa), che in questo modo potranno, nel periodo 2014-2020, godere di vantaggi rilevanti nell'ottenere finanziamenti europei, rispetto ai paesi del centro-sud Europa nei quali prevale il *cultural heritage*" (Donato, 2013, p. 32).

Una risposta adeguata a tale quesito potrà essere fornita alla scadenza della programmazione 2014-2020, attualmente ancora in corso, attraverso l'analisi e la valutazione di tutti i progetti finanziati, dei relativi beneficiari, delle partnership costituite e dei risultati conseguiti. Certo è, però, che tale approccio ha contribuito ad alimentare un po' di confusione nella comprensione di un macro-settore i cui contenuti e confini sono già abbastanza ambigui e sfuggenti. Non si mette qui in dubbio lo slancio, positivo e rilevante, nei confronti degli investimenti nel settore culturale, ma non si può nemmeno trascurare il rischio di un appiattimento che può essere dannoso nella misura in cui impedisce di vedere il peso di gerarchie ed esclusioni e di individuare le reali lacune del sistema e, di conseguenza, le corrette strategie per colmarle.

2.2 Confini di difficile definizione

Il 22 febbraio 2014, al momento del suo insediamento, il ministro dei Beni, delle Attività Culturali e del Turismo, Dario Franceschini, ha definito il suo ministero "il più importante ministero economico italiano" (E&Y, 2015, p. 3). Il valore economico del patrimonio culturale, in effetti, è oggi

ampiamente riconosciuto. Come stabilito dalla Convenzione di Faro, firmata dall'Italia nel 2013, ma ancora in attesa di ratifica, l'eredità culturale è *source* e *resource*, in grado di promuovere non solo la diversità culturale e una migliore qualità della vita, lo sviluppo umano e la costruzione di una società pacifica e democratica, ma anche la creatività contemporanea e lo sviluppo sostenibile (Council of Europe, 2005). Al fine di raggiungere questi obiettivi anche il recente rapporto *Cultural heritage Counts for Europe* adotta un approccio fondato su quattro pilastri, per misurare l'impatto sociale, economico, culturale e ambientale del patrimonio culturale (CHCfE, 2015).

Tuttavia, da un punto di vista economico, quando si analizzano il ruolo e l'impatto dei settori culturali, il patrimonio culturale è spesso incluso in un più ampio spettro di attività culturali e creative i cui confini sono alquanto incerti e in cui la posizione del *cultural heritage* non è ben definita. In Italia, secondo il primo studio sulle ICC, *Italia Creativa,* nel 2014 il settore culturale e creativo ha generato un valore economico complessivo pari a 40,1 miliardi di euro (E&Y, 2015, p. 10), impiegando 850.000 persone corrispondenti al 3,8% della forza lavoro italiana (E&Y, 2015, p. 17 e p. 27)[5], mentre secondo il rapporto *Io sono cultura* nello stesso anno il Sistema Produttivo Culturale e Creativo ha prodotto 78,6 miliardi di euro, impiegando il 5,9% della forza lavoro (Symbola e Unioncamere, 2015, p. 25). Tali discrepanze dipendono dai differenti metodi applicati nei due rapporti per disegnare il perimetro del settore culturale e creativo: mentre il primo considera 11 sub-settori culturali e creativi (architettura, arti performative, arti visive, cinema, libri, musica, pubblicità, quotidiani e periodici, radio, televisione e *home entertainment*, videogiochi) (E&Y, 2015, p. 12), il secondo identifica 5 categorie nell'ambito delle ICC (patrimonio culturale, arti performative e visive o attività culturali non riproducibili, industrie culturali, industrie creative - design, architettura e comunicazione - e attività *creative-driven*, comprendenti tutte quelle attività economiche che hanno una stretta sinergia con il settore culturale e creativo) (Symbola e Unioncamere, 2015, pp. 51-52).

Analizzando nel dettaglio il ruolo del patrimonio culturale, il rapporto di Ernst & Young include musei, monumenti e siti archeologici nella categoria "arti visive", escludendo biblioteche e archivi, che pure sono istituti preposti alla tutela e valorizzazione del patrimonio culturale. Si rinnova così la confusione tra "arte" e "patrimonio culturale" (Cerquetti, 2014; Montella, 2016), già alimentata dal rapporto *Economy of Culture in Europe* (KEA European Affairs, 2006), che colloca il *cultural heritage* nel "*core arts field*". Infine, se si vuole comprendere il valore del patrimonio culturale, sarà bene metterne in luce gli specifici punti di forza e di debolezza rispetto agli altri sub-settori. Quando se ne analizza il contributo al PIL e all'occupazione, il patrimonio culturale e gli altri sub-settori hanno infatti differenti performance. Nel 2015, il valore aggiunto generato dalle attività *creative-driven* è stato del 2,3% e quello delle industrie culturali del 2,2%, mentre il patrimonio culturale ha raggiunto solo lo 0,2% (Symbola e Unioncamere, 2016, p. 63). Molto simile è la situazione riguardante l'occupazione: 2,4% è la percentuale degli occupati nelle attività *creative-*

[5] Tali dati si riferiscono alle attività e agli impiegati diretti.

driven, 2% quella nelle industrie creative e solo 0,2% nel patrimonio culturale (Symbola e Unioncamere, 2016, p. 64).

I risultati non sono rassicuranti neanche quando si considera il ritorno economico generato dal patrimonio culturale: nel 2007, l'Italia ha ottenuto un ritorno medio di 0,5 milioni di euro per sito culturale, mentre, nello stesso anno, negli USA il ritorno è stato 8,16 volte superiore a quello italiano; 1,8 milioni di euro sono stati generati dalla Francia e 3,3 milioni di euro dal Regno Unito (E&Y, 2015, p. 4). Tuttavia l'effetto moltiplicatore del patrimonio culturale è il più alto dopo quello del fiorente settore *creative-driven* - rispettivamente 2,09 e 2,20 nel 2015 (Symbola e Unioncamere, 2016, p. 96). Il patrimonio culturale, infatti, va considerato un bene pubblico che genera esternalità positive non solo nei settori connessi, ma anche in quelli correlati, come il turismo e l'agroalimentare.

Tracciando alcune considerazioni preliminari sul significato di tali dati, si rileva che i risultati spesso entusiastici di simili report non ci consentono di cogliere gli specifici bisogni e i punti di forza dei differenti sub-settori, né forniscono indicazioni strategiche per il management culturale. Sarà, dunque, bene indagare la questione da un punto di vista scientifico-teorico, cercando di capire non solo l'origine e le motivazioni che sottendono l'approccio basato sulle ICC, ma anche gli effetti manageriali.

3. Oltre la retorica della creatività: il framework teorico di riferimento

3.1 Dall'armatura culturale all'atmosfera creativa nei processi di sviluppo locale

Nel corso degli ultimi quindici anni la letteratura internazionale ha riservato un'attenzione crescente all'economia creativa (Howkins, 2001), alle industrie creative (Caves, 2000; Hesmondhalgh, 2007) e alla classe creativa (Florida, 2002), con un progressivo spostamento del dibattito scientifico - ma non solo - dal "culturale" al "creativo". La creatività è così diventata un imperativo economico, ben oltre i tradizionali confini culturali e finanche creativi:

> secondo questa retorica, si ritiene che il futuro di un'economia nazionale competitiva dipenda dalla conoscenza, dalla flessibilità, dalla responsabilità personale e dalle capacità di *problem solving* dei lavoratori e dei loro manager, i quali, a quanto pare, sono favoriti e incoraggiati da metodi creativi nel business, nell'educazione, nell'industria. Qui, trova spazio un focus particolare sul contributo delle "industrie creative". Questa retorica annette il concetto di creatività al servizio di un programma e di un discorso economici neoliberali (Banaji *et al.*, 2010, p. 70, *t.d.a.*)[6].

[6] "The future of a competitive national economy is seen to depend, in this rhetoric, on the knowledge, flexibility, personal responsibility and problem solving skills of workers and their managers. These are, apparently, fostered and encouraged by creative methods in business, education and industry. There is a particular focus here on the contribution of the 'creative industries'. This rhetoric annexes the concept of creativity in the service of a neo-liberal economic programme and discourse" (Banaji *et al.*, 2010, p. 70).

In Italia tale retorica è stata supportata anche dalla letteratura economico-manageriale (Sacco, 2010; Santagata, 2009 e 2014; Sedita e Paiola, 2009; Della Lucia, 2014), con un impatto sulle politiche pubbliche nazionali e regionali. Ne forniscono una conferma alcuni recenti progetti di distretto culturale contraddistinti da un passaggio dall'"armatura culturale" all'"atmosfera creativa" (Bertacchini e Santagata, 2012; Cerquetti e Ferrara, 2015; Montella, 2015; Sacco *et al.*, 2015). Tale approccio prevede l'applicazione del modello proposto da Scott (2010) per le grandi citta e le aree metropolitane negli Stati Uniti ai *cluster* di città di piccole e medie dimensioni: considerando che la localizzazione è un fattore rilevante nei processi creativi (Drake, 2003), ci si aspetta che i *cluster* culturali funzionino come contesti di fiducia, socializzazione, conoscenza, ispirazione, scambio e innovazione incrementale in un ambiente di produzione caratterizzato da alti livelli di rischio e incertezza (Mommas, 2004, p. 521).

Se si guarda, però, alle indagini condotte dall'OECD sul rapporto tra attività culturali e turismo e sull'impatto della nascita dell'industria creativa su questo rapporto (OECD, 2009 e 2014), si rileva che gli attori principali sono soprattutto le città di maggiori dimensioni, che già da decenni "utilizzano le composite offerte del settore culturale per migliorare il loro posizionamento sui mercati nazionali e internazionali, per accrescere la loro capacità di attrazione sia di flussi di visitatori che di attività economiche e di capitali" (Valentino, 2016, p. 288). Questo dato, sebbene positivo e di incentivo per i contesti urbani, rileva i possibili limiti dell'applicazione di certe politiche nelle aree non metropolitane, spesso marginali e più fragili, che non hanno le potenzialità di innovazione delle grandi città, ma in cui spesso, come in Italia, è capillarmente distribuito il patrimonio culturale.

I tempi non sono ancora maturi per misurare e valutare gli impatti di lungo periodo dei progetti avviati con tale approccio. Tuttavia sono possibili alcune osservazioni di carattere metodologico. Condividendo l'approccio basato sulle risorse, quando si progettano e realizzano distretti culturali, avvalendosi di un'analisi strategica preliminare, occorrerebbe identificare gli asset distintivi che sono alla base del successo locale nel contesto globale (Barney, 1991; Grant, 1991; Montella, 2015). A tal proposito, non sempre l'approccio basato sulle ICC è accompagnato da un'analisi delle risorse uniche ed eccellenti che potrebbero assicurare uno sviluppo di lungo periodo. Più frequentemente, prevale una mera adesione acritica ad un modello *cool*, probabilmente di successo in altri paesi, senza un'approfondita conoscenza e comprensione dei processi e delle dinamiche capaci di favorire un approccio glocale e sostenibile all'economia creativa. Il rischio, infatti, è che la creatività - concetto vasto, trasversale, difficile da circoscrivere - possa diventare un'etichetta per progetti che non sono realmente legati al territorio. Come afferma Bocci, analizzando i progetti di distretto culturale evoluto avviati in Italia, si è assistito a una

> fuga in avanti verso i distretti culturali creativi, senza aver condiviso una visione di sviluppo da parte dei soggetti che progettano lo sviluppo, che non possono che essere le amministrazioni pubbliche, le autonomie locali, i comuni, ovvero in primo luogo chi è il titolare della costruzione di una cornice per una visione di sviluppo sul territorio (Bocci in Feliciati, 2016, p. 106).

Queste criticità ci impongono un'analisi accurata volta a definire con maggior precisione il significato di "industrie culturali e creative" e a mettere in luce alcune differenze rilevanti al loro interno così come con altri settori. Un auspicabile chiarimento terminologico potrebbe aiutare i *policy makers* ad evitare l'uso superficiale e l'applicazione fuorviante di vaghe e sovrapponibili etichette. L'obiettivo non è quello di effettuare un'analisi esaustiva del dibattito scientifico sull'argomento, ma piuttosto di evidenziare alcuni aspetti critici: senza puntare a risolvere completamente questioni tassonomiche né tanto meno a chiarire lo stato ontologico - ampiamente dibattuto - delle ICC, si vogliono quanto meno mettere in luce gli effetti di certe terminologie sulle politiche culturali.

3.2 Origini e sviluppo di un dibattito non solo semantico

Come già suggerito, la mancanza di rigore e l'inconsistente e confusa terminologia attualmente in uso nelle *policies* sulle ICC derivano dalle debolezze riguardanti la concettualizzazione di cultura e creatività (Galloway e Dunlop, 2007, p. 17). Se quello di cultura è un concetto problematico, allo stesso tempo assolutamente familiare, ma anche complesso e difficile da definire pienamente (O'Brien, 2014, p. 2), ancora più incerto, vago e persino più ampio è il concetto di creatività, così come contraddittorio il suo uso, che può indicare tanto un modo di fare business in qualsiasi settore quanto un preciso settore industriale. Ne consegue che non è facile fornire una definizione chiara e non discutibile non solo delle attività culturali e creative (tab. 1), ma anche del loro valore e della qualità delle relative attività. In aggiunta, considerato che molti ostacoli semantici e politici sono legati all'ancora irrisolta tensione tra cultura ed economia (O'Connor, 2007, p. 7), gli studiosi non sono concordi neanche quando spiegano e discutono il significato di "industria" e "industrie". Come messo in luce da Simon Roodhouse, all'origine del dibattito c'è un "*contorted and torturous definitional historical discourse*" (Roodhouse, 2006, p. 14).

Focalizzando l'attenzione sulle ICC, secondo Throsby, le industrie creative producono beni e servizi creativi, mentre le industrie culturali producono beni e servizi culturali e sono un sottoinsieme del più ampio gruppo delle industrie creative (Throsby, 2010, p. 89). Nel fornire una spiegazione a questa definizione tautologica, nel volume *The Economics of Cultural Policy,* Throsby definisce i "beni creativi" (*creative goods*) prodotti che richiedono un livello ragionevolmente significativo di creatività nella loro produzione, senza necessariamente soddisfare altri criteri che permetterebbe loro di essere etichettati come "culturali" (Throsby, 2010, pp. 16-17), e i "beni culturali" (*cultural goods*)[7] prodotti e servizi che: (1) richiedono un qualche input di creatività umana nella loro produzione; (2) sono veicoli di messaggi simbolici per i consumatori; (3) contengono una qualche forma di proprietà intellettuale; (4) sono soggetti a *rational addiction*[8]; (5) generano valore culturale in aggiunta a qualsivoglia valore commerciale essi possano avere (Throsby, 2010, p. 16).

[7] Da segnalare che la nozione di *cultural goods* non coincide con l'espressione italiana "beni culturali", corrispondente all'inglese *cultural heritage*.

[8] *Rational addiction* significa che un incremento nel consumo presente comporterà un incremento nel consumo futuro, in quanto la domanda è cumulativa (Throsby, 2010, p. 16).

Sulla stessa linea, O'Connor argomenta che:

> le industrie culturali sono quelle attività che hanno a che fare primariamente con beni simbolici - beni il cui primario valore economico deriva dal loro valore culturale. […] Questa definizione quindi include sia le "classiche" industrie culturali - radio e televisione, cinema, stampa, musica, design, architettura, new media - sia le "arti tradizionali" - arti visive, artigianato, teatro, teatro musicale, concerti e spettacoli, letteratura, musei e gallerie - ovvero tutte quelle attività che hanno i requisiti per essere finanziate pubblicamente come "arte" (O'Connor, 2000, p. 5, *t.d.a.*)[9].

La distinzione tra industrie culturali e industrie creative argomentata da Throsby rivela alcune debolezze che è bene mettere in luce. Considerando gli obiettivi di questo lavoro, qui può essere sufficiente prendere in esame tre questioni principali. Innanzitutto, dato che tutte le attività umane necessitano di qualche input creativo e che molte di esse richiedono rilevanti livelli di creatività - indipendentemente dal settore in cui si opera -, ogni industria può essere considerata creativa. In secondo luogo, quello di "messaggio simbolico" o "beni simbolici" - ampiamente discusso nel dibattito scientifico (Martin, 2004, p. 4) - è un concetto ambiguo e volatile, i cui confini sono alquanto incerti: come si chiede qualche studioso, nel contesto attuale è forse possibile escludere una qualche attività produttiva industriale che non abbia un significato simbolico? (Flew, 2002, pp. 12-13; Mato, 2009). In aggiunta, il focus sulla natura simbolica, estetica ed artistica di alcuni beni protrae la distinzione tra beni utilitari e non utilitari, che è mistificante in quanto basata su una ristretta definizione di valore economico (Montella, 2016). Infine, se si esclude l'idea che ogni attività umana contiene una qualche forma di proprietà intellettuale, alcune attività connesse al management del patrimonio culturale e il cui *output* è costituito da servizi culturali dovrebbero essere escluse dal settore culturale, in quanto non possono essere protette da diritti di proprietà intellettuale. La distinzione effettuata da Throsby, dunque, è tutt'altro che chiarificatrice.

Riconoscendo la stretta connessione tra analisi teorico-concettuale e *policy making* e cercando di mettere da parte il dibattito sulle industrie culturali e/o creative, alcuni studiosi hanno focalizzato l'attenzione sull'emergenza delle ICC nelle *policies* culturali, in particolare sul passaggio dal "culturale" al "creativo" (Hesmondhalgh e Pratt, 2005), concludendo che le industrie culturali e quelle creative coincidono:

> il termine "industrie creative" è una costruzione politica sviluppata per la prima volta dal governo britannico nel 1997 sotto l'amministrazione New Labour. Il termine "industrie culturali" era stato precedentemente utilizzato

[9] "The cultural industries are those activities which deal primarily in symbolic goods - goods whose primary economic value is derived from their cultural value. […] This definition then includes what have been called the 'classical' cultural industries - broadcast media, film, publishing, recorded music, design, architecture, new media - and the 'traditional arts' - visual art, crafts, theatre, music theatre, concerts and performance, literature, museums and galleries - all those activities which have been eligible for public funding as 'art'" (O'Connor, 2000, p. 5).

> dai consigli metropolitani guidati dai laburisti per indicare più o meno le stesse attività. Non c'è stata un'esplicita discussione sulle ragioni del cambiamento del termine, né la formulazione di un'esauriente definizione da distinguere da quella di "industrie culturali" (o altro termine) (Pratt, 2005, p. 32, *t.d.a.*)[10].

Secondo Pratt, l'adozione del nuovo termine[11] può essere spiegata come il tentativo dei "New" Labour di posizionarsi come politicamente centristi e differenziarsi dalle politiche tendenti a sinistra promosse dagli "Old" Labour. Muovendo dagli stessi assunti, Hewison ha messo in luce come il passaggio dal "culturale" al "creativo" fino alla retorica della creatività suonava non obbligato al passato e suggeriva libertà e autonomia personale (Hewison, 2014, p. 61). Lo zenit di questo processo si è raggiunto con l'invenzione di *Creative Britain* (Hewison, 2014, p. 39), che lo storico britannico definisce un perfetto esempio dell'ideologia New Labour in continuità con il programma neoliberale messo in atto dai conservatori in vari campi e a vari livelli:

> Quando i New Labour iniziarono ad incoraggiare l'individualismo e a lanciare un nuovo spirito imprenditoriale, era necessario utilizzare lo stato per renderlo libero. Per ottenere questo, era necessario dare il via non solo a una riforma istituzionale, ma anche ad un cambiamento *culturale*. […] E chi poteva essere contro la creatività? La creatività è positiva e proiettata in avanti - è *cool*, proprio come i New Labour volevano essere (Hewison, 2014, p. 5, *t.d.a.*)[12].

Secondo questa posizione, come meglio argomentato nei paragrafi successivi, pur prendendo le distanze dai Conservatori, i New Labour ne sostenevano il programma economico.

Su questa linea, collocando lo slittamento verso la creatività nel contesto della società globale, Garnham considera l'emergenza del termine "industrie creative" il risultato di cambiamenti industriali, tecnologici e culturali, come lo sviluppo dei media e delle comunicazioni, in particolare delle industrie del copyright e della proprietà intellettuale (Garnham, 2005, pp. 15-16) e, più in generale, dell'affermazione dell'economia dell'informazione o della conoscenza, che è un lascito dell'amministrazione conservatrice (1979-1997). In questa prospettiva, Cunningham (2002)

[10] "The term 'creative industries' is a political construct first deployed by the British government in 1997 under a new Labour administration. The term 'cultural industries' had been used previously by Labour-run metropolitan councils to point to more or less the same activities. There was no explicit discussion of why the term changed, nor a statement of a comprehensive definition in distinction to 'cultural industries' (or any other term)" (Pratt, 2005, p. 32).

[11] Galloway e Dunlop citano il discorso di John Howkins, all'*Inception Session - The Mayor's Commission on the Creative Industries* (Londra, 12 dicembre 2002). Sebbene ampiamente sviluppato e diffuso nel Regno Unito, il concetto di "industrie creative" aveva fatto la sua comparsa in Australia già agli inizi degli anni '90 del Novecento (Galloway e Dunlop, 2007, p. 18).

[12] "When New Labour set out to encourage individualism and release a new spirit of entrepreneurialism, it had to use the state to set it free. To achieve this, it had to bring about not just institutional reform, but a *cultural* change. […] And who could be against creativity? Creativity is positive and forward-looking - it is *cool*, just as New Labour wished to be" (Hewison, 2014, p. 5).

argomenta che l'ultima fase del cambiamento tecnologico, includente il World Wide Web e la digitalizzazione, ha sancito il definitivo superamento del vecchio concetto di "industrie culturali" focalizzato sulle arti e sui media commerciali (cinema, radio e televisione, musica) (Galloway e Dunlop, 2007, p. 19).

Infine, Hughson e Inglis hanno salutato le cosiddette "industrie creative" della cultura popolare massmediatica come un tentativo democratico di mettere in discussione le pretese di forme artistiche già legittimate come cultura alta, ovvero pittura, balletto, musica classica e teatro (Hughson e Iglis, 2001, p. 458), sposando gli obiettivi di qualità (ovvero eccellenza) e accesso (Smith, 1998).

Tab. 1: La distinzione tra industrie culturali e creative presente in letteratura

FONTE	DISTINZIONE TRA INDUSTRIE CULTURALI E CREATIVE
O'Connor, 2000; Throsby, 2010	Le industrie creative producono beni e servizi creativi e richiedono un livello ragionevolmente significativo di creatività nella loro produzione, senza necessariamente soddisfare altri criteri che permetterebbe loro di essere etichettate come "culturali", mentre le industrie culturali producono beni e servizi culturali e sono un sottoinsieme del più ampio gruppo delle industrie creative.
Hesmondhalgh e Pratt, 2005; Hewison, 2014; Pratt, 2005	Industrie culturali e industrie creative coincidono; il termine "industrie creative" è una costruzione politica sviluppata dall'amministrazione New Labour.
Cunningham, 2002; Garnham, 2005; Galloway e Dunlop, 2007	L'espressione "industrie creative" è il risultato dell'affermazione dell'economia dell'informazione o della conoscenza, ovvero di cambiamenti industriali, tecnologici e culturali (WWW e digitalizzazione, sviluppo industrie del copyright e della proprietà intellettuale, etc.).
Hughson e Iglis, 2001	Le industrie creative della cultura popolare massmediatica sono un tentativo democratico di mettere in discussione le pretese di forme artistiche già legittimate come cultura alta, ovvero pittura, balletto, musica classica e teatro.

Fonte: elaborazione propria

3.3 Esiti e implicazioni per i settori tradizionali

Le politiche per le industrie creative hanno stimolato - non solo nel Regno Unito, in cui si è concentrato il dibattito scientifico - un nuovo approccio allo sviluppo locale e alla creazione di *cluster* culturali basati su: rafforzamento dell'identità, potere di attrazione e posizionamento dei luoghi; promozione di un approccio più imprenditoriale alle arti e alla cultura; incoraggiamento dell'innovazione e della creatività; riuso di vecchi edifici e siti abbandonati; promozione della diversità culturale e della democrazia culturale (Mommaas, 2004). Quest'orientamento ha inoltre incrementato l'attenzione verso il valore economico della cultura, ma anche verso nuove forme di networking, l'*audience development* e la partecipazione culturale[13].

[13] Si veda, ad esempio, la controversia tra l'approccio basato sulla *democratizzazione della cultura* e quello basato sulla *democrazia culturale*: il primo poggia sulla disseminazione top-down delle arti, mentre il secondo sostiene un approccio

Secondo alcuni studiosi (Galloway e Dunlop, 2007, pp. 28-29), tali approcci, spostando il focus sulla creatività e sulla proprietà intellettuale, hanno progressivamente ignorato le caratteristiche distintive della cultura, contribuendo alla marginalizzazione di attività che sono più legate alla cultura che alla creatività. In particolare, il sotto-settore del patrimonio culturale è stato completamente omesso nel dibattito sulle politiche culturali (Cunningham, 2002). In molti casi, il *cultural heritage* non è incluso tra le ICC, né considerato accanto agli altri settori culturali e creativi. Una maggiore tensione si è sviluppata, invece, tra le tradizionali forme artistiche e le ICC *stricto sensu*, per il fatto che in tale dibattito le questioni rilevanti riguardano l'artisticità e il valore artistico. A questa connesse sono le dispute tra produzione di massa e non di massa, tra valore culturale e valore commerciale, tra eccellenza e accesso. Questi dilemmi sono legati anche alla qualità artistica dei prodotti e dei servizi. Talvolta, in tale dibattito si includono i musei, mentre completamente trascurati sono siti archeologici, biblioteche e archivi. Ci sarebbe da chiedersi perché si consideri solo una parte del patrimonio culturale. La ragione è che i musei non vi sono compresi in quanto parte del *cultural heritage*, ma perché considerati "luoghi dell'arte" - come le gallerie -, sebbene non necessariamente siano musei d'arte.

Per dare al patrimonio culturale una giusta collocazione nelle politiche culturali, si potrebbe allora ripartire dalla distinzione effettuata dal rapporto Kea (2006), rivedendo però i confini del "*core arts field*", da cui distinguere il patrimonio culturale (tab. 2). Permarrebbero in ogni caso le già citate criticità riguardanti la creatività e i settori creativi.

Pur partendo da diversi presupposti e con qualche differenza, il modello illustrato in questa sede ha punti di contatto con quello proposto da Pietro Antonio Valentino (2012 e 2013), basato sulle rivoluzioni tecnologiche. Tale modello, avvalendosi della struttura a cerchi concentrici utilizzata anche da altri approcci (Throsby, 2008; KEA, 2006), pone nel primo cerchio (*subsidized muses*) - distinguendoli - beni culturali e arti visive, non in quanto *core art fields*, ma in quanto attività industriali "più «antiche» realizzate ancora in forme sostanzialmente *precapitalistiche*" (Valentino, 2013, p. 282), nel secondo cerchio le attività nate con la rivoluzione industriale (industrie culturali) e nel terzo quelle nate con la rivoluzione informatica (industria creativa).

La questione non ha natura esclusivamente semantica o tassonomica, in quanto il framework concettuale e terminologico di riferimento ha un impatto non irrilevante sulle politiche culturali. Per questo si ritiene opportuno adottare un approccio alle politiche culturali che riconosca le differenti caratteristiche dei settori e sub-settori culturali e creativi al fine di:

- comprendere e soddisfare gli specifici bisogni delle differenti attività (riproducibili e non riproducibili, soggette e non soggette a copyright, ecc.);
- identificare come promuoverne la *cross-fertilization* e l'aiuto reciproco;

di tipo bottom-up, attraverso il quale alle persone si insegna ad esplorare il proprio talento creativo fin dai primi anni di vita (Matarasso e Landry, 1999; Hughson e Inglis, 2001, p. 474).

- valorizzare gli specifici asset locali (patrimonio culturale, attività culturali, ICC, ecc.) in una prospettiva globale;
- promuovere un reale accesso alla cultura, inclusivo sia della comprensione del valore del patrimonio culturale sia dell'esplorazione della creatività individuale secondo l'approccio basato sulla democrazia culturale.

Tab. 2: I settori culturali e creativi

AMBITI	SETTORI	SUB-SETTORI	CARATTERISTICHE
Patrimonio culturale	Patrimonio culturale tangibile	Beni e istituti culturali: musei, biblioteche, archivi, "museo diffuso", paesaggio	- Attività non industriali (servizi) - Gli output non sono opere potenzialmente soggette a copyright
	Patrimonio culturale intangibile	Tradizioni, danze, musica, letteratura, ecc.	
Arti (attività culturali non riproducibili)	Arti visive	Pittura, scultura, fotografia, ecc.	- Attività non industriali - Gli output sono opere potenzialmente soggette a copyright
	Arti performative	Teatro, danza, circo, concerti, festival, ecc.	
Industrie culturali (attività culturali riproducibili)	Cinema e video		- Attività industriali finalizzate alla riproduzione di massa - Gli output sono soggetti a copyright
	Radio e televisione		
	Videogame		
	Musica		
	Libri e stampa		
Industrie e attività creative	Design	Fashion design, graphic design, interior design, product design, ecc.	- Attività non necessariamente industriali, ma che possono essere prototipizzate - Anche se gli output non sono soggetti a copyright, possono includere altri input di proprietà intellettuale (es. marchi registrati, brevetti) - L'uso della creatività è essenziale per il successo di questi settori non culturali (es. abilità creative e risorse umane provenienti dai settori delle arti e dal settore delle industrie culturali)
	Architettura		
	Pubblicità		
Industrie correlate	ICT, turismo, ecc.		- Questa categoria ha confini vaghi ed è impossibile da circoscrivere sulla base di criteri certi; comprende molti altri settori economici che dipendono dagli ambiti precedenti

Fonte: elaborazione propria da Kea, 2006, p. 3

4. Il caso di studio

4.1 Metodologia e disegno della ricerca

Sulla base dell'analisi della letteratura sulle industrie culturali e creative e, in particolare, delle criticità riscontrate, la ricerca sul campo si è avvalsa dello studio di caso con una funzione di supporto (*supportive role*), ovvero

al fine di testare quanto emerso dalla ricognizione della letteratura. In particolare, ci si è avvalsi di un caso di studio strumentale (*instrumental case study)* (Stake, 2005, p. 445), come utile strumento esplorativo per spiegare possibili esiti e limiti di politiche che si stanno affermando e diffondendo sempre più ampiamente a livello europeo (Stake, 1983, p. 284).

Partendo da questi presupposti metodologici, nella scelta del caso di studio si è deciso di porre l'attenzione su una realtà dalla quale poter apprendere di più (Stake, 2005, p. 451) e che fosse possibile considerare tipica negli aspetti ritenuti rilevanti per l'argomento oggetto di indagine (Gomm *et al.*, 2000, p. 107). La scelta è così caduta sul Regno Unito, su cui si è focalizzato anche gran parte del dibattito teorico esaminato nei paragrafi precedenti. Il Regno Unito è, infatti, considerato il quartier generale delle politiche e delle strategie basate sulla creatività e sulle ICC, e finanche "the world's creative hub" (Blair, 2007, citato in Holden, 2007), tanto da essere diventato un *benchmark* per molti altri Paesi (Valentino, 2012, p. 63). Fine della ricerca non è stato quello di ricavare generalizzazioni, ma indicazioni di cui tener conto quando certe politiche vengono esportate in contesti anche molto diversi.

Tenendo conto di quanto previsto dalla letteratura scientifica sullo studio di caso (Yin, 2012 e 2014), l'indagine è stata distinta in due fasi: 1) un'analisi *desk*, condotta attraverso una *review* della letteratura comprensiva non solo delle più recenti pubblicazioni sulle politiche culturali del Regno Unito (libri e articoli)[14], ma anche della letteratura grigia prodotta in tale settore (documenti pubblici, report, green paper, statistiche e altri dati secondari)[15]; 2) un'analisi *field* di tipo qualitativo, finalizzata a mettere in luce aspetti che non emergono dalle ricerche di tipo quantitativo. Con l'intento di ricavare dati e informazioni utili a una più ampia e completa comprensione del fenomeno e della sua rilevanza ai fini degli specifici obiettivi di questo lavoro, si è scelto di incrociare diversi livelli di analisi (Eisenhardt, 1989, p. 534), quello delle politiche culturali e quello delle imprese operanti nel settore del *cultural heritage*.

Rispetto ai risultati degli studi prodotti sull'argomento, già ampiamente discussi e diffusi a livello internazionale, si è cercato di comprendere l'impatto delle politiche culturali sulla gestione del patrimonio culturale nel corso degli ultimi venti anni. In particolare, si è scelto di focalizzare l'attenzione sui musei, i quali, secondo la definizione internazionalmente condivisa e aggiornata dall'ICOM nel 2007, sono istituzioni che rivestono un ruolo di primo piano nei processi di tutela e valorizzazione del *cultural heritage*, in quanto effettuano ricerche sulle "testimonianze materiali e immateriali dell'uomo e del suo ambiente", le acquisiscono, le conservano, le comunicano e specificamente le espongono per scopi di studio, istruzione e diletto.

---

[14] Si segnalano, tra gli altri: Belfiore, 2012; Bell e Oakley, 2015; Cowell, 2007 e 2008; Eisenberg *et al.*, 2006; Garnham, 2005; Gray, 2000; Hesmondhalgh *et al.*, 2015; Hewison, 1987, 1995, 2011 e 2014; Hughson e Inglis 2001; Oakley, 2004; Pendlebury, 2000; Smith, 1998.

[15] Tra le fonti prese in esame si vedano in particolare i seguenti rapporti e documenti di policy: CBI, 2014; DCMS, 2011 e 2014; The Warwick Commission, 2015; UK Trade & Investment, 2014.

A tal fine sono state effettuate delle interviste in profondità volte ad indagare il punto di vista di alcuni musei di rilevanza nazionale, presso i quali sono stati realizzati anche sopralluoghi volti a verificare tipologia e qualità dei servizi offerti. Il protocollo di intervista utilizzato è stato elaborato sulla base delle questioni emerse dall'esame della letteratura relativamente a: 1) ruolo del patrimonio culturale nelle politiche culturali del Regno Unito; 2) impatto delle politiche promosse di New Labour; 3) rapporto con le politiche europee; 4) impatto del NPM e dell'*evidence-based policy*, tema su cui il Regno Unito ha fatto da apripista a livello europeo.

Dopo una breve presentazione dell'istituzione (missione, attività e programmi futuri) l'intervista semi-strutturata ha preso in esame gli aspetti dettagliati in tab. 3.

Tab. 3: Struttura dell'intervista

HERITAGE IN THE UK	- Ruolo del patrimonio culturale nelle politiche culturali del Regno Unito - Effetti della *commodification* del *cultural heritage* - Centralità del dibattito sull'argomento ed eventuali questioni emergenti - Supporto pubblico - Rapporto tra musei e patrimonio culturale
NEW LABOUR'S AGENDA	- Impatto dello slittamento dal "culturale" al "creativo" a cui si è assistito nel Regno Unito a partire dalla fine degli anni '90 - Punti di forza e di debolezza dello slittamento verso la creatività - Rapporto tra organizzazioni operanti nel settore dei beni culturali e ICC - Sviluppo della cultura imprenditoriale - Rapporto tra centro e periferia
EUROPEAN POLICIES	- Impatto delle politiche europee - Partecipazione a reti e bandi europei - Collaborazione con altre istituzioni europee
TARGET CULTURE, PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT, DEMOCRATIZATION OF CULTURE	- Caratteristiche ed effetti dell'applicazione del NPM al settore culturale; - Limiti dell'*arm's-length principle* - Punti di forza e di debolezza e spazi di migliorabilità nella misurazione delle performance (*Value for Money, evidence-based policy e target-driven culture*) - Democratizzazione della cultura

Fonte: elaborazione propria

Le interviste sono state realizzate tra la fine di marzo e la prima metà di aprile 2016 e hanno coinvolto 5 istituzioni museali londinesi, di diversa tipologia e proprietà[16]: The Science Museum, The British Museum, The Geffrye Museum of the Home, Royal Museums Greenwich e The Wallace Collection[17].

[16] Ulteriori informazioni sono disponibili nei siti web istituzionali: Science Museum, http://www.sciencemuseum.org.uk; British Museum, http://www.britishmuseum.org/; Geffrye Museum of the Home, http://www.geffrye-museum.org.uk/; Royal Museums Greenwich, http://www.rmg.co.uk/; Wallace Collection, http://www.wallacecollection.org/.

[17] Le persone che hanno partecipato alle interviste sono: Helen Jones, Head of Strategy and Planning, Science Museum; Joe Edwards, Department of

4.2 Discussione dei risultati

Uno dei primi risultati della ricerca è la conferma della rilevanza del tema oggetto di studio, al quale nel Regno Unito negli ultimi anni sono stati dedicati progetti di ricerca, articoli su riviste accademiche e altre pubblicazioni (Gray, 2000; Eisenberg *et al.*, 2006; Hewison, 2014; Bell e Oakley, 2015; Hesmondhalgh *et al.*, 2015).

Analizzando l'argomento nel dettaglio, è opportuno condividere alcune osservazioni preliminari circa il ruolo del patrimonio culturale nelle politiche britanniche, oltre che nella letteratura scientifica. Innanzitutto, a differenza di quanto avviene in Italia e in altri paesi europei[18], nell'ambito delle politiche e dei finanziamenti culturali, in linea con la distinzione che si riscontra anche in letteratura tra *heritage studies* e *museum studies*, nel Regno Unito il patrimonio culturale è un campo distinto dai musei, sebbene non manchino sovrapposizioni e interessi condivisi[19] (Hesmondhalgh *et al.*, 2015, p. 163).

Pur essendoci strette connessioni con l'industria, nel contesto britannico, le politiche riguardanti il patrimonio culturale hanno avuto una storia differente, oltre che distinta, dalle politiche rivolte alle ICC. A tal proposito, in primo luogo occorre segnalare che il dibattito sulla gestione del patrimonio culturale è stato principalmente riferito alla sua protezione - salvaguardia, conservazione e restauro (Harrison, 2013). Più di recente, il bisogno di protezione del patrimonio culturale ha condotto ad una vera "heritage obsession" (Cowell, 2008), che si è tradotta in un maggior potere di intervento dello stato su beni di proprietà privata. Una conferma di quest'approccio è la creazione dell'Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF). In secondo luogo, il dibattito sul patrimonio culturale nel Regno Unito si è concentrato sulle politiche promosse dai Conservatori per la sua tutela sotto i governi Thatcher e Major, tra il 1979 e il 1997 - sfuggendo persino alla retorica della liberalizzazione. Sebbene nessuno di questi argomenti riesca a spiegare soddisfacentemente tutte le azioni dei governi di questo periodo, Pendlebury prende in esame tre questioni che possono fornire qualche spiegazione di carattere generale circa il successo della tutela sotto i governi conservatori e il grado di consenso senza precedenti riscontrato:

1. *the economic commodification of heritage*, a partire dalla quale si è iniziato a considerare conservazione e rigenerazione come essenzialmente complementari;
2. *the political symbolism of heritage*, volto ad utilizzare il passato per obiettivi politici, come un modo per riaffermare l'identità nazionale e "making Britain Great";
3. *the dominant ideology thesis,* secondo la quale "il patrimonio culturale selezionato per la tutela diviene non semplicemente il riflesso dei

Communication, British Museum; David Dewing, Director, Geffrye Museum of the Home; Christopher Gray, Museum Secretary, Royal Museums Greenwich; Christoph Martin Vogtherr, Director, Wallace Collection.

[18] In Italia, ad esempio, i musei sono istituzioni culturali e parte del patrimonio culturale.

[19] Per questa ragione, in molti lavori scientifici qui analizzati possiamo trovare riferimenti ai musei - in alcuni casi considerati come un'industria culturale (O'Connor, 2000) -, ma non al patrimonio culturale.

gusti e delle idee delle élite, ma parte di un apparato che assicura il mantenimento del sistema sociale presente" (Pendlebury, 2000, p. 47, *t.d.a.*)[20].

Il consenso raggiunto da tali politiche in questo periodo ha condotto al progressivo sviluppo dell'*heritage industry* - innanzitutto la nascita di *open air museums* e la crescente *commodification* del *cultural heritage* (Hewison, 1987 e 1995). Come messo in luce da alcuni critici, ricorrendo ad approcci basati su un forte impatto emotivo, il patrimonio culturale è stato sfruttato per fornire una "versione perfezionata del passato", persino una "storia contraffatta" (*bogus history*) (Hewison, 1987, p. 10 e p. 144). In particolare, al fine di rendere il patrimonio culturale un'attrazione turistica, le *country houses* e i musei sono diventati teatri di un nostalgico *re-enactment* del passato come un posto migliore.

Allo stesso tempo, sviluppando l'ideologia della rigenerazione economica, a partire dagli inizi degli anni '80 del Novecento altre strategie hanno posto il focus sul ruolo delle industrie culturali per lo sviluppo locale, specialmente per la rigenerazione urbana: le politiche culturali del Greater London Council (GLC) guidato dagli "Old" Labour sono spesso citate come un "momento seminale" (Hesmondhalgh e Pratt, 2005, p. 3), seguite dalle politiche sulle industrie culturali della città di Sheffield e da una grande varietà di progetti di *urban regeneration*.

Alla fine degli anni '90 i New Labour hanno definitivamente spostato l'attenzione verso il settore creativo, comprendente "tutte quelle industrie che hanno la loro origine nella creatività, nell'abilità e nel talento individuali e che hanno un potenziale per la ricchezza e la creazione di lavoro attraverso il generale sfruttamento della proprietà intellettuale" (DCMS, 2001, p. 3, *t.d.a.*)[21], così determinando un'esplicita innovazione rispetto alle precedenti politiche perseguite sia dai Conservatori sia dagli "Old" Labour. La creatività suggeriva "libertà senza classi e autonomia personale, valori positivi associati con ciò che era inteso in modo crescente come l'economia post-moderna dei segni e dei simboli" (Hewison, 2011, p. 236, *t.d.a.*)[22]. Tuttavia, come già argomentato, la creatività è una *buzzword*, finanche un'idea illusoria (Pratt, 2004, p. 119), non solo difficile da definire, ma presente in molte industrie al di fuori di quelle artistiche. Solo per fornire un esempio della complessità di quest'argomento, citiamo qui il primo rapporto finalizzato a quantificare il contributo della creatività sull'economia - il *Creative Industries Mapping Document* -, in cui il DCMS aveva incluso il "computer software business", che nel 1998, insieme alla pubblicità e al design, copriva almeno la metà del turnover delle industrie creative, mentre il settore culturale filantropico e no profit finanziato dal DCMS costitutiva il 5% del totale delle industrie creative (Newison, 2014,

[20] "The heritage selected for protection becomes not simply a reflection of the tastes and ideas of elites but part of the apparatus that ensure the maintenance of the present social system" (Pendlebury, 2000, p. 47).

[21] "those industries that have their origin in individual creativity, skill and talent and which have a potential for wealth and job creation through the general exploitation of intellectual property" (DCMS, 2001, p. 3).

[22] "classless freedom and personal autonomy, positive values associated with what was increasingly understood as the post-modern economy of signs and symbols" (Hewison, 20011, p. 236).

p. 42)[23]. Di conseguenza, l'English Heritage era sempre alla fine della coda per il finanziamento da parte del DCMS (Hewison, 2014, p. 79). Una delle prime azioni che confermano questo nuovo approccio è stato il *rebranding* del Department of National Heritage, ora Department for Culture, Media and Sport, con un'"ideologica" rinuncia al *cultural heritage*, alla quale hanno fatto seguito la riduzione del supporto economico al patrimonio culturale e la progressiva convergenza economica e tecnologica tra cultura e media (Hewison, 2014, p. 28).

Da qui in avanti, procedendo sulle orme del brand *Cool Britannia* ideato dai Conservatori, il patrimonio culturale è diventato parte delle ICC e, in quanto tale, è stato trattato come un'impresa culturale. Secondo Belfiore, la comparsa di Creative Britain ha decretato il successo di un'agenda strumentale per le arti e la cultura (Belfiore, 2012, p. 104), ovvero il progressivo ritorno di uno strumentalismo difensivo ed esclusivamente economico, incapace di articolare in modo efficace e significativo argomenti a favore del valore culturale (Belfiore, 2012, p. 107). A giudizio di chi scrive tali osservazioni non sono da leggere nell'ottica di una contrapposizione tra valore culturale e valore economico, ma piuttosto nella prospettiva di una più ampia nozione di valore economico, che non si limiti alla valutazione dei profitti di una singola impresa, assegnando inevitabilmente un ruolo di primo piano alle industrie del copyright, ma che sia in grado di cogliere anche tutte le esternalità, materiali e immateriali, derivanti dal corretto uso del patrimonio culturale (Montella, 2016).

Per quanto riguarda il patrimonio culturale, il focus maggiore sulle ICC è stato accompagnato da una diminuzione dei finanziamenti per il patrimonio culturale, compresi i musei. Sebbene il settore abbia continuato a crescere, la tensione tra accesso ed eccellenza non è stata risolta e gli obiettivi di inclusione sociale e democratizzazione della cultura non sono stati raggiunti completamente. In particolare, un'analisi approfondita rivela due questioni che meriterebbero ulteriori ricerche: (1) da un lato, la persistenza di disuguaglianze sociali; (2) dall'altro, un grande *gap* tra Londra, dove si concentrano i più importanti musei nazionali e la gran parte dei finanziamenti pubblici e privati, e il resto del paese, dove si fa sentire rilevantemente la diminuzione dei finanziamenti alle autorità locali (Hesmondhalgh *et al.*, 2015).

Si consideri, a titolo di esempio, l'effetto dell'ingresso gratuito nei musei, reintrodotto, con un consenso *super partes*, dai New Labour in tutti gli istituti museali nazionali del Regno Unito nel 2001, e diventato una delle politiche per promuovere l'accesso culturale più visibili e ammirate a livello internazionale (Hesmondhalgh *et al.*, 2015, p. 85; The Warwick Commission, 2015, p. 34)[24]. Anche una misura così ambiziosa, che pure

[23] Nel 2010 si è così deciso di escludere tale settore ("business and domestic software design and computer consultancy") dalle stime economiche annuali del DCMS sulle industrie creative (Hewison, 2014, p. 42). Allo stesso tempo, alcuni cambiamenti hanno interessato anche il NESTA (National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts), non più finanziato dal DCMS, ma dal Department for Business, Information and Skills (BIS) (Hewison, 2011, p. 239).

[24] Sulla linea delle politiche di prezzo introdotte dal Regno Unito, per il caso dell'Italia, si veda il Decreto 27 giugno 2014, n. 94 del Ministro dei Beni e delle

ha raggiunto ottimi risultati in termini di aumento dei visitatori, ha fallito l'obiettivo di rendere i *flagship museums* più inclusivi. Analizzandone l'effetto a cinque anni dall'introduzione, Cowell ha segnalato come tra il 2000/2001 e il 2005/2006 le visite da parte delle minoranze etniche siano passate solo dal 3,2% al 4,9% del totale, aumento che risulta ancora più scarso se contestualizzato, ad esempio tenendo conto che in una città come Londra - dove si concentrano i principali musei nazionali - le minoranze etniche costituiscono circa il 40% della popolazione (Cowell, 2007, p. 214). L'analisi dei dati più recenti riferiti alla partecipazione culturale conferma il *gap* tra la popolazione bianca e quella appartenente alla categoria BME (*Black and Minority Ethnic*). Nonostante un incremento complessivo della partecipazione culturale registrato a partire dal 2005/2006, a titolo esemplificativo si rileva che, nei 12 mesi precedenti l'indagine (ottobre 2013/settembre 2014), ha visitato un sito di interesse culturale il 57,7% della popolazione BME contro il 74,3% della popolazione bianca, percentuali che scendono rispettivamente al 42,3% e al 53,1% se si considera la visita a un museo o una galleria (DCMS, 2014, p. 9 e p. 25).

Di questi limiti occorrerebbe tener conto anche quando certe politiche vengono esportate e riprodotte in paesi con diversa storia e diversa organizzazione del patrimonio culturale, talvolta capillarmente distribuito su tutto il suolo nazionale.

Come confermato dalle interviste ai manager dei musei oggetto di indagine, nel Regno Unito tali politiche sono state finalizzate a promuovere lo sviluppo delle industrie creative e non hanno avuto un impatto rilevante sulle organizzazioni impegnate nella conservazione e valorizzazione del patrimonio culturale. Se alcuni legami con il settore creativo sono stati intensificati, non è stato grazie a particolari incentivi provenienti dalle politiche poste in essere, ma a seguito della necessità di affrontare i cambiamenti globali come la rivoluzione digitale e i bisogni espressi dai nuovi pubblici. Anche le capacità imprenditoriali dei musei non sono il risultato dei recenti tagli finanziari, né la conseguenza degli obiettivi quantitativi di più recente introduzione, ma l'effetto della cultura manageriale introdotta nei musei dalla fine degli anni '80 attraverso la sistematica applicazione di target e indicatori di performance. Con qualche eccezione, i soggetti intervistati hanno segnalato anche uno scarso impatto delle politiche europee sul management delle istituzioni culturali e una bassa partecipazione ai progetti europei. Infine, è stato rilevato che nel Regno Unito, diversamente da altri paesi europei, un dibattito sulla gestione del patrimonio culturale è quasi inesistente.

5. Conclusioni e implicazioni manageriali

L'esperienza britannica analizzata in questa sede ha avuto un impatto rilevante in Europa, sia ispirando le politiche culturali nazionali (Eisenberg

Attività Culturali e del Turismo (Regolamento recante modifiche al decreto 11 dicembre 1997, n. 507, concernente "Norme per l'istituzione del biglietto di ingresso ai monumenti, musei, gallerie, scavi di antichità, parchi e giardini monumentali dello Stato"), che ha previsto l'ingresso gratuito nei musei statali la prima domenica di ogni mese.

et al., 2006) sia influenzando l'agenda europea per la cultura e la creatività (European Commission, 2010), in cui il patrimonio culturale è stato inserito sotto l'etichetta "industrie culturali e creative"[25]. Nonostante il continuo successo del settore creativo (CBI, 2014; UK Trade & Investment, 2014), se l'economia creativa è vista come *inevitabile*, diviene più difficile comprenderne i punti di debolezza e l'opportunità di una sua revisione (Campbell, 2014, p. 1000)[26].

Sono stati qui messi in luce i fallimenti nel promuovere l'accesso culturale e nel superare le disuguaglianze sociali, oltre che tra le diverse parti del paese, nonché i limiti nello sviluppo di un'efficace *evidence-based policy* e nel promuovere la *cross-fertilization* tra patrimonio culturale e ICC, In particolare, nel contesto "glocale" le diverse performance e i diversi risultati raggiunti dai sub-settori culturali e creativi suggeriscono la necessità di ripensare l'agenda di sviluppo iniziando non dalla promozione delle industrie creative come la strategia vincente adatta ad ogni contesto, ma dalla valorizzazione delle risorse e delle abilità locali (Napolitano e Marino, 2016). Da questo punto di vista, il confronto con nuove prospettive ed approcci può essere un buon punto di partenza. Già nel 2004 Oakley lamentava la sproporzionata influenza del pensiero nordamericano sulle politiche dei New Labour; ad oltre dieci anni di distanza l'Europa può fare valutazioni simili circa l'impronta del pensiero anglosassone sulle politiche culturali nazionali e regionali, oltre che dell'Unione. Come già argomentato (Oakley, 2004, p. 72), se la nozione di industrie creative è problematica, ancora di più lo è l'idea che tale settore possa essere replicato e sviluppato pressoché ovunque, senza alcuna considerazione delle specificità di un luogo. In linea con l'approccio basato sulle risorse già richiamato in questo lavoro, la nascita e lo sviluppo di nuove imprese nel settore culturale[27] dovrebbero invece valorizzare i *place-specific assets* dei luoghi, puntando ad una reale cooperazione tra diversi settori e sub-settori industriali e non industriali, non necessariamente riconducibili all'economia creativa, come ad esempio l'enogastronomia, l'artigianato, il *made in*, il turismo e l'ambiente, se e in quanto capaci di valorizzare risorse idiosincratiche di difficile riproduzione in altri contesti[28]. Parafrasando la canzone di un noto gruppo musicale pop svedese citata nel titolo di questo contributo, c'è ancora qualche asso da giocare.

---

[25] Nei successivi documenti di *policy* europei, le ICC e il patrimonio culturale sono stati considerati settori distinti. Cfr. Council of the European Union, 2010 e 2014.

[26] A livello europeo, ad esempio, va registrato che, a fronte della nascita di nuove attività culturali e della riduzione dei costi di produzione, non si è ridotta la dipendenza dal sussidio per le attività artistiche né la necessità della "produzione di massa" per cinema e tv (Valentino, 2012, p. 48).

[27] Si veda ad esempio la crescente attenzione allo sviluppo delle start-up nel settore culturale.

[28] Focalizzandosi sull'Italia, alcune possibili innovazioni vengono dalla Strategia Nazionale Aree Interne (SNAI, 2013) e dal Piano Strategico di Sviluppo del Turismo 2017-2020 (MiBACT, 2017) recentemente approvato, che mira allo sviluppo di prodotti turistici integrati, facendo dei grandi attrattori culturali come Roma, Firenze, Venezia, Milano delle porte d'accesso al territorio.

Bibliografia

APPADURAI A. (2015), *Banking on Words. The Failure of Language in the Age of Derivative Finance,* University of Chicago Press, Chicago.

BANAJI S., BURN A., BUCKINGHAM D. (2010), *The rhetorics of creativity: a literature review*, CCE Creativity, Culture and Education, Newcastle upon Tyne.

BARNEY J. (1991), "Firm resources and sustained competitive advantage", *Journal of Management*, n. 17, pp. 99-120.

BELFIORE E. (2012), "'Defensive instrumentalism' and the legacy of New Labour's cultural policies", *Cultural Trends*, vol. 21, n. 2, pp. 103-111.

BELL D., OAKLEY K. (2015), *Cultural policy,* Routledge, Abingdon-New York.

BERTACCHINI E., SANTAGATA W. (2012), *Atmosfera creativa. Un modello di sviluppo sostenibile per il Piemonte fondato su cultura e creatività,* Il Mulino, Bologna.

BUTLER J. (1997), *Excitable Speech: A Politics of the Performative,* Routledge, New York.

CALVINO I. (1995), "L'italiano, una lingua tra le altre lingue" (1965), in *Una pietra sopra,* Mondadori, Milano.

CAMMELLI M. (2017), "Il diritto del patrimonio culturale: un'introduzione", in Barbati C., Cammelli M., Casini L., Piperata G., Sciullo G. (a cura di), *Diritto del patrimonio culturale*, Il Mulino, Bologna, pp. 11-30.

CAMPBELL P. (2014), "Imaginary Success? - The Contentious Ascendance of Creativity", *European Planning Studies*, vol. 22, n. 5, pp. 995-1009.

CAUST J. (2003), "Putting the 'art' back into arts policy making: How arts policy has been 'captured' by the economists and the marketers", *International Journal of Cultural Policy,* vol. 9, n. 1, pp. 51-63.

CAVES R. (2000), *Creative Industries: Contracts between Art and Commerce,* Harward University Press, Cambridge, MA.

CBI (2014), *The creative nation. A growth strategy for the UK's creative industries,* Confederation of British Industry, London.

CERQUETTI M. (2014), *Marketing museale e creazione di valore: strategie per l'innovazione dei musei italiani,* FrancoAngeli, Milano.

CERQUETTI M., FERRARA C. (2015), "Distretti culturali: percorsi evolutivi e azioni di policy a confronto", *Il capitale culturale. Studies on the Value of Cultural heritag*e, Supplementi, n. 3, pp. 137-163.

CHCFE (2015), *Cultural heritage Counts for Europe,* International Cultural Centre, Krakow.

COMMISSIONE EUROPEA (2010), *Le industrie culturali e creative, un potenziale da sfruttare,* Libro Verde, Bruxelles, 27.4.2010, disponibile sul sito: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/IT/TXT/?uri=celex%3A52010DC0183.

COUNCIL OF EUROPE (2005), *Council of Europe Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural heritage for Society,* CETS No. 199, Faro, 27th Oct. 2005, disponibile sul sito: http://conventions.coe.int/Treaty/EN/Treaties/Html/199.htm; tr. it. http://www.ufficiostudi.beniculturali.it/mibac/multimedia/UfficioStudi/documents/1362477547947_Convenzione_di_Faro.pdf.

COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION (2010), *Work Plan for Culture 2011-2014*, Brussels, 18-19 November 2010, available at: http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/educ/117795.pdf.

COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION (2014), *Work Plan for Culture 2015-2018*, Brussels, 26 November 2014, available at: http://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/st-16094-2014-init/en/pdf.

COWELL B. (2007), "Measuring the Impact of Free Admission", *Cultural Trends,* vol. 16, n. 3, pp. 203-224.

COWELL B. (2008), *The Heritage Obsession. The Battle for England's Past*, The History Press, Stroud.

CUNNINGHAM S.D. (2002), "From cultural to creative industries: Theory, industry, and policy implications", *Media International Australia Incorporating Culture and Policy: Quarterly Journal of Media Research and Resources,* vol. 102, n. 1, pp. 54-65.

DCMS (2001), *Creative Industries Mapping Document, Department for Culture*, Media & Sport, London.

DCMS (2014), T*aking Part 2014/15 Quarter 2: Statistical Release,* Department for Culture, Media and Sport, December, London, available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/taking-part-201415-quarter-2-statistical-release.

DELLA LUCIA M. (2014), "La multidimensionalità dello sviluppo locale culture-led. Laboratori territoriali di sperimentazione", *Mercati e Competitività,* n. 4, pp. 85-107.

DONATO F. (2013), *La crisi sprecata. Per una riforma dei modelli di governance e di management del patrimonio culturale italiano,* Aracne, Roma.

DRAKE G. (2003), "'This place gives me space': place and creativity in the creative industries", *Geoforum*, n. 34, pp. 511-524.

E&Y (2015), *Italia Creativa. Primo studio sull'Industria della Cultura e della Creatività in Italia,* Ernst & Young Financial-Business Advisors S.p.A.

EISENBERG C., GERLACH R., HANDKE C., eds. (2006), *Cultural Industries: The British Experience in International Perspective,* Humboldt University, Berlin, disponibile sul sito: http://edoc.hu-berlin.de/conferences/culturalindustries/proc/culturalindustries.pdf.

EISENHARDT K.M. (1989), "Building theories from case study research", *Academy of Management Review,* vol. 14, n. 4, pp. 532-550.

FELICIATI P., a cura di (2016), "La valorizzazione dell'eredità culturale in Italia", Atti del convegno di studi in occasione del 5° anno della rivista (Macerata, 5-6 novembre 2015), *Il capitale culturale. Studies on the Value of Cultural heritage,* Supplementi, n. 5, disponibile sul sito: https://riviste.unimc.it/index.php/cap-cult/issue/view/81.

FLEW T. (2002), "Beyond ad hocery: defining creative industries", paper presented to *Cultural sites, Cultural Theory, Cultural Policy, The Second International Conference on Cultural Policy Research* (Te Papa, Wellington, New Zeland, 23-26 January 2002), available at: http://eprints.qut.edu.au/256/1/Flew_beyond.pdf.

FLORIDA R. (2002), *The Rise of the Creative Class: And How It's Transforming Work, Leisure, Community and Everyday Life,* Basic Books, New York.

GALLOWAY S., DUNLOP S. (2007), "A critique of definitions of the cultural and creative industries in public policy", *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, vol. 13, n. 1, pp. 17-31.

GARNHAM N. (2005), "From cultural to creative industries", *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, vol. 11, n. 1, pp. 15-29.

GOMM R., HAMMERSLEY M., FOSTER P. (2000), "Case study and generalization", in *Case study method*, Sage Publications, Thousand Oaks, CA, pp. 98-115.

GRANT R.M. (1991), "The Resource-based Theory of Competitive Advantage: Implications for Strategy Formulation", *California Management Review,* n. 33, pp. 114-135.

GRAY C. (2000), *The Politics of the Arts in Britain,* Palgrave Macmillan, London.

HARRISON R. (2013), *Heritage. Critical Approaches*, Routledge, Abingdon-New York.

HESMONDHALGH D. (2007), *The Cultural Industries*, Sage, London.

HESMONDHALGH D., OAKLEY K., LEE D. (2015), *Culture, Economy and Politics. The Case of New Labour,* Palgrave Macmillan, London.

HESMONDHALGH D., PRATT A.C. (2005), "Cultural industries and cultural policy", *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, vol. 11, n. 1, pp. 1-14.

HEWISON R. (1987), *The Heritage industry. Britain in a climate of decline,* A Methun Paperback, York.

HEWISON R. (1995), *Culture & Consensus. England, art and politics since 1940*, Methuen, London.

HEWISON R. (2011), "Creative Britain: myth or monument?", *Cultural Trends,* vol. 20, n. 3, pp. 235-242.

HEWISON R. (2014), *Cultural Capital: The Rise and Fall of Creative Britain,* Verso, London-New York.

HOLDEN J. (2007), *Publicly Funded Culture and the Creative Industries,* Arts Council, London.

HOWKINS J. (2001), *The Creative Economy: How People Make Money from Ideas,* Penguin, London.

HUGHSON J., INGLIS D. (2001), "'Creative industries' and the arts in Britain: Towards a 'third way' in cultural policy?", *International Journal of Cultural Policy,* n. 7, pp. 457-478.

KEA EUROPEAN AFFAIRS (2006), *Economy of Culture in Europe, European Commission,* Directorate-General for Education and Culture, Brussels.

MARTIN C. (2004), "Defining Culture and Communication for the Purpose of National and International Statistics Program", paper presented to the *3rd International Conference on Cultural Policy Research* (HEC Montréal, Montreal, Canada, 25-28 August 2004), available at: http://neumann.hec.ca/iccpr/PDF_Texts/Martin_Claude.pdf.

MATARASSO F., LANDRY C. (1999), *Balancing act: twenty-one strategic dilemmas in cultural policy*, Council of Europe, Strasbourg.

MATO D. (2009), "All industries are cultural. A critique of the idea of 'cultural industries' and new possibilities for research", *Cultural Studies*, vol. 23, n. 1, pp. 70-87.

MiBACT (2017), *PST 2017-2020. Italia Paese per Viaggiatori, Piano Strategico di Sviluppo del Turismo,* Invitalia, Roma, disponibile sul sito: http://www.pst.beniculturali.it/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/PST_2017_IT_final.pdf.

MOMMAAS H. (2004), "Cultural clusters and the post-industrial city: Towards the remapping of urban cultural policy", *Urban Studies,* n. 41, pp. 507-532.

MONTELLA M. (2015), "Quale distretto culturale - fra accademia e fattività", *Il capitale culturale. Studies on the Value of Cultural heritage,* Supplementi, n. 3, pp. 11-42.

MONTELLA M. (ed.) (2016), *Economia e gestione dell'eredità culturale. Dizionario metodico essenziale*, Wolters Kluwer-CEDAM, Alphen aan den Rijn-Milano.

NAPOLITANO M.R., MARINO V. (2016), *Cultural heritage e Made in Italy. Casi ed esperienze di marketing internazionale,* Editoriale Scientific, Napoli.

OAKLEY K. (2004), "Not so cool Britannia: The role of the creative industries in economic development", *International Journal of Cultural Studies*, vol. 7, n. 1, pp. 67-77.

O'BRIEN D. (2014), *Cultural policy. Management, value and modernity in the creative industries,* Routledge, Abingdon-New York.

O'CONNOR J. (2000), "The definition of the 'Cultural Industries'", *The European Journal of Arts Education*, vol. 2, n. 3, pp. 15-27, available at: http://eprints.qut.edu.au/43877/2/43877.pdf.

O'CONNOR J. (2007), *The cultural and creative industries: a review of the literature*, Arts Council England, Creative Partnerships, London.

OECD (2009), *The impact of Culture on Tourism, OECD Publishing*, Paris, available at: http://www.mlit.go.jp/kankocho/naratourismstatisticsweek/statistical/pdf/2009_The_Impact.pdf.

OECD (2014), *Tourism and the Creative Economy, OECD Studies on Tourism,* OECD Publishing, Paris, available at: http://www.mlit.go.jp/kankocho/naratourismstatisticsweek/statistical/pdf/2014_Tourism_and_the_creative.pdf.

PENDLEBURY J. (2000), "Conservation, Conservatives and Consensus: The Success of Conservation under the Thatcher and Major Governments, 1979-1997", *Planning Theory and Practice*, vol. 1, n. 1, pp. 31-52.

PRATT A.C. (2004), "The cultural economy. A call for spatialized 'production of culture' perspectives", *International Journal of Cultural Studies,* vol. 7, n. 1, pp. 117-128.

PRATT A.C. (2005), "Cultural industries and public policy: an oxymoron?", *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, vol. 11, n. 1, pp. 31-44.

ROODHOUSE S. (2006), "The Creative Industries: Definitions, Quantification and Practice", in Eisenberg C., Gerlach R., Handke C., eds., *Cultural Industries: The British Experience in International Perspective*, Humboldt University, Berlin, pp. 13-31, available at: http://edoc.hu-berlin.de/conferences/culturalindustries/proc/culturalindustries.pdf.

SACCO P.L. (2010), "Cultura e sviluppo locale: il distretto culturale evoluto", *Sinergie*, n. 82, pp. 115-119.

SACCO P.L., FERILLI G., TAVANO BLESSI G. (2015), *Cultura e sviluppo locale. Verso il distretto culturale evoluto,* Il Mulino, Bologna.

SANTAGATA W. (2009), *Libro bianco sulla creatività. Per un modello italiano di sviluppo,* Università Bocconi, Milano.

SANTAGATA W. (2014), *Il governo della cultura. Promuovere sviluppo e qualità sociale,* Il Mulino, Bologna.

SCOTT A.J. (2010), "Cultural Economy and the Creative Field of the City", *Geografiska Annaler: Series B, Human Geography,* vol. 92, n. 2, pp. 115-130.

SEDITA S.R., PAIOLA M., a cura di (2009), *Il management della creatività. Reti, comunità e territori,* Carocci, Roma.

SMITH C. (1998), *Creative Britain,* Faber and Faber, London.

SNAI (2013), *Strategia nazionale per le Aree interne: definizione, obiettivi, strumenti e governance (Accordo di Partenariato 2014-2020),* documento tecnico collegato alla bozza di Accordo di Partenariato trasmessa alla CE il 9 dicembre 2013.

STAKE R.E. (1983), "The case study method in social inquiry", in *Evaluation models, Springer Netherlands*, pp. 279-286.

STAKE R.E. (2005). "Qualitative case studies", in Denzin N.K., Lincoln Y.S., eds., *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research,* 3rd Edition, Sage Publications, Thousand Oaks, CA, pp. 443-466.

SYMBOLA, UNIONCAMERE (2015), *Io sono cultura. L'Italia della qualità e della bellezza sfida la crisi,* Quaderni di Symbola, Symbola, Unioncamere, Roma.

SYMBOLA, UNIONCAMERE (2016), *Io sono cultura. L'Italia della qualità e della bellezza sfida la crisi,* Quaderni di Symbola, Symbola, Unioncamere, Roma.

THE WARWICK COMMISSION (2015), *Enriching Britain: Culture, Creativity and Growth. The 2015 Report by the Warwick Commission on the Future of Cultural Value,* University of Warwick, Warwick.

THROSBY (2008), "Modelling the cultural industries", *International Journal of Cultural Policy,* vol. 14, n. 3, pp. 217-232.

THROSBY D. (2010), *The Economics of Cultural Policy,* Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

UK TRADE & INVESTMENT (2014), *UK Creative Industries - International Strategy. Driving global growth for the UK creative industries,* UK Trade & Investment, London.

VALENTINO P.A., a cura di (2012), *L'arte di produrre arte: imprese culturali a lavoro*, Marsilio, Venezia.

VALENTINO P.A. (2013), "L'impresa culturale e creativa: verso una definizione condivisa", *Economia della cultura,* n. 3, pp. 273-288.

VALENTINO P.A. (2016), *I mutamenti nell'economia della cultura, in Impresa Cultura. Creatività, Partecipazione, Competitività*, 12° Rapporto Annuale Federculture 2016, Gangemi, Roma, pp. 281-293.

YIN R.K. (2012), *Applications of Case Study Research,* Third Edition, Sage publications, Thousand Oaks, CA.

YIN R.K. (2014), *Case Study Research: Design and Methods,* Fifth Edition, Sage publications, Thousand Oaks, CA.

Academic or professional position and contacts

Mara Cerquetti
Researcher in Management
University of Macerata - Italy
e-mail: mara.cerquetti@unimc.it

sinergie
italian journal of management

ISSN 0393-5108
DOI 10.7433/s105.2018.06
pp. 105-130

FONDAZIONE CUEIM

L'innovazione nelle piccole e medie imprese agroalimentari della Regione Campania[1]

Received
3th November 2016
Revised
13th July 2017
Accepted
9th November 2017

Marcella De Martino - Fabio Magnotti - Lodovico Santoro

Abstract

Obiettivo del paper*: Il lavoro ha l'obiettivo di analizzare i principali fattori - sia interni all'azienda (n° addetti, fatturato, competenze, investimenti in R&S) che esterni (collaborazione, fonti informative, finanziamenti pubblici) - che favoriscono lo sviluppo di attività innovative nelle PMI del settore agroalimentare.*

Metodologia*: Sulla base di un framework teorico desunto dalla letteratura, è stata realizzata un'indagine empirica che ha coinvolto 122 PMI agroalimentari campane, scelte tra quelle appartenenti alle filiere pastaria, olivicola, lattiero-casearia e vitivinicola. I dati ottenuti sono stati successivamente elaborati attraverso la cluster analysis per rilevare il contributo di alcuni dei fattori alle modalità di innovazione delle PMI.*

Risultati*: L'analisi ha permesso di individuare tre gruppi di imprese con differenti innovation patterns: Innovative e Collaborative (IC), Innovative e Non Collaborative (INC) e Non Innovative (NI). Dall'analisi dei dati emerge che i principali fattori discriminanti la capacità innovativa sono rappresentati dalla collaborazione con diversi stakeholder locali, dall'accesso a fonti informative e dal ricorso ai finanziamenti pubblici.*

Limiti della ricerca*: La realizzazione di un'indagine longitudinale di alcune best practice di piccole imprese innovative consentirebbe di approfondite il nesso di causalità tra alcuni fattori (driver) e risultati ottenuti attraverso i processi innovativi. Ulteriore limite è l'analisi delle caratteristiche dell'imprenditore quale attore del processo di cambiamento aziendale.*

Implicazioni pratiche*: La diffusione di "best practice" può incentivare l'adozione di pratiche collaborative da parte delle PMI afferenti ai due cluster INC e NI, anche in virtù del fatto che solitamente esse innovano per imitazione.*

Originalità del lavoro*: Il lavoro rappresenta un primo studio della capacità innovativa delle PMI agroalimentari della Campania. Inoltre, il lavoro ha consentito di evidenziare alcune realtà innovative che sfuggono alle rilevazioni statistiche nazionali ed europee.*

Parole chiave: piccole e medie imprese; capacità di innovazione; agroalimentare

[1] Il presente lavoro è stato realizzato attraverso la partecipazione al progetto di ricerca Campus innovazione QUARC: "Qualità delle produzioni tipiche campane ed il suo territorio: approcci innovativi ed integrati per rafforzare la competitività del sistema Agroalimentare", in attuazione degli obiettivi operativi 2.1 e 2.2. del Programma Operativo FESR Campania 2007/2013.

sinergie
italian journal of management
Vol. 36, N. 105, 2018

Innovation capacity of agri-food small and medium enterprises of the Campania region

***Purpose of the paper**: The purpose of this paper is to analyse the impact of some drivers - both internal (n° employees, revenue, competences, investment in R&D) and external (collaboration, information sources, public funding) - on the development of innovation activities in small and medium enterprises (SMEs)*

***Methodology**: Based on a theoretical framework derived from the literature, it has been conducted an empirical analysis involving 122 agri-food SMEs of the Campania Region that belong to the grain-pasta, olive-oil, dairy and wine supply chains. The data has been elaborated through the cluster analysis technique in order to explore any meaningful patterns that may exist in terms of the innovation capacity.*

***Results**: Three clusters with different innovation modes have been identified: Innovative and collaborative (IC); Innovative and non-collaborative (INC); Non-innovative (NI). The analysis reveals that the main discriminating factors of the innovative capacity are the collaboration with different local stakeholders the access to information sources and the ability to obtain public funding for innovation.*

***Research limits**: A longitudinal analysis of some best practices of innovative SMEs could offer a better understanding of the relationships between some drivers and the results of the innovation. Other limits is the lack of the analysis of characteristics of the entrepreneur as the main dynamic actors of the business ri-organizational process.*

***Practical implications**: The dissemination of "best practices" can promote the adoption of collaborative practices by SMEs of the others two clusters INC and NI, given the fact that these usually innovate by imitation.*

***Originality of the papaer**: This is the first quantitative study focusing on the innovation capacity of agri-food SMEs in the Campania Region. The study specifically highlights the existence of some innovative SMEs that generally are overlooked by national and European statistical surveys.*

Key words: small and medium enterprises; innovation capacity; agri-food chain

1. Introduzione

L'importanza dell'innovazione per la competitività aziendale è stata ampiamente dibattuta nella letteratura manageriale e numerosi studi hanno evidenziato come essa sia il frutto di specifiche scelte strategiche delle imprese in funzione di diverse variabili quali la dimensione aziendale (Avermaete *et al.*, 2004; De Jong e Vermeulen, 2006), la cultura imprenditoriale (Mascitelli, 2000, Shan *et al.*, 2016), il grado di internazionalizzazione (Boermans e Roelfsema, 2016; Özçelik *et al.*, 2004), il livello di investimenti in attività di Ricerca e Sviluppo (Capitanio *et al.*, 2009) e il grado di collaborazione con gli altri attori della *supply chain* (Kuhne *et al.*, 2010). Tra tali variabili, quella dimensionale continua a rivestire un ruolo fondamentale nel determinare la capacità innovativa delle imprese. È infatti innegabile come la grande dimensione favorisca i processi innovativi delle imprese che possono far leva su un maggior potere contrattuale nel mercato della ricerca e del capitale intellettuale e disporre di maggiori risorse da investire in attività di Ricerca e Sviluppo (R&S) e, pertanto, svolgere con maggiore efficacia un'attività innovativa.

Non sono mancati, tuttavia, studi da cui emerge una spiccata capacità innovativa da parte delle piccole e medie imprese, evidenziando come quest'ultima non derivi necessariamente da investimenti in attività di ricerca e sviluppo, ma possa essere alimentata da altre fonti interne ed esterne non necessariamente riconducibili ad attività formalmente misurabili (Santamaria *et al.*, 2009). L'innovazione nelle piccole e medie imprese (PMI) è infatti spesso realizzata secondo forme, modalità e meccanismi non facilmente rilevabili, come ad esempio lo spirito creativo dell'imprenditore o la creazione di rapporti collaborativi con clienti e fornitori fondati sulla fiducia (Giarretta, 2013). Per utilizzare un'espressione ricorrente e molto efficace, le piccole imprese realizzano per lo più un innovazione *invisibile*, nascosta, poiché sfugge alle rilevazioni statistiche[2]. A tal riguardo, recenti studi si sono focalizzati sul ruolo della collaborazione quale modalità di accesso a risorse esterne e a nuovi mercati, nonché come fonte di generazione di nuova conoscenza. In tal modo viene superato il limite legato alla disponibilità *in-house* delle risorse e delle competenze adeguate per poter avviare con successo una innovazione (Batterink *et al.* 2010; Colombo *et al.*, 2012; Dagnino *et al.*, 2015; Gronum *et al.*, 2012).

Altri autori richiamano invece i concetti di prossimità geografica (Lundvall, 1992; Von Hippel, 1988), distretti tecnologici (Lazzeroni, 2010; Sangnuigni e De Crescenzo, 2013) e di ecosistemi dell'innovazione (Ambrosetti, 2013), al fine di evidenziare la capacità di un'area geografica di sostenere i processi di innovazione delle imprese, garantendo una più diretta circolazione delle conoscenze riguardo ai progressi tecnologici, anche attraverso meccanismi di interazione più diretti.

Tuttavia, tali interazioni sono solo parzialmente riscontrabili nel contesto italiano, specialmente nelle regioni del Mezzogiorno, dove la frammentazione del sistema produttivo ha accentuato le difficoltà, soprattutto per le PMI nel sostenere investimenti in attività di R&S. Tale circostanza ha comportato un forte *gap* innovativo rispetto ai principali paesi europei (Banca d'Italia, 2012). La polverizzazione del sistema produttivo nazionale si manifesta con maggiore enfasi nel comparto agroalimentare, uno dei più rappresentativi del *Made in Italy*, in cui tuttavia il peso delle imprese di piccole e piccolissime dimensioni è pari a circa il 99% (Istat, 2011)[3]. In particolare, i dati del 9° Censimento industria e servizi mostrano come la maggioranza (87,1%) delle realtà produttrici del comparto agroalimentare siano microimprese con un numero di addetti minore di 10, mentre quelle di piccole dimensioni (10-49 addetti) rappresentino l'11,4%. Considerando il forte impatto che le imprese agroalimentari rivestono sull'occupazione, si registra, inoltre, un

[2] Va notato che il sistema di misurazione dell'innovazione utilizzato nelle statistiche ufficiali a livello europeo e nazionale è fondato sull'impiego di alcuni indicatori, quali la spesa in R&S o il numero di brevetti, i quali comportano una sottostima della capacità innovativa delle imprese di piccola dimensione che innovano senza lasciarne traccia nel bilancio d'esercizio.

[3] Si deve tenere presente che l'unica indagine ISTAT che coinvolge le imprese con meno di 10 addetti è rappresentata dal Censimento industria e servizi. Le indagini relative all'innovazione in Italia, seguendo le indagini europee della Community Innovation Survey - CIS, coinvolgono le imprese che hanno un numero di addetti maggiore di 10.

valore aggiunto aggregato inferiore rispetto a quello ascrivibile alle grandi imprese.

Infine, le imprese agroalimentari italiane presentano un forte *gap* rispetto ai concorrenti europei, considerando aspetti legati all'innovazione. Dall'analisi dei dati europei relativi al "*food and beverage*" (Eurostat, 2014), risulta che il 41,7% delle imprese italiane non ha introdotto innovazioni negli ultimi 3 anni, mentre solo il 9,8% ha sperimentato innovazioni di processo e di prodotto (contro una media europea del 13,2%), mentre considerando le forme collaborative di innovazione solo, il 19,5% (contro una media europea del 33,1%) ha attivato *partnership* con altri soggetti.

Alla luce di tali considerazioni, il presente lavoro si pone l'obiettivo di analizzare la capacità di innovazione delle piccole e medie imprese (PMI) agroalimentari campane. Adottando una visione globale del processo innovativo, il lavoro non si limita a considerare soltanto le risorse interne all'azienda ma anche quelle esterne, come lo sviluppo di forme di collaborazione con fornitori, clienti e istituti di ricerca, il ricorso a finanziamenti pubblici e l'accesso a fonti informative. Inoltre, analizzando un contesto regionale, è possibile verificare l'importanza che la prossimità geografica assume sulle scelte di innovazione delle PMI (Davenport, 2005).

Considerando come input dell'innovazione sia le risorse interne che quelle esterne all'impresa, il lavoro analizza le innovazioni delle PMI agroalimentari relativamente ai prodotti, ai processi, ai modelli organizzativi e alle strategie di marketing. I differenti percorsi di innovazione intrapresi conducono le imprese ad ottenere differenti risultati in termini di aumento del profitto, della quota di mercato, dell'efficienza produttiva e della sostenibilità ambientale. Oltre a misurare la capacità delle imprese innovatrici di sfruttare le risorse interne ed esterne nei processi innovativi, vengono considerati anche i principali fattori di ostacolo incontrati dalle imprese che non presentano alcuna innovazione.

La ricerca si focalizza principalmente sulle PMI agroalimentari impegnate nella fase di trasformazione delle filiere lattiero-casearia, olivicola-olearia, cerealicola-pastaria e viticola/vitivinicola della regione Campania. Questa scelta è legata sia alla loro rilevanza socio-economica, sia all'elevata incidenza di prodotti *Made in Italy* provenienti da tali filiere campane. Inoltre, alle quattro filiere analizzate è riconducibile la maggior parte dei prodotti di qualità, come la Mozzarella (DOP, STG), la Pizza Napoletana (STG), la pasta di Gragnano, l'olio DOP e l'ampia gamma di vini DOP e DOCG (MIPAAF, 2016). La qualità di tali prodotti è inoltre riconosciuta anche dai mercati esteri. In particolare, secondo uno studio di European House-Ambrosetti e di Federalimentare (2018) circa il 40% dell'export italiano è rappresentato da prodotti a denominazione protetta (DOP, IGP, ecc.) appartenenti alle filiere vitivinicole (17,9%), lattiero-casearia (8,6%), olivicola (6,8%) e cerealicola-pastaria (5,8%).

Il lavoro è strutturato come segue. Il secondo paragrafo riporta l'analisi della letteratura sui nuovi modelli di innovazione nel settore agroalimentare. Nel paragrafo successivo è descritto, invece, il *framework* teorico impiegato per valutare la capacità innovativa delle PMI agroalimentari campane. Chiude tale paragrafo, un'attenta descrizione della struttura del questionario e della scelta del metodo statistico utilizzato nell'analisi dei dati. Nel quarto

paragrafo vengono presentati e discussi i principali risultati emersi. A conclusione del lavoro, sono sviluppate alcune riflessioni sullo scenario in cui operano le PMI agroalimentari campane e sull'individuazione di possibili implicazioni manageriali e di *policy*.

2. L'innovazione nel settore agroalimentare: drivers e modelli di analisi

Un primo contributo rilevante per la comprensione dei modelli di innovazione delle imprese agroalimentari è offerto dal lavoro di Grunert *et al.* (1997) che, sulla base dell'analisi di casi studio in ambito europeo, definisce due principali *driver* dell'innovazione di cui il primo è rappresentato dalle attività di R&S, che sono alla base del cambiamento tecnologico all'interno dell'impresa. Sebbene il settore sia considerato *lower research intensity industry*, nondimeno evidenzia un grande numero di innovazioni tese al miglioramento dei prodotti agroalimentari esistenti e/o dei relativi processi produttivi (Bareghehe *et al.*, 2012). Il secondo *driver* è identificato nell'orientamento al mercato, inteso come "*the detection and fulfilment of unfilled needs and wants of potential customers, using the skills, resources, and competences of the company*" (Grunert *et al.*, 1997, pag. 29).

Tali *drivers* sono stati successivamente approfonditi da alcuni dei lavori più recenti (Avermaete *et al.*, 2004; Acosta *et al.*, 2015; Batterinik *et al.*, 2006; Karantininis *et al.*, 2010; Kuhne *et al.*, 2010) che hanno evidenziato il ruolo determinante delle risorse interne e delle risorse esterne nell'attivare processi di innovazione all'interno dell'azienda e lungo la *supply chain* (Tabella 1).

Nello specifico, Avermaete *et al.* (2004) analizzano le determinanti delle innovazioni di prodotto e di processo nelle piccole imprese agroalimentari localizzate in 6 diverse zone agricole del Regno Unito, Belgio e Irlanda. Il *framework* teorico proposto dagli autori si focalizza, da un lato, sulle risorse interne all'azienda quali le caratteristiche dell'imprenditore; competenze della forza lavoro e gli investimenti in *know-how* e dall'altro, su quelle esterne quali le consulenze e le fonti informative. Attraverso un'indagine empirica condotta su 177 PMI, gli autori identificano 4 gruppi di imprese caratterizzati da differenti modalità di innovazione, denominati rispettivamente: non-innovatrici, tradizionaliste, *followers* e *leaders*. Dai risultati, emerge come lo sviluppo delle competenze della forza lavoro risulti essere il principale *driver* dell'innovazione, più rilevante degli investimenti in *know-how*, peraltro del tutto assenti in alcune imprese del gruppo dei *leaders*. Questo risultato ha importanti implicazioni per le *policy* tese a favorire l'innovazione nelle PMI la cui efficacia, in tal caso, sarebbe certamente più significativa se orientate a favorire lo sviluppo delle competenze interne, piuttosto che rivolte genericamente a sostenere l'attività di R&S.

Sulla base dei dati relativi a più di 300 imprese agroalimentari olandesi, Batterink *et al.* (2006) sottolineano l'importanza dell'orientamento al mercato, oltre che dei finanziamenti pubblici, quale *driver* dell'innovazione. Nonostante le evidenze emerse in letteratura circa l'importanza della

collaborazione nei processi innovativi, gli autori non riscontrano all'interno del campione un nesso causale tra queste due variabili. Questo in conseguenza del fatto che l'unità di analisi è circoscritta a singole imprese danesi (e non alle *supply chain*) che hanno partecipato alla *Community Innovation Survey* (CIS), in cui l'analisi della collaborazione si limita esclusivamente alle innovazioni radicali di prodotto e/o processo. Molto più rilevanti risultano essere le fonti esterne di informazioni, in quanto le imprese agroalimentari sono spinte ad innovare per imitazione dei loro diretti *competitors*.

Le relazioni collaborative lungo la *supply chain* sono invece prese in considerazione nel lavoro di Kuhne *et al.* (2010) che, a differenza di Batterinik *et al.* (2006), si focalizza su 270 imprese agroalimentari appartenenti a circa 90 *supply chain* di prodotti tradizionali di tre paesi europei: Italia, Belgio ed Ungheria. Attraverso la *cluster analysis* sono stati identificati tre gruppi di imprese: il primo, formato da 31 *supply chain*, è caratterizzato da imprese principalmente di piccolissime dimensioni, con bassa capacità d'innovazione e con scarsa propensione alla collaborazione ed è, pertanto, definito "*Non-innovator chains*". Il secondo gruppo, "*Non-collaborating innovator chain*", è composto da 49 *supply chain* e si contraddistingue per una maggiore capacità innovativa rispetto al primo. Infine il terzo *cluster* è composto da 11 *supply chain* caratterizzate da un elevato livello di innovazione e da un intensa rete di collaborazioni ed è, pertanto, definito "High-collaborating innovator chains". I risultati di questo *cluster* evidenziano l'importanza che i processi collaborativi assumono per le imprese, in quanto dimostrano come la piccola dimensione non implichi necessariamente una bassa capacità di innovazione qualora vi siano strette collaborazioni con i membri della *supply chain* (clienti e fornitori).

Il tema della collaborazione e dell'integrazione verticale lungo la *supply chain* viene anche affrontato nel lavoro di Karantininis *et al.* (2010), che analizza la diversa natura dei legami tra le imprese (integrazione verticale, contratti e/o altri accordi di rete) e l'impatto che questi hanno sulle dinamiche di crescita sia delle singole imprese che dell'intera *supply chain*. Grazie ad un'indagine empirica che ha coinvolto più di 400 imprese danesi, il lavoro fornisce un quadro molto dettagliato sull'organizzazione dell'innovazione e sugli effetti generati nell'ambito delle *supply chain* agroalimentari. La strategia di integrazione verticale risulta molto più rilevante nel perseguimento delle innovazioni di prodotto, soprattutto nei casi in cui il controllo viene esercitato dalle imprese a valle della *supply chain*. Ciò in virtù del fatto che le imprese posizionate a valle, hanno una maggior conoscenza delle esigenze del consumatore finale, *driver* fondamentale per l'innovazione di prodotto. Inoltre, il potere contrattuale dell'impresa ed il suo orientamento alle esportazioni rappresentano ulteriori fattori chiave per l'attivazione di varie forme di innovazione lungo la *supply chain*.

Acosta *et al.* (2015) analizzano il ruolo delle politiche pubbliche nel favorire lo sviluppo di attività di R&S e l'innovazione nelle imprese agroalimentari e il relativo impatto sulla produttività aziendale. Ispirandosi al modello sviluppato da Crepon *et al.* (1998), gli autori conducono un indagine longitudinale, dal 2008 al 2011, su circa 500 imprese agroalimentari spagnole. Il modello, opportunamente adattato al contesto

di riferimento, considera tre tipologie di innovazione (di prodotto, di processo e organizzative) e valuta per ciascuna di esse l'impatto dei finanziamenti pubblici sulla produttività dell'impresa in termini di "vendite per dipendente". Dall'indagine emerge che i fondi pubblici nazionali favoriscono gli investimenti in R&S e contribuiscono, anche se marginalmente, allo sviluppo di innovazioni di prodotto ed organizzative. Le spese per la formazione, inoltre, risultano più elevate per le imprese che hanno realizzato più di una innovazione; per queste imprese si registra anche una maggiore produttività rispetto a quelle che hanno realizzato esclusivamente innovazioni di processo. Infine, anche la propensione alla collaborazione e l'orientamento alle esportazioni risultano essere fattori determinati per l'innovazione.

Tab. 1: Principali modelli di analisi dell'innovazione nelle imprese agroalimentari

Autori	Innovazione	Metodo d'analisi e campione d'indagine	Driver dell'innovazione	
			Risorse interne	Risorse esterne
Avermaete *et al.* (2004)	Prodotto e processo	Analisi di regressione Campione: 77 PMI localizzate in sei regioni di tre paesi europei (Regno Unito, Belgio e Irlanda).	Caratteristiche dell'imprenditore (*età, qualifica, esperienza*); Competenze della forza lavoro (*tecnici qualificati e manager*); Investimenti in know/how (*spese in attività di formazione e di marketing*).	Consulenze (*amministrative, marketing e tecniche*); Fonti informative (*imprese simili, fornitori di macchinari, fornitori di materie prime, clienti e Centri di Ricerca*).
Batterinik *et al.* (2006)	Prodotto e processo	Analisi di regressione Campione: 328 imprese agroalimentari olandesi.	Spese in R&S (*macchinari, hardware, attività di ricerche interne, contratti e licenze*).	Collaborazione (*clienti, fornitori, concorrenti, Università e Centri di Ricerca*); Fonti informative (*interne all'azienda, clienti, fornitori, concorrenti, Università e Centri di Ricerca*); Finanziamenti pubblici (*locali, nazionali ed europei*).
Kuhne *et al.* (2010)	Prodotto, processo, organizzative marketing	*Cluster analysis* Campione: 270 imprese coinvolte in 90 supply chain (Belgio, Ungheria e Italia)	Risorse Umane (*costi di formazione del personale, esperimenti, seminari e corsi*); Risorse Finanziarie (*spese in R&S*).	Collaborazione (*clienti e fornitori*).
Karantininis *et al.* (2010)	Prodotto	Analisi di regressione Campione: 444 imprese agroalimentari danesi	Dimensione aziendale (*numero di addetti*).	Integrazione verticale in termini di controllo gerarchico, e/o contratti o altri accordi di rete; Potere contrattuale dell'azienda rispetto alle imprese a monte e a valle; Esportazioni (*% di vendite generate dall'-export*).
Acosta *et al.* (2015)	Prodotto, processo e organizzative	Analisi di regressione Campione: 500 imprese agroalimentari spagnole	Caratteristiche dell'impresa (*numero di addetti, % personale qualificato, spese di formazione, professionale, spese in R&S per addetto, % esportazioni sulle vendite*).	Finanziamenti pubblici (*locali, nazionali ed europei*); Fonti informative (*interne all'azienda, fornitori, clienti, concorrenti, Università, fiere*).

Fonte: nostra elaborazione

A conclusione di questa breve rassegna, si può rilevare come la maggior parte dei lavori esaminati si siano focalizzati sulle innovazioni di prodotto e processo, considerando i comportamenti di acquisto dei consumatori, attenti alla qualità e alla sicurezza alimentare e, solitamente, molto sensibili all'utilizzo di prodotti agroalimentari con caratteristiche nuove. Un'ulteriore evidenza emersa dall'analisi della letteratura riguarda la dimensione aziendale, considerata come variabile chiave per l'innovazione. In particolare, soltanto uno dei lavori esaminati si focalizza, attraverso un'analisi field, esplicitamente sulle piccola e media dimensione (Avermaete *et al.*, 2004), mentre gli altri studi fondano l'analisi sui dati della CIS, che utilizza come indicatori della capacità di innovazione gli investimenti in attività di R&S, i brevetti e il numero di nuovi prodotti realizzati. Va detto, tuttavia, che le PMI possono innovare anche senza svolgere attività di R&S internamente, attraverso lo sviluppo di collaborazioni esterne. La rilevanza della dimensione e della collaborazione ha contribuito, inoltre, ad alimentare il tema delle politiche di sostegno all'innovazione, come sottolineato da Acosta *et al.* (2015) che evidenziano la necessità di definire azioni di *policy* specifiche per le PMI agroalimentari.

3. Il framework di analisi della capacità di innovazione

Sulla base della letteratura analizzata nel paragrafo precedente, i lavori di Acosta *et al.* (2015), Avermaete *et al.* (2004) e Kuhne *et al.* (2010) rappresentano i riferimenti più appropriati per analizzare un contesto poco esplorato, quale quello della delle filiere agroalimentari in Campania, caratterizzato principalmente da micro e piccole imprese. Il *framework* proposto considera l'influenza di alcune risorse, interne ed esterne all'impresa, sulla capacità di innovazione delle PMI e delle microimprese agroalimentari (Figura 1).

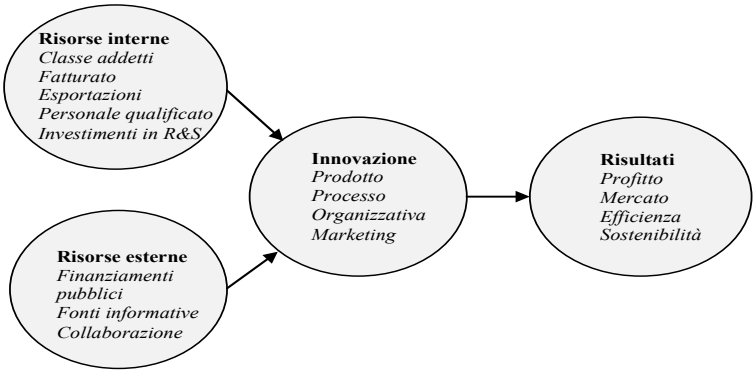
Le risorse interne fanno riferimento alla struttura ed alle caratteristiche dell'impresa, ed in particolare: la dimensione aziendale (in termini di classe di addetti e di fatturato), il personale qualificato, le esportazioni e gli investimenti in R&S. La dimensione aziendale e gli investimenti in R&S rappresentano le variabili chiave analizzate in tutti gli studi citati, e le indagine realizzate confermano l'esistenza di un legame tra dimensione ed investimenti in R&S. Con riferimento alla piccola e media dimensione il contributo sia delle risorse umane che quelle finanziare sulla capacità di innovazione richiede una specifica analisi, che ad oggi gli studi nel settore agroalimentare non hanno ancora offerto.

Le esportazioni rappresentano un'altra variabile che influisce sulla capacità innovativa delle imprese, in quanto la competizione sui mercati internazionali incentiva le imprese ad attivare nuovi processi innovativi (Karantininis *et al.*, 2010). L'apertura ai mercati esteri offre la possibilità di conoscere le innovazioni intraprese dai *competitors* e, quindi, attivare un processo di innovazione anche nel mercato locale. In linea con il lavoro di Avermaete *et al.* (2004), è stata considerata come ulteriore risorsa interna la presenza di personale qualificato, che contribuisce alla realizzazione di innovazioni attraverso la realizzazione di nuove tecniche volte al

miglioramento del processo produttivo o alla realizzazione di nuovi prodotti *in-house*.

Poiché la piccola e piccolissima dimensione aziendale presentano vincoli in termini di risorse finanziare e manageriali interne, risulta necessario estendere l'analisi alle risorse esterne a cui l'azienda può accedere. L'adozione di un approccio di "innovazione aperta" per lo sviluppo di innovazioni è ormai indispensabile nell'attuale scenario competitivo, in cui gli elevati costi legati all'innovazione e la necessità di conoscenze e competenze specifiche impediscono a molte imprese, soprattutto quelle di piccole e medie dimensioni, di svolgere attività innovative e di R&S. Il raggiungimento di un vantaggio competitivo è, soprattutto in alcuni settori fortemente concorrenziali come quello dell'agroalimentare, subordinato a quello che Kanter (1994) definisce vantaggio collaborativo. Ed è proprio sulla base di tali considerazioni, che si è scelto di misurare, oltre che i finanziamenti pubblici e le fonti informative, anche la collaborazione esterna. In particolare, sebbene rilevanti i rapporti con fornitori e clienti, l'analisi si estende ai rapporti di collaborazione con altri soggetti detentori di conoscenza come Università, istituti di ricerca, associazioni professionali e consulenti. Le fonti informative, ovvero i principali canali di informazione utile ai fini dell'innovazione, dipendono dalla tipologia dei soggetti con cui l'impresa interagisce quali: fornitori, consumatori, *competitors*, consulenti, Università, associazioni professionali, fiere e convegni, nonché personale interno all'azienda (Avermaete *et al.*, 2004). Infine, i finanziamenti pubblici rappresentano una variabile rilevante per migliorare la capacità innovativa delle PMI, in quanto accedendo a fondi locali e/o nazionali, le imprese hanno una maggiore propensione ad investire in attività di R&S (Acosta *et al.*, 2015).

Fig. 1: Il framework di analisi della capacità innovativa delle PMI agroalimentari



Fonte: nostra elaborazione

Poiché i cambiamenti adottati dalle imprese agroalimentari sono spesso incrementali e riguardano non solo il processo produttivo e la qualità dei prodotti realizzati, ma anche la riorganizzazione delle attività aziendali e delle attività di marketing, il *framework* analizza quattro tipologie di innovazione: prodotto, processo, organizzative e di marketing.

Infine, il *framework* considera l'impatto che l'innovazione può generare sia direttamente sui risultati aziendali, come ad esempio la crescita della quota di mercato e del profitto, sia in maniera indiretta sugli altri *stakeholders*, come ad esempio la sostenibilità ambientale.

In linea con gli studi citati, l'assenza di tali fattori possono rappresentare i principali ostacoli all'innovazione per le imprese e sono stati considerati nell'analisi svolta presso le PMI agroalimentari della Campania. In particolare, tali fattori inabilitanti possono afferire alla sfera interna dell'impresa, come la mancanza di risorse finanziarie da poter investire in attività di R&S, l'impossibilità di poter sopportare gli alti costi dell'innovazione, l'assenza di competenze (Avermaete *et al.*, 2004); oppure dipendere dal contesto in cui l'impresa opera, come l'assenza di informazioni sui progressi scientifici e tecnologici, la difficoltà a trovare partner con cui collaborare (Kuhne *et al.*, 2010) o nel poter accedere alle fonti di finanziamento esterne (Acosta *et al.*, 2015).

Struttura del questionario, variabili utilizzate e relativa scala di misurazione

Coerentemente con il *framework* teorico, il questionario è stato strutturato in modo da analizzare le quattro dimensioni del *framework* d'analisi: risorse interne ed esterne, innovazioni e risultati. In relazione alle risorse interne, la dimensione aziendale viene rilevata attraverso classi di fatturato e numero di addetti. Al fine di tenere conto della diffusa presenza delle micro imprese nel tessuto imprenditoriale della Campania, il fatturato è stato suddiviso in classi più ridotte rispetto a quelle impiegate dalle statistiche ufficiali[4]. Con riferimento al numero di addetti, è stata invece utilizzata la classificazione delle PMI[5] proposta dall'Unione Europea (European Commission, 2003). Le esportazioni, misurate dalla percentuale di produzione assorbita dai mercati esteri, sono state raggruppate in quattro classi di ampiezza nulla, bassa, media o alta[6]. La variabile "personale qualificato" è stata rilevata attraverso una scelta dicotomica (si/no) tra differenti figure professionali presenti nelle imprese agroalimentari: tecnologi alimentari, medici dietologi, figure tecniche non laureate, chimici, ingegneri ed altro[7]. Gli investimenti in R&S sono stati misurati considerando la percentuale del fatturato investito in attività di R&S[8].

[4] Le seguenti classi di fatturato sono state discusse e validate dalle Associazioni di categoria: fino a € 50.000, da € 50.000 a € 250.000; da € 250.000 a 1 milione di euro; da 1 milione di euro a 2 milioni di euro; oltre i 2 milioni di euro.

[5] La categoria delle piccole e medie imprese (PMI) è costituita da imprese che occupano meno di 250 persone. All'interno della categoria delle PMI, si definisce piccola impresa un'impresa che occupa meno di 50 persone, mentre si definisce micro impresa un'impresa con meno di 10 persone.

[6] Le seguenti classi di esportazione sono state discusse e validate dalle Associazioni di categoria: nulla, bassa (meno del 30%); media (tra il 30% e 60%); alta (oltre il 60%).

[7] La scelta delle figure professionali attinenti alla variabile personale qualificato sono state discusse e validate dalle Associazioni di categoria.

[8] Le seguenti classi di investimenti in R&S sono state discusse e validate dalle Associazioni di categoria: nessuna, meno dell'1%, tra l'1-2%, tra il 2-4% e maggiore del 4%.

Con riferimento alle seconda dimensione del *framework* relativa alle risorse esterne, il ricorso ai finanziamenti pubblici è stato rilevato attraverso una scelta dicotomica (si/no) a seconda che l'azienda ne fruisca o meno. Nel caso affermativo, è stata utilizzata una risposta a scelta multipla per esplorare sia il contesto geografico (europeo, nazionale e regionale) che le diverse tipologie di finanziamento (Programmi Quadro, bandi del Ministero delle Attività Produttive, Piano di Sviluppo Rurale, Programma Operativo Regionale e altre fonti). Le fonti informative sono state analizzate attraverso una scelta multipla tra differenti tipologie di fonti: interne (all'interno dell'azienda o del gruppo), di mercato (fornitori di materie prime, macchinari, o software, *competitors* e clienti), istituzionali (Università, istituti di ricerca ed istituzioni pubbliche) ed altre (convegni, fiere e associazioni professionali). La collaborazione, infine, è misurata attraverso una scelta multipla tra i vari tipi di partner (fornitori di materie prime, fornitori di macchinari e software, clienti, *competitors*, consulenti, Università ed istituti di ricerca, e associazioni professionali) e la loro posizione geografica (Italia, Europa, Stati Uniti ed altro).

La terza dimensione del *framework* analizza le quattro tipologie di innovazione (prodotto, processo, organizzative e di marketing) sia attraverso scelte dicotomiche (si/no) in merito alla presenza o meno delle attività indicate, sia attraverso risposte aperte che hanno prodotto informazioni di tipo qualitativo. In particolare, dopo aver fornito agli intervistati le definizioni riguardanti le diverse tipologie di innovazione, è stato rilevato il grado di innovatività (incrementale e radicale) attraverso una descrizione dettagliata delle innovazioni adottate negli ultimi tre anni.

Nella quarta dimensione del *framework*, sono analizzati i risultati derivanti da ciascuna tipologia di innovazione, attraverso un insieme di indicatori di performance riguardanti: il profitto (*trend* crescente); il mercato (ingresso in un nuovo mercato, aumento della quota di mercato); l'efficienza (miglioramento della flessibilità e della capacità produttiva, riduzione dei costi di produzione); la sostenibilità (aumento della qualità dell'ambiente lavorativo, riduzione dell'impatto ambientale, soddisfazione della normativa).

Infine, una specifica sezione del questionario è volta a rilevare la percezione delle imprese riguardo ai principali fattori di ostacolo ai processi innovativi. Tali ostacoli sono rappresentati da fattori economici (quali la mancanza di risorse interne, di fonti di finanziamento esterne e costi per l'innovazione troppo elevati); dalla difficoltà dell'impresa di assorbire nuove tecnologie o nuove conoscenze (a causa della mancanza di personale qualificato, della scarsa conoscenza delle tecnologie disponibili e difficoltà nel trovare partner nello sviluppo di innovazioni); dalle condizioni avverse di mercato (mercato dominato da imprese *leader*; incertezza della domanda).

La struttura del questionario, la scelta delle variabili e delle relative scale di misurazione sono state discusse e convalidate dalle Associazioni di Categoria (Coldiretti, Unione Industriali Napoli).

4. L'indagine empirica

4.1 Il Campione d'indagine e metodo di analisi dei dati

L'universo di riferimento delle imprese è stato definito utilizzando lo studio condotto da De Martino *et al.* (2014) sull'analisi delle filiere agroalimentari in Campania. Rispetto ai dati Istat, i risultati di tale analisi consentono sia di mappare la distribuzione delle imprese agroalimentari campane nell'ambito dei singoli stadi produttivi, sia di delineare le relazioni di subfornitura e i rapporti proprietari tra tali imprese. Secondo questo studio, sul territorio campano erano localizzate 620 imprese di produzione dei derivati del latte, 308 imprese di produzione di oli e grassi vegetali, 442 imprese di paste alimentari, cuscus e prodotti farinacei e 360 imprese produttrici di vino. Per reperire i contatti aziendali si è utilizzata la Banca dati Aida e quella dell'Osservatorio della Cooperazione Agricola italiana raccogliendo informazioni per contattare 453 imprese.

Poiché l'invio del questionario via e-mail si è dimostrato inefficace, si è deciso di coinvolgere alcune associazioni di categoria (Coldiretti e Unione Industriale di Napoli) nella fase di selezione e somministrazione del questionario. In linea con il *framework* proposto, ai fini della selezione delle imprese da coinvolgere nell'indagine sono stati adottati i seguenti criteri:

- dimensione aziendale (piccola e media);
- posizionamento a valle della filiera di riferimento e presenza di un marchio proprio;
- esportazione dei prodotti all'estero.

La scelta di selezionare le piccole e medie imprese della regione Campania scaturisce, chiaramente, dalla necessità di esplorare le dinamiche che caratterizzano i processi innovativi di realtà produttive così diffuse sul territorio italiano e campano, ma che sfuggono alle statistiche ufficiali, sia europee che nazionali. Inoltre, al fine di individuare PMI innovative è stato necessario selezionare imprese posizionate a valle della filiera di riferimento. Queste ultime, infatti, avendo una maggior conoscenza delle esigenze del consumatore finale, *driver* fondamentale per l'innovazione, hanno una maggiore propensione ad innovare rispetto a fornitori e distributori. Un ulteriore criterio nella selezione del campione è rappresentato dalla propensione alle esportazioni. Tuttavia, quest'ultimo criterio è stato tenuto parzialmente in considerazione poiché solo una percentuale molto esigua di imprese di piccola dimensione esporta i propri prodotti all'estero. Considerando soltanto le imprese esportatrici, oltre ad avere una ridotta numerosità campionaria, non sarebbe stato possibile catturare i diversi fattori che influenzano la capacità innovativa delle piccole imprese agroalimentari.

Delle 453 imprese contattate, soltanto 122 si sono dichiarate disposte a partecipare all'indagine empirica attraverso la compilazione di un questionario presso la sede aziendale. Le interviste sono state condotte tra settembre 2014 e febbraio 2015 da due intervistatori appositamente formati per assistere i proprietari e/o i manager delle imprese nella compilazione del questionario.

La distribuzione per filiera delle imprese del campione finale è riportata in Tabella 2. Le filiere lattiero-caseario e olivicola sono rappresentative dell'universo di riferimento mentre la bassa presenza di imprese appartenenti alla filiera cerealicola-pastaria è dovuta principalmente a fattori strutturali del comparto campano. Tale filiera risulta infatti dominata da imprese di grandi dimensioni che non rispecchiano il primo criterio di selezione del campione. Inoltre, alcune delle imprese cerealicole-pastarie di minori dimensioni, operando prevalentemente in qualità di subfornitori, non sono state incluse, in quanto non rispettavano il secondo criterio di selezione.

Tuttavia, la rappresentatività del campione è stata testata attraverso il test di ipotesi sulla differenza tra due medie. In tal senso, è stata utilizzata come variabile il numero medio dei dipendenti per impresa sia per il campione che per l'universo di riferimento e per le diverse filiere.

Utilizzando la statistica t-Student, il campione risultava rappresentativo dell'universo di riferimento con un grado di significatività dell'1%[9]. Tale risultato conferma in tal modo la rappresentatività del campione ottenuto, anche considerando la ripartizione delle imprese tra le quattro filiere considerate.

Tab. 2: Struttura dell'universo di riferimento e del campione

Filiera	*Universo di riferimento*		*Campione*	
	Numero di imprese	Incidenza % della filiera	Numero di imprese	Rappresentatività %
Lattiero-Casearia	620	35,8	43	6.9
Vitivinicola	360	20,8	47	13.1
Olivicola	308	17,8	18	5.8
Cerealicola-pastaria	442	25,6	14	3.1
Totale	1730		122	

Fonte: nostra elaborazione

I dati raccolti attraverso i 122 questionari sono stati elaborati utilizzando la Two-step *Cluster analysis*. Tale tecnica, sviluppata da Chiu *et al.* (2001), consente di raggruppare le imprese in un numero di *cluster* caratterizzati dalla massima omogeneità interna ai gruppi e la massima eterogeneità tra i gruppi, rispetto a determinati fattori, rappresentati dalle variabili di *clustering*. Tali fattori dovrebbero fornire una chiara differenziazione dei differenti gruppi rispetto ad un dato obiettivo conoscitivo e la loro scelta rappresenta una fase cruciale in ogni *Cluster analysis*. A tal fine, le variabili di *clustering* sono state inizialmente individuate tra quelle che presentano una correlazione inferiore a 0,7 rispetto alle altre come suggerito da Mooi e Sarstedt (2011). Inoltre, tali variabili devono offrire il maggiore potere

[9] Essendo la varianza della popolazione ignota, il test di significatività della media è stato condotto utilizzando la statistica t-Student anziché la Normale. Il valore empirico della t-Student (0,65) ricadeva nella regione di accettazione delimitata dai valori teorici (±1,982). Pertanto veniva accettata l'ipotesi nulla, secondo la quale la media del campione non era significativamente diversa dalla media della popolazione, fino ad un livello di significatività pari all'1%.

predittivo del fenomeno indagato. Pertanto, le variabili di *clustering* così scelte risultano essere la "dimensione aziendale", la "classe di addetti", il "fatturato", le "esportazioni", gli "investimenti in R&S", i "finanziamenti pubblici" e la "collaborazione" (De Martino e Magnotti, 2018). Rispetto ad altre tecniche di *cluster*, come la *k-means* o la *cluster* gerarchica, la procedura *two-step* ha il vantaggio sia di definire automaticamente il numero ottimale di *cluster*, evitando una scelta arbitraria e predeterminata, sia di analizzare variabili continue e categoriche. Infine, attraverso la procedura *two-step* è possibile stimare l'importanza di ciascun predittore, ovvero il contributo di ogni variabile di *clustering* nella segmentazione del campione. Nella presente analisi, le variabili con il maggior potere predittivo risultavano gli "investimenti in R&S", la "classe di addetti" e il "fatturato", mentre le "esportazioni", i "finanziamenti pubblici" e la "collaborazione" presentavano un punteggio di importanza inferiore a 0,5 su una scala da 0 a 1. Tale risultato consente di individuare una connessione tra alcune variabili e l'appartenenza ai *cluster*.

4.2 L'innovazione delle PMI agroalimentari della Campania

L'elevato grado di dettaglio delle informazioni raccolte rappresenta un aspetto particolarmente importante del presente lavoro in quanto, diversamente dalle statistiche disponibili sia a livello europeo che nazionale, consente di analizzare congiuntamente fattori legati all'innovazione, alle caratteristiche aziendali e al contesto di riferimento. Va precisato che cinque delle imprese selezionate nel campione sono state escluse dall'analisi a causa dell'assenza di informazioni relative ai dati anagrafici e alle variabili di *clustering*. I risultati finali, pertanto, fanno riferimento ai dati rilevati su 117 imprese.

Un primo risultato, riguarda la distribuzione del campione tra imprese innovative e non innovative. La Tabella 3 evidenzia che 51 imprese (pari al 43,5%) hanno realizzato almeno una innovazione, mentre le rimanenti 66 non ne hanno introdotto per motivi legati sia a fattori interni all'azienda che a fattori di contesto. Considerando il dato disaggregato per singola filiera, emerge poi che la filiera vitivinicola comprende la più alta percentuale di imprese che hanno innovato nel periodo preso in esame (il 52,9% sul totale delle imprese innovative), mentre in quella olivicola si registra la percentuale più bassa (5,9%).

Tab. 3: L'innovazione nelle singole filiere

	Imprese innovative Numero (%)	Imprese non innovative Numero (%)
Filiera agroalimentare		
Lattiero - Casearia	15 (29,4)	25 (37,9)
Vitivinicola	27 (52,9)	19 (28,8)
Olivicola	3 (5,9)	15 (22,7)
Cerealicola-pastaria	6 (11,8)	7 (10,6)
N (%)	*51 (43,5)*	*66 (56,5)*

Fonte: nostra elaborazione

L'applicazione della *cluster analysis*, ha permesso, poi, di identificare tre gruppi di imprese caratterizzati da altrettanti *innovation modes*, definiti rispettivamente: Innovative e Collaborative (IC), Innovative e Non Collaborative (INC), Non Innovative (NI) (Tabella 4).

Tab. 4: Gli innovation modes delle PMI agroalimentari (frequenze %)

	Driver dell'innovazione	Cluster 1 IC	Cluster 2 INC	Cluster 3 NI		Totale Campione	ANOVA	Sign.
				MNI	PMINI			
RISORSE INTERNE	*N.° Addetti*						48,402	,000
	Micro (1-9)	5,3	62,5	100	4,0	53,8		
	Piccole (10-49)	84,2	37,5	-	88,0	42,8		
	Medie (50-249)	10,5	-	-	8,0	3,4		
	Fatturato						53,273	,000
	€ 0 - 50.000	-	6,3	43,9	-	17,1		
	€ 50.000 - 250.000	5,3	68,8	56,1	16,0	42,7		
	€ 250.000 - 1 milione	42,1	6,3	-	40,0	17,1		
	€ 1 - 2 milione	21,1	18,8	-	36,0	16,2		
	€ 2 milione ed oltre	31,6	-	-	8,0	6,8		
	Investimenti in R&S						113,694	,000
	Nessuna	-	3,1	100	100	57,2		
	Meno dell'1%	31,6	12,5	-	-	8,5		
	Tra l'1-2%	5,3	71,9	-	-	20,5		
	Tra il 2-4%	36,8	9,4	-	-	8,5		
	Maggiore del 4%	26,3	3,1	-	-	5,1		
	Personale Qualificato							
	No	31,6	37,9	100	100	72,8		
	Si	68,4	62,1	-	-	27,2		
	Quota esportazioni						4,054	,009
	No	26,3	40,6	100	100	71,8		
	Si	73,7	59,4	-	-	28,2		
RISORSE ESTERNE	*Collaborazione*						18,359	,000
	No	47,4	81,2	100	100	86,3		
	Si	52,6	18,8	-	-	13,7		
	Fonti Informative							
	No		18,8	100	100	61,5		
	Si	100	81,2	-	-	38,5		
	Dimensione cluster, N (%)	19 *(16,2)*	32 *(27,3)*	41 *(35,1)*	25 *(21,4)*	117 *(100)*		

Fonte: nostra elaborazione

In base alla dimensione aziendale, le imprese non innovative sono poi state suddivise in Microimprese Non Innovative (MNI) e Piccole e Medie Imprese Non Innovative (PMINI). Nelle ultime due colonne della Tabella 4 sono riportati i risultati dell'*Analysis of Variance* (ANOVA) e la loro significatività statistica limitatamente alle variabili di *clustering*. La colonna ANOVA indica in che misura tali variabili hanno contributo alla individuazione dei *cluster*. Le variabili che hanno contribuito maggiormente alla segmentazione del campione risultano essere investimenti in R&S e la dimensione aziendale (sia per fatturato che classe di addetti) con un alto livello di significatività.

4.3 La Cluster analysis

4.3.1 Le imprese Innovative e Collaborative (IC)

Tale gruppo rappresenta il 16,2% del campione (Tabella 4) ed è composto per l'84,2% da piccole imprese (10-49 dipendenti) e per il 10,5% da imprese di medie dimensioni (50-249 addetti). Tali imprese appartengono principalmente alla filiera vitivinicola (36,8%), lattiero-casearia (31,6%) e cerealicola-pastaria (26,3). La maggior parte delle IC presenta un fatturato annuo superiore ad un milione di euro e tutte impiegano una quota del proprio fatturato in investimenti in R&S.

Nel 73,7% dei casi, le imprese in questione riescono ad accedere ai finanziamenti pubblici soprattutto attraverso la partecipazione al Programma Operativo Regionale (POR) della Regione Campania. Da una analisi di approfondimento emerge che il Piano di Sviluppo Rurale (PSR) della Campania rappresenta una fonte di finanziamento strategica per rafforzare ed incentivare i processi innovati nella regione. Al contrario, i programmi europei (VII Programma Quadro 2007-2013) hanno un peso marginale per le imprese in esame, in quanto solo due di esse hanno dichiarato di aver partecipato a progetti europei. La maggiore incidenza di finanziamenti provenienti da istituzioni localizzate sul territorio conferma la rilevanza della prossimità nelle scelta di innovazione da parte delle PMI. Tale tendenza è legata al vantaggio che la prossimità fisica genera per le imprese sia nello scambio di informazioni che nello sviluppare relazioni dirette con differenti soggetti chiave del contesto locale.

Una peculiarità che contraddistingue questo *cluster* è la capacità di sviluppare collaborazioni per la realizzazione di innovazioni (52,6%). Come si evince dalla Tabella 5, le imprese Innovative e Collaborative hanno attivato rapporti di collaborazione principalmente con interlocutori o controparti nazionali e, segnatamente: all'interno dell'azienda o del Gruppo di appartenenza (31,2%), con i consulenti (31,2%), con Università ed Istituti di ricerca pubblici (31,2%), con i clienti (18,7%) e con le associazioni professionali (12,5%). Gli accordi siglati con i *competitors*, invece, hanno principalmente riguardato partner europei (6,7%), nell'ambito dei due casi di progetti finanziati dai Programmi Quadro dell'Unione Europea.

Tab. 5: I partner più rilevanti per le attività di innovazione (% risposta multipla)

	Innovative e Collaborative	Settore Manifatturiero Italia*	Settore Agroalimentare Italia*
All'interno dell'azienda	31,2%	4,0%	0,8%
Fornitori di materie prime	31,3%	10,1%	3,6%
Fornitori di macchinari, software	43,7%		
Clienti e consumatori	18,7%	3,9%	2,7%
Competitors od altre aziende del settore	6,7%	5,1%	3,3%
Consulenti	31,2%	9,0%	9,1%
Università ed istituti di ricerca pubblici	31,2%	7,0%	8,5%
Associazioni professionali o industriali	12,5%	N.D.	N.D.

Fonte: Nostra elaborazione; * Eurostat - Community Innovation Survey 2014

Una rilevanza non trascurabile per il successo del processo innovativo è stata poi attribuita ai fornitori di materie prime (31,3%) e di macchinari e software (43,7%). Confrontando i risultati della presente ricerca con quelli dell'indagine CIS 2014, si può constatare come le forme di *partnership* siano nettamente superiori sia rispetto al settore manifatturiero che a quello agroalimentare. In particolare, emerge come il contesto campano, fotografato dalla nostra indagine, sia caratterizzato da una maggiore propensione ad innovare lungo la *supply chain* rispetto al contesto italiano. Tale tendenza è probabilmente legata alla numerosa presenza di microimprese che, in assenza di risorse, avviano processi innovativi con soggetti conosciuti e con cui hanno già rapporti di fiducia pregressi, come i fornitori di materie prime. Anche i fornitori di macchinari e software sono soggetti con cui l'impresa collabora, mostrando una predilezione delle piccole imprese a fondare l'attività innovativa sull'acquisizione di tecnologie incorporate in macchinari e d impianti innovativi. Inoltre, osservando i dati relativi alle collaborazioni con Università e istituti di ricerca pubblici, va rilevato come il sistema della ricerca in Campania, a differenza del contesto nazionale, rappresenti per le PMI un partner fondamentale per attingere a conoscenze scientifiche e tecnologiche difficilmente accessibili.

Tra le fonti informative più rilevanti, le imprese hanno poi indicato le fiere come il luogo in cui hanno avuto modo di incontrare le professionalità e le competenze più significative per implementare i progetti di innovazione, ma anche un'opportunità di scambio di conoscenze e *know-how*.

Rilevante ai fini della realizzazione del processo innovativo, sono risultate altresì le competenze presenti in azienda e, in particolare, quelle in possesso di tecnologi alimentari, ingegneri e chimici.

Il forte orientamento alle esportazioni che caratterizza le imprese di questo *cluster* consente un più ampio accesso alle conoscenze scientifiche disponibili nei diversi mercati di sbocco; di alimentare il processo innovativo con idee nuove; di poter imitare ed integrare nei propri prodotti e processi produttivi le conoscenze acquisite da altre imprese.

Con specifico riferimento alle tipologie di innovazione realizzate, le IC si sono concentrate prioritariamente sulle innovazioni di prodotto (89,5%) e di processo (68,4%) (Tabella 6). Sebbene in misura meno pronunciata, si registra anche l'adozione di innovazioni nel marketing (47,4%) e nel miglioramento dei sistemi gestionali e organizzativi (21,1%).

In particolare, dalle informazioni aggiuntive fornite durante le interviste, le innovazioni di prodotto sono state indirizzate prevalentemente a soddisfare le nuove esigenze dei consumatori, come ad esempio i vini a basso tenore alcolico, i vini vegani o i formaggi con caglio vegetale. Inoltre, sono state introdotte anche innovazioni tese a migliorare la *shelf life* dei prodotti, come nel caso della realizzazione di una nuova tecnica di congelamento della mozzarella di bufala per le fasi del trasporto. Per quanto concerne invece le innovazioni di processo, estremamente rilevante è il ruolo svolto dall'uso di macchinari altamente tecnologici che hanno portato, ad esempio, all'adozione del *Voluntary Milking System* (VMS), un sistema di mungitura automatico tramite *chip*, o all'introduzione di nuovi strumenti per la crio-macerazione delle uve che consente una fermentazione a freddo dei mosti. La realizzazione di

tali processi è il risultato della collaborazione delle imprese con fornitori altamente specializzati o con istituti di ricerca ed Università.

Tab. 6: Tipologie di innovazione nelle imprese dei primi due cluster

	IC (%)	INC (%)	Campione (%)
Innovazione di prodotto			
No	10,5	31,2	66,7
Si	89,5	68,8	33,3
Innovazione di processo			
No	31,6	50,0	75,2
Si	68,4	50,0	24,8
Innovazioni organizzative			
No	78,9	93,7	94,9
Si	21,1	6,3	5,1
Innovazione di marketing			
No	52,6	56,2	80,3
Si	47,4	43,8	19,7
Dimensione dei cluster, N (%)	19 *(16,2)*	32 *(27,3)*	117 *(100)*

Fonte: nostra elaborazione

Si registra, invece, una incidenza relativamente bassa di innovazioni organizzative (21,1%) tese principalmente a migliorare i sistemi di gestione delle conoscenze o lo scambio di informazioni internamente all'impresa. Tale risultato è connesso alla piccola dimensione aziendale e a una gestione a conduzione prevalentemente familiare che non richiede l'adozione di sistemi informativi e/o modelli gestionali interni. Più significative sono, invece, le innovazioni avviate nell'area del marketing (47,4%), che consentono di realizzare cambiamenti significativi nell'attività di vendita o di distribuzione, come ad esempio nel caso della realizzazione di piattaforme di e-commerce.

4.3.2 Le imprese Innovative e Non Collaborative (INC)

Questo gruppo rappresenta il 27,3% del campione ed è formato per il 62,5% da microimprese (1-9 addetti) e per il restante 37,5% da imprese di piccole dimensioni, con meno di 49 addetti (Tabella 4). La limitata dimensione è confermata dal modesto livello del fatturato che nella maggior parte dei casi è inferiore a €250.000. Questa caratteristica influisce, ovviamente, anche sul livello degli investimenti in innovazione (R&S) che per la maggior parte del *cluster* risulta inferiore al 2% del fatturato. Si tratta, comunque, di un dato che denota una certa propensione all'innovazione di queste imprese che, anche in questo caso, si concentrano principalmente nelle filiera vitivinicola (62,5%) e in quella lattiero-casearia (28,1%). Considerando le risorse interne, risulta che nel 62,1% dei casi, nei processi innovativi viene impiegato personale qualificato, in particolare tecnici non laureati e tecnologi alimentari. Le risorse esterne maggiormente utilizzate sono, invece, le fonti informative (81,2%) ed il ricorso a finanziamenti esterni (59,4%). Inoltre, risultano ancora limitate

le imprese che utilizzano forme di collaborazione esterna (18,8%) al fine di avviare attività innovative.

Da domande di approfondimento durante le interviste emerge che nella fase di avvio del processo di innovazione, le imprese ricercano notizie di vario genere. Nella maggior parte dei casi queste riguardano i progressi tecnologici e scientifici e le relative ricadute sull'efficienza del processo produttivo. Tali notizie vengono spesso ricercate presso molteplici fonti di informazione, anche molto diverse tra di loro, dalle quali desumere le modalità con cui si evolve l'innovazione all'interno del settore o lungo la filiera di appartenenza. A tal proposito, dalla maggior parte delle interviste emerge che le informazioni più importanti per l'avvio del processo di innovazione sono quelle che provengono dall'interno dell'azienda. Sono indicati inoltre come fonti di acquisizione di conoscenza i convegni e le fiere, i clienti e le Associazioni professionali. I fornitori di materie prime, a differenza di quanto è emerso per le imprese del *cluster* IC, non risultano condizionare il processo innovativo delle INC, dal momento che in molte filiere le imprese di trasformazione di piccolissima dimensione sono integrate a monte con il sistema agricolo.

Le principali tipologie di innovazioni introdotte sono quelle di prodotto (68,8%) e, in misura meno rilevante, quelle di processo (50%) (Tabella 6). Per quanto riguarda le prime, le imprese del *cluster* hanno dichiarato che la realizzazione di nuovi prodotti è volta a soddisfare soprattutto i nuovi *trend* di consumo. Nel caso delle imprese viti-vinicole, un esempio è rappresentato dalla produzione di nuovi vini senza solfiti e lieviti o dalle nuove linee di vino spumante. Le innovazioni di prodotto nella altre filiere riguardano soprattutto la realizzazione di prodotti sostenibili e con *packaging attivi* oltre che una maggiore completezza dell'etichettatura, tale da garantire la tracciabilità dei prodotti. Le innovazioni di processo hanno riguardato invece l'utilizzo di macchinari di agricoltura di precisione con sensori multi spettrali o la realizzazione di impianti fotovoltaici per il fabbisogno energetico aziendale. Riguardo alle innovazioni di marketing (43,8%), le imprese del *cluster* si sono focalizzate principalmente sulla realizzazione di cambiamenti significativi nell'attività di vendita e distribuzione e nel *packaging*.

Questo *cluster* può essere considerato "con alto potenziale innovativo", poiché le innovazioni sono state realizzate utilizzando prevalentemente risorse interne e sfruttando relativamente poco il ricorso alle collaborazioni. A tale riguardo va, infatti, considerato che le nuove tecnologie nascono solitamente in settori profondamente diversi da quello agroalimentare, per cui lo sviluppo di rapporti di collaborazione con soggetti esterni a spiccata vocazione innovativa e tecnologica, può favorire il contenimento dei costi di sviluppo interno ed accelerare i tempi di realizzazione ed immissione dei nuovi prodotti sul mercato.

4.3.3 Le imprese Non Innovative (NI)

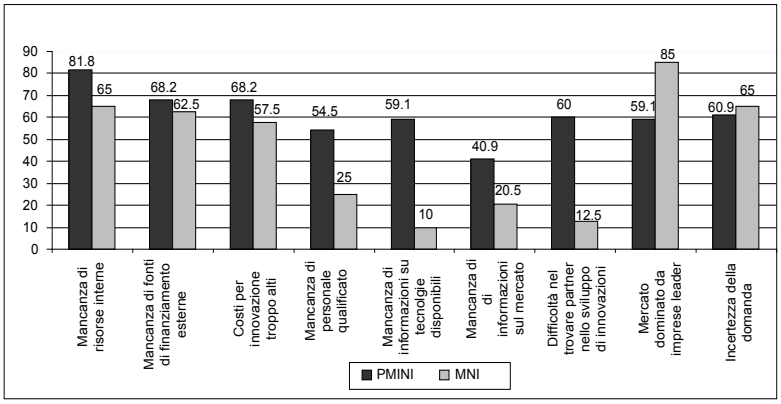
Il terzo *cluster*, rappresentato dalle imprese Non Innovative (NI), contiene il più alto numero di imprese del campione (56,5%) ed è costituito da due sottogruppi che attribuiscono una differente importanza ai fattori di

ostacolo all'innovazione: Microimprese Non Innovative (MNI) e Piccole e Medie Imprese Non Innovative (PMINI). Il sottogruppo MNI rappresenta il 35,1% del campione ed è composto esclusivamente da microimprese con meno di 10 addetti e con un fatturato inferiore a € 250.000 (Tabella 4). Il PMINI rappresenta invece il 21,4% del campione ed è composto soprattutto da piccole imprese (88%) con un numero di addetti compreso tra 10 e 49 ed un fatturato più elevato delle MNI.

Un elemento comune ad entrambi i sottogruppi è rappresentato dalla forte incidenza di casi che hanno dichiarato di non aver mai esportato i propri prodotti all'estero, sebbene tale tendenza sia maggiore tra le MNI (70,7%). Dall'indagine risulta, altresì, che nessuna delle imprese del *cluster* ha partecipato a programmi di finanziamento europeo, nazionale o regionale, non sfruttando così i vantaggi associabili all'utilizzo di risorse esterne quali i finanziamenti pubblici per l'innovazione.

Nella Figura 2 sono riportati i principali fattori di ostacolo ai processi innovativi. In particolare è possibile osservare come per le microimprese (MNI) il fattore di ostacolo più rilevante sia costituito dalla presenza di imprese *leader* nel proprio mercato di riferimento (85%). Questa percezione si può spiegare considerando il ruolo delle microimprese nell'ambito della filiera, le quali operando prevalentemente come subfornitori della Grande Distribuzione Organizzata (GDO), hanno una compressione dei margini di profittabilità. Questo fenomeno è aggravato spesso dalla mancanza di una struttura organizzativa in grado di sostenere politiche di penetrazione commerciale verso il sistema distributivo e/o il consumatore finale.

Fig. 2: Ostacoli all'innovazione (frequenze %)



Fonte: nostra elaborazione

Inoltre, la mancanza di risorse interne (65%), la carenza di finanziamenti esterni (62,5%) e i costi per innovazione troppo alti (57,5) rappresentano i principali fattori di ostacolo all'innovazione. Tali fattori risultano legati principalmente alla struttura finanziaria di queste microimprese, che dispongono di risorse limitate da investire in attività di R&S. I fattori di natura economico-finanziaria sono d'altronde considerati come uno dei principali ostacoli all'innovazione anche nel tessuto imprenditoriale italiano.

In tal senso, come suggerisce Giaretta (2013) il costo per l'innovazione non deve essere considerato limitatamente al periodo di sviluppo ma anche e soprattutto a quello di diffusione delle innovazioni, che generalmente impegna l'azienda per un maggiore e indefinito orizzonte temporale. Tale circostanza incide notevolmente sull'esposizione finanziaria delle imprese, soprattutto quelle di piccole dimensioni, spingendo spesso progetti innovativi ad arenarsi, nonostante le elevate potenzialità di sviluppo.

Con riferimento alle imprese del secondo sottogruppo (PMINI), l'elemento più rilevante che ostacola gli investimenti in attività di R&S è rappresentato dalla carenza di personale qualificato (54,5%) e dalle insufficienti risorse interne, sia finanziarie che tecnologiche (81,8%). Tali imprese, infatti, ritengono fondamentale il possesso di queste risorse soprattutto qualora lo sviluppo di una nuova tecnologia o prodotto risulti eccessivamente oneroso. Un ulteriore ostacolo all'innovazione per le PMINI è rappresentato dall'elevato costo dell'innovazione (68,2%). Tale risultato è dovuto principalmente all'impossibilità di trasferire i benefici connessi ai risultati delle attività di R&S sui volumi di produzione, i cui livelli sono tali da non consentire la riduzione dell'incidenza del costo dell'innovazione sul prezzo finale del prodotto.

Infine, un fattore percepito quale ostacolo all'innovazione da entrambi i sottogruppi di imprese (65% delle MNI e dal 60,9% delle PMINI) è rappresentato dall'incertezza sull'andamento della domanda che, soprattutto in fasi congiunturali negative, può scoraggiare l'attività di innovazione anche di imprese che avrebbero la possibilità di farlo.

4.4 I risultati dell'innovazione

Un aspetto interessante della ricerca riguarda l'analisi degli effetti dell'innovazione che consente di comprendere i risultati che le imprese innovatrici hanno ottenuto nel triennio 2011-2013.

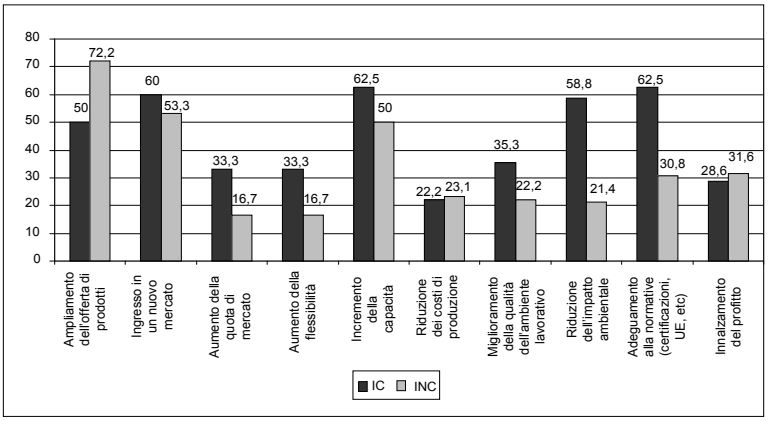
Con riferimento alle imprese del primo *cluster* (IC), quest'ultime percepiscono tra i maggiori benefici l'ampliamento della capacità produttiva (62,5%), la maggiore capacità di conformarsi alla normativa (62,5%), l'ingresso in nuovi mercati (60%) e la riduzione dell'impatto ambientale (58,8%) (Figura 3). L'ampliamento della capacità produttiva permette alle imprese di conseguire economie di scala che danno luogo ad una riduzione dei costi unitari. Il conseguente aumento dei volumi di produzione associato ad una maggiore efficienza produttiva può incentivare l'espansione dell'impresa, facilitando la penetrazione in nuovi mercati altamente competitivi.

L'adempimento delle normative relative al settore agroalimentare, invece, è il risultato del consolidamento dei rapporti di tali imprese con il settore pubblico. Oltre ai finanziamenti, tali rapporti riguardano anche l'adeguamento alle politiche europee e nazionali sia in materia di certificazioni di qualità dei prodotti agroalimentari (DOP e IGP) sia in materia di sostenibilità delle produzioni. In maniera simile, la riduzione degli impatti ambientali, percepita come beneficio raggiunto tramite l'innovazione dal 58,8% delle IC, è legato all'adempimento delle normative comunitarie in materia di sostenibilità ambientale (emissioni di CO_2, uso

di nitrati, pesticidi, nonché protezione del suolo, gestione delle risorse idriche e conservazione delle biodiversità). Tali risultati vanno letti congiuntamente con il *trend* positivo registrato dal fatturato delle IC che, rispetto agli altri *cluster*, presentano nella maggior parte dei casi (73,7%) un fatturato in crescita, nonostante la crisi economica che caratterizzava il periodo dell'indagine (Figura 4).

Nonostante le ridotte dimensioni aziendali che caratterizzano le imprese del secondo *cluster* (INC), le innovazioni da queste adottate hanno tuttavia condotto a risultati aziendali positivi. In particolare, l'aumento dell'offerta dei prodotti (72,2%) è percepito come il beneficio maggiormente associato all'innovazione (Figura 3).

Fig. 3: Risultati derivanti dall'introduzione di innovazioni

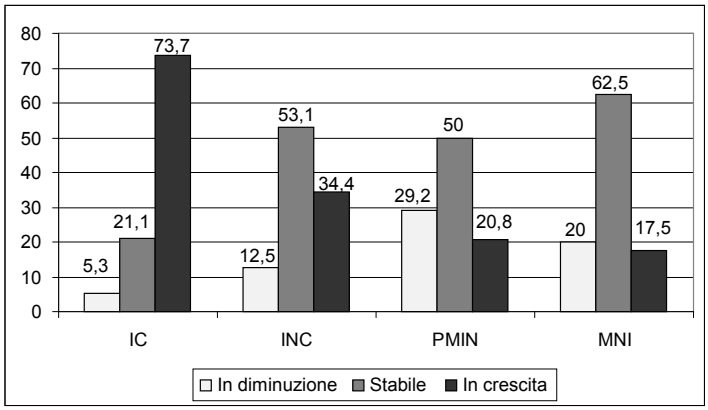


Fonte: nostra elaborazione

Tale tendenza è da collegare principalmente alle innovazioni di prodotto e di marketing, le quali permettono di ottenere un vantaggio competitivo attraverso l'introduzione di nuovi prodotti sul mercato. Congiuntamente, va considerato che l'ingresso in nuovi mercati rappresenta il secondo risultato percepito come più importante dalle INC (53,3%). Tale fattore rappresenta un'opportunità, non solo per aumentare i propri ricavi di vendita e rafforzare il proprio vantaggio competitivo, ma anche per instaurare nuovi rapporti di collaborazione e aumentare le proprie conoscenze utili per l'attivazione di ulteriori processi innovativi.

Anche l'aumento della capacità produttiva è percepito come un risultato importante da molte imprese del *cluster* (50%). Questo può condurre, a sua volta, ad un aumento dei volumi di fatturato attraverso cui finanziare ulteriori progetti di innovazione. Nonostante le ridotte dimensioni, l'approccio aziendale orientato alle innovazioni ha permesso alle INC di ottenere un *trend* del fatturato positivo o stabile, rispettivamente nel 34,4% e nel 53,1% dei casi (Figura 4).

Fig. 4: Trend di fatturato (2010-2013) (frequenze %)



Fonte: nostra elaborazione

5. Conclusioni e future direzioni della ricerca

L'analisi svolta ha permesso di identificare tre gruppi di imprese, due dei quali (IC e INC) hanno intrapreso processi innovativi con diversa intensità di utilizzo delle risorse interne ed esterne, mentre il terzo gruppo (NI) non ha realizzato alcuna innovazione.

In particolare, il primo gruppo delle imprese innovative ha beneficiato del rapporto di collaborazione istaurato con i fornitori di materie prime e di macchinari e software. Questo risultato è in linea con quanto ampiamente dimostrato dalla letteratura che considera i rapporti con gli attori della *supply chain* una condizione necessaria per realizzare con successo le innovazioni, specialmente nel caso di prodotti con nuove caratteristiche qualitative. Rispetto alla totalità delle imprese intervistate, però, tale pratica risulta essere ancora poco diffusa, in quanto le aziende appartenenti a tale *cluster* rappresentano solo il 16,2% dell'intero campione. Due sono gli elementi critici che possono offrire alcuni spunti di riflessione affinché sia possibile favorire la diffusione di una cultura dell'innovazione nelle PMI, sia nell'ambito della *supply chain* che nel contesto territoriale di riferimento.

Un primo punto critico per lo sviluppo e diffusione dell'innovazione è rappresentato dalla necessità che i vari attori della *supply chain* e gli *stakeholder* locali (come ad esempio Università, enti di ricerca) condividano un patrimonio cognitivo comune, il che non è realizzabile senza la mediazione di un'identità e di valori condivisi. La fiducia è un fattore chiave per il successo di molte reti inter-organizzative che, spesso, necessitano di appropriate forme di governo al fine di prevenire comportamenti opportunistici da parte degli altri attori della rete. Il decisore pubblico può svolgere, a tal riguardo, un ruolo chiave nel promuovere e incentivare, anche attraverso forme di sostegno alla collaborazione pubblico-privata, lo sviluppo di reti inter-organizzative.

Un secondo punto critico è legato alla necessità di diffondere una cultura all'innovazione presso le microimprese campane, spesso restie ad attivare

processi di cambiamento organizzativo o ad aprire i confini aziendali ad altri attori esterni. I dati relativi al gruppo delle imprese IC mostrano che esse hanno ottenuto risultati aziendali migliori rispetto alle altre imprese appartenenti ai *cluster* INC e NI. La diffusione di "*best practice*" potrebbe incentivare, a tal riguardo, l'adozione di pratiche collaborative da parte di queste imprese, anche in virtù del fatto che solitamente esse innovano per imitazione.

Un ulteriore risultato è che la capacità di sapersi avvalere delle opportunità offerte dai finanziamenti pubblici può favorire i processi innovativi delle PMI agroalimentari. L'indagine, infatti, ha mostrato che la quasi totalità delle imprese del *cluster* IC ha beneficiato di finanziamenti pubblici per la realizzazione di attività di innovazione, soprattutto di provenienza regionale e/o nazionale. L'utilizzo di fondi europei è, però, molto ridotto; del tutto assente nel caso delle microimprese del *cluster* INC. Le fonti di finanziamento pubblico possono rappresentare, a tal riguardo, importanti strumenti di incentivo all'innovazione, beneficiando anche delle collaborazioni a livello europeo, qualora le imprese siano informate ed assistite nella loro partecipazione alle varie iniziative progettuali. A questo proposito, alcune di esse hanno identificato nelle Associazioni di categoria il soggetto chiave in grado di supportale nell'identificazione dei bandi più appropriati. Ciò risulta essere ancor più necessario per le micro imprese del *cluster* MNI, che identificano nella presenza di un *leader* di settore il principale ostacolo all'innovazione e, pertanto, sono disincentivate a partecipare a progetti comuni, basandosi sulla percezione di avere un peso relativo minore nell'ambito della *partnership*.

Dall'analisi emerge, anche, l'importanza degli investimenti in attività di R&S nel favorire l'adozione di processi innovativi, sebbene la natura stessa dell'innovazione nelle PMI sia spesso legata a fattori difficilmente rilevabili formalmente, tanto da essere stata definita "*invisibile*". Difatti, la presente ricerca conferma la presenza di PMI che hanno saputo innovare attraverso la partecipazione a network collaborativi e/o la formazione dei lavoratori finalizzata allo sviluppo o all'introduzione di innovazioni di prodotto o di processo, nonché attraverso le attività di marketing e advertising, di supporto alla vendita di nuovi prodotti. A tal riguardo, il presente lavoro propone un set di indicatori in grado di cogliere la capacità innovativa delle PMI, in linea con il *framework* adottato nelle indagini CIS, pertanto adatto a fornire risultati comparabili ed indicazioni di *policy* a livello locale. Il valore aggiunto risiede sia nell'aver saputo coinvolgere realtà di piccola e piccolissima dimensione, spesso restie alla partecipazione ad indagine empiriche, sia nell'aver esplorato la natura e le tipologie di innovazione da esse realizzate negli ultimi tre anni. Le Associazioni di categoria risultano, a tal riguardo, un soggetto chiave per il coinvolgimento delle PMI e per l'efficace somministrazione del questionario in sede aziendale.

Il lavoro fornisce, in conclusione, una analisi approfondita dei fattori che influenzano la capacità innovativa delle piccole e medie imprese nel settore agro-alimentare. Tuttavia, sono presenti alcuni limiti che la futura ricerca dovrebbe superare. In particolare il *framework* utilizzato offre un quadro completo ma descrittivo dei fattori che facilitano l'innovazione nelle PMI. A tal riguardo, la realizzazione di un'indagine longitudinale

di alcune *best practice* di piccole imprese innovative consentirebbe di analizzare i processi di cambiamento e gli effetti di lungo termine prodotti dalle innovazioni che per loro natura non sono immediati. In tal modo sarebbe possibile svolgere analisi più approfondite sul nesso di causalità tra fattori (*driver*) e risultati ottenuti attraverso i processi innovativi. Inoltre, alcuni aspetti legati all'impresa a gestione familiare tipica delle PMI - che rappresenta l'ossatura del sistema imprenditoriale italiano - meritano attenzione. In particolare, le imprese familiari presentano solitamente una minore propensione al rischio, quale conseguenza della sostanziale coincidenza tra patrimonio familiare e patrimonio di impresa. Si potrebbe investigare il ruolo che la natura familiare della proprietà svolge nel facilitare od ostacolare lo sviluppo di processi innovativi, approfondendo anche gli effetti della trasmissione intergenerazionale delle imprese. L'analisi delle caratteristiche dell'imprenditore innovatore, inoltre, e dei diversi canali attraverso cui influenza ed è influenzato dal sistema tecnico, economico e sociale che lo circonda (Gambardella, 2014), offrirebbe un ulteriore elemento critico di riflessione sul tema dell'innovazione *invisibile*, che sfugge alle rilevazioni statistiche nazionali.

I risultati conseguiti nell'ambito della ricerca sono stati discussi con le principali Associazioni di categoria, al fine di delineare azioni volte a favorire una maggiore diffusione dell'innovazione nell'ambito delle filiere agroalimentari e dell'intero territorio campano. Si riconosce la necessità di adottare un approccio sistemico di sviluppo dell'innovazione che passi attraverso il consolidamento del cosiddetto "sistema innovativo regionale", formato dall'insieme dei soggetti, delle funzioni e delle azioni interessate ai meccanismi di diffusione della conoscenza e dell'innovazione. Attivare l'innovazione e governare il sistema della conoscenza, deve essere uno stimolo per perseguire una più generale eccellenza non solo d'impresa, ma di sistema sull'intero territorio interessato a queste produzioni. Questo richiede, difatti, un rafforzamento del partenariato, ed in particolare la promozione dell'approccio c. d. "a tripla elica", secondo il quale è necessario realizzare una stretta interazione tra il mondo della ricerca, dell'impresa e della pubblica amministrazione, allo scopo di favorire le più adeguate sinergie e complementarietà tra le diverse politiche e gli strumenti finanziari connessi.

Bibliografia

ACOSTA M., CORONADO D., ROMERO C. (2015), "Linking public support, R&D, innovation and productivity: New evidence from the Spanish food industry", *Food Policy*, vol. 57, pp. 50-61.

AMBROSETTI CLUB (2013), *L'ecosistema per l'innovazione: quali strade per la crescita delle imprese e del Paese,* The European House, Technology Forum.

AVERMAETE T., VIAENE J., MORGAN E.J., PITTS E., CRAWFORD N., MAHON D. (2004), "Determinants of product and process innovation in small food manufacturing firms", *Trends in food science and technology,* vol. 15, n. 10, pp. 474-483.

BANCA D'ITALIA (2012), "Il gap innovativo del sistema produttivo italiano: radici e possibili rimedi", *Questioni di Economia e Finanza*, n. 121, Aprile 2012.

BAREGHEH A., ROWLEY J., SAMBROOK S., DAVIES D. (2012), "Innovation in food sector SMEs", *Journal of Small Business and Enterprise Development*, vol. 19, n. 2, pp. 300-321.

BATTERINK M., WUBBEN E., OMTA S. (2006), "Factors related to innovative output in the Dutch agrifood industry", *Journal on Chain and Network Science*, vol. 6, n. 1, pp. 31-44.

BATTERINK M.H., WUBBEN E.F., KLERKX L., OMTA S.W.F. (2010), "Orchestrating innovation networks: The case of innovation brokers in the agri-food sector", *Entrepreneurship and Regional Development*, vol. 22, n. 1, pp. 47-76.

BOERMANS M.A., ROELFSEMA H. (2016), "Small firm internationalization, innovation, and growth", *International Economics and Economic Policy*, vol. 13, n. 2, pp. 283-296.

CAPITANIO F., COPPOLA A., PASCUCCI S. (2009), "Indications for drivers of innovation in the food sector", *British Food Journal*, vol. 111, n. 8, pp. 820-838.

CHIU T., FANG D., CHEN J., WANG Y., JERIS C. (2001), "A robust and scalable clustering algorithm for mixed type attributes in large database environment", in *Proceedings of the seventh ACM SIGKDD International conference on knowledge discovery and data mining*, pp. 263-268.

COLOMBO M.G., LAURSEN K., MAGNUSSON M., ROSSI-LAMASTRA C. (2012), "Small business and networked innovation: organizational and managerial challenges", *Journal of Small Business Management,* vol. 50, n. 2, pp. 181-190.

CRÉPON B., DUGUET E., MAIRESSE J. (1998), 'Research and Development, Innovation and Productivity: An Econometric Analysis at the Firm Level", *Economics of Innovation and New Technology,* vol. 7, n. 2, pp. 115-158.

DAGNINO G.B., LEVANTI G., MINÀ A., PICONE P.M. (2015), "Interorganizational network and innovation: a bibliometric study and proposed research agenda", *Journal of Business and Industrial Marketing*, vol. 30, n. 3/4, pp. 354-377.

DAVENPORT S. (2005), "Exploring the role of proximity in SME knowledge-acquisition", *Research Policy*, vol. 34, pp. 683-701.

DE JONG P.J., VERMEULEN P.A.M. (2006), "Determinants of product innovation in small firms: a comparison across industries", *International Small Business Journal,* vol. 24 n. 6, pp. 587-609.

DE MARTINO M., MAGNOTTI F. (2018), "The innovation capacity of small food firms in Italy", *European Journal of Innovation Management*, https://doi.org/10.1108/EJIM-04-2018-0041

DE MARTINO M., MAGNOTTI F., VOLPE T. (2014), "Analisi delle filiere agroalimentari", *Rapporto di ricerca del progetto Campus innovazione QUARC "Qualità delle produzioni tipiche campane ed il suo territorio: approcci innovativi ed integrati per rafforzare la competitività del sistema Agroalimentare*.

EUROPEAN COMMISSION (2003), *Commission Recommendation* 2003/361/EC.

EUROSTAT (2014), *Community Innovation Survey 2014,* The statistical office of the European Union, Brussels.

GAMBARDELLA A. (2014), "L'imprenditore innovatore come agente dello sviluppo tecnico, economico e sociale", *Sinergie*, n. 93, pp. 3-18.

GIARETTA E. (2013), "L'innovazione aziendale: aspetti concettuali e approcci gestionali", in Baccarani C., Brunetti F., Giaretta E. (a cura di), *Impresa e management tra competitività e progresso,* Giappichelli, Torino.

GRONUM S., VERREYNNE M.L., KASTELLE T. (2012), "The role of networks in small and medium-sized enterprise innovation and firm performance", *Journal of Small Business Management*, vol. 50, n. 2, pp. 257-282.

GRUNERT K.G., HARMSEN H., MEULENBERG M., KUIPER E., OTTOWITZ T., DECLERCK F., GÖRANSSON G. (1997), "A framework for analysing innovation in the food sector", in *Products and Process Innovation in the Food Industry*, Springer US, pp. 1-37.

ISTAT (2011), *9° Censimento generale dell'Industria e dei Servizi,* Roma.

KANTER R.M. (1994), "Collaborative advantage: the art of alliances", *Harvard Business Review*, vol. 72, n. 4, pp. 96-108.

KARANTININIS K., SAUER J., FURTAN W.H. (2010), "Innovation and integration in the agri-food industry", *Food Policy*, Vol. 36, n. 2, pp. 112-120.

KÜHNE B., VANHONACKER F., GELLYNCK X., VERBEKE W. (2010), "Innovation in traditional food products in Europe: Do sector innovation activities match consumers' acceptance?", *Food Quality and Preference*, vol. 21, n. 6, pp. 629-638.

LAZZERONI M. (2010), "High-tech activities, system innovativeness and geographical concentration: Insights into technological districts in Italy", *European Urban and Regional Studies,* vol. 17, n. 1, pp. 45-63.

LUNDVALL B. (2010), *National systems of innovation: Toward a theory of innovation and interactive learning*, Pinter Publishers, London.

MASCITELLI R. (2000), "From experience: harnessing tacit knowledge to achieve breakthrough innovation", *Journal of Product Innovation Management,* vol. 17, n. 3, pp. 179-193.

MIPAAF (2016), *Elenco delle denominazioni italiane, iscritte nel Registro delle denominazioni di origine protette, delle indicazioni geografiche protette e delle specialità tradizionali garantite (Regolamento UE n 1151/2012 del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio del 21 novembre 2012),* Roma. https://www.politicheagricole.it/flex/cm/pages/ServeBLOB.php/L/IT/IDPagina/2090

MOOI E., SARSTEDT M. (2011), *A Concise Guide to Market Research: The Process, Data, and Methods Using IBM SPSS Statistics*, Springer, Berlin, NY.

ÖZÇELIK E., TAYMAZ E. (2004), "Does innovativeness matter for international competitiveness in developing countries? The case of Turkish manufacturing industries", *Research Policy*, vol. 33, n. 3, pp. 409-424.

SANGUIGNI V., DE CRESCENZO E. (2013), "Lo sviluppo delle potenzialità del territorio attraverso i distretti tecnologici. Un'analisi desk della Regione Campania", in *L'innovazione per la competitività delle imprese, Refferred Electronic Conference Proceedings, XXV Convegno Annuale di Sinergie,* Università Politecnica delle Marche, Ancona, 24-25 ottobre.

SANTAMARÍA L., NIETO M.J., BARGE-GIL A. (2009), "Beyond formal R&D: Taking advantage of other sources of innovation in low-and medium-technology industries", *Research Policy*, vol. 38, n. 3, pp. 507-517.

SHAN P., SONG M., JU X. (2016), "Entrepreneurial orientation and performance: is innovation speed a missing link?", *Journal of Business Research,* vol. 69, n. 2, pp. 683-690.

THE EUROPEAN HOUSE - AMBROSETTI, FEDERALIMENTARI (2018), "Sostenere la crescita di lungo periodo e l'internazionalizzazione delle imprese del settore food & beverage in Italia", *Rapporto Cibus connect*.

VON HIPPEL E. (1988), *The Sources of Innovation*, Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Academic or professional position and contacts

Marcella De Martino
Researcher in Management
Istituto di Ricerca su Innovazione e Servizi per lo Sviluppo (IRISS) - CNR - Napoli - Italy
e-mail: m.demartino@iriss.cnr.it

Fabio Magnotti
Research Fellow in Management
Istituto di Ricerca su Innovazione e Servizi per lo Sviluppo (IRISS) - CNR - Napoli - Italy
e-mail: f.magnotti@iriss.cnr.it

Lodovico Santoro
Research Assistant in Economics and Statistics
Istituto di Ricerca su Innovazione e Servizi per lo Sviluppo (IRISS) - CNR - Napoli - Italy
e-mail: l.santoro@iriss.cnr.it

sinergie
italian journal of management

ISSN 0393-5108
DOI 10.7433/s105.2018.07
pp. 131-158

FONDAZIONE CUEIM

How to start a revolution: organizational changes and lean system at the FCA Pomigliano plant[1]

Received
15th July 2016
Revised
13th February 2017
Accepted
28th December 2017

Loris Gaio - Sandro Trento - Marco Zamarian

Abstract

***Purpose of the paper**: The study has two goals: first, we highlight the inadequacy of mainstream change management models to fully explain complex change interventions; secondly, we juxtapose WCM (World Clan Manufacturing) and change management and propose a framework that integrates elements of emergent change models with the so-called planned change models, in the light of evidence collected from a WCM reorganization in the FCA Plant in Pomigliano.*

***Methodology**: We perform an inductive case study of how the Fiat-Chrysler Automotive (FCA) group managed change at its Pomigliano plant from three sources-archived data, direct interviews of FCA managers and employees, and field observations of the production plant*

***Results**: The study demonstrates a new model of organizational change characterized by diffuse processes, activated by the hybrid choices between organizational design and emergence.*

***Research Limitation**: The analysis is limited to the case in point, even though highly representative in terms of the themes addressed in the paper.*

***Managerial implications**: Two main normative implications emerge from this work: first, seeding methods centered on agents of change represent a viable alternative to traditional triggering methods; and second, the involvement of all personnel is very important in both the design and the implementation of change.*

***Originality of the paper**: Our proposed analytical framework allows for the identification of a hybrid model for conducting organizational change that integrates several of the existing prevailing models.*

Key words: organizational change; lean production; automotive; change management

1. Introduction and overview

Between 2008 and 2013 the FCA Pomigliano plant (Naples) was the focus of a broad debate in the press and among social groups; in the scientific field, the discussion focused on the industrial relations between the company and the surrounding area. However, the academic discussion has so far focused little on the important innovations of process and the managerial decisions that took place in this controversial production

[1] The authors are grateful to the management of FCA Group, and the personnel of the Pomigliano d'Arco plant. The opinions expressed in this paper are the authors' own and do not reflect those of FCA Group.

context. In fact, what happened at the plant is one of the most extraordinary examples of transformation and recovery of a production line seemingly destined to close. The case of Pomigliano, therefore, constitutes an exceptional opportunity to study the management of change in a complex situation.

The fundamental idea of *change management* is the management of a structural change consistent with a strategic business reorientation. It is often stressed in the literature (Burnes, 2004) that change, while being an inescapable characteristic of any company, its management should be one of the basic skills of managers (Senior, 2002). In particular, one would expect, both from the theoretical point of view and as regards the nature of regulatory approaches, the emergence of a solid and coherent corpus of guiding principles. However, this expectation does not coincide with reality (Todnem By, 2005): despite many attempts to interpret and systemize change management practices, the overall picture remains fragmented and, to some degree, contradictory. In addition, the idea of change management is often expressed quite generically with regard to the relationship between scale and pervasiveness of change. A further cause for dissatisfaction is related to change practices associated with the design implementation: by nature, planned projects are-or should be-instruments of change, and change management techniques should, therefore, relate to these transformations.

For these reasons, our study has two goals. The first is to account for the substantial inadequacy in change management literature to provide an appropriate framework for understanding the implementation of a complex exercise of change. The second is to contribute to an improvement of the existing interpretative schemes, by proposing a framework that incorporates certain elements of the notion of emergent change into the setting of so-called planned change. To achieve these goals, we inductively reconstruct the example of radical transformation provided by the FCA Pomigliano plant.

The remainder of this paper is structured as follows. In the next section, we summarize the characterizations offered by the literature of the principal change management frameworks. A section detailing the methodology used to reconstruct the present case follows this. Therein we offer a summary of the historical evolution of the plant to illuminate the particular difficulties inherent in the plant's transformation. Finally, we turn to the explanation of the case, give our analysis, and draw conclusions from its example.

2. Change management: a synthesis of the literature

Change management is defined as "the process of continually renewing an organization's direction, structure and capabilities to serve the ever-changing needs of external and internal customers" (Moran and Brightman, 2001, p. 111). Change management should, therefore, be an essential element among managerial practices and principles. However, some meta-analyses of cases of change (King and Peterson, 2007) agree that successful

completion of an organizational change initiative is not an event to be taken for granted, as confirmed by failure rates of 70-81%. One critical issue is the lack of common theoretical and normative frames of reference (Burnes, 2004). In fact, the literature on change management presents a fragmented framework (Todnem By, 2005). The keys of this fragmentation are two: first, projects of change are extremely heterogeneous amongst each other, a factor making a systematic approach difficult; moreover, the approaches and conceptualizations emerge from irreconcilable conceptions about the very idea of change.

An attempt to bring the numerous change management contributions into sharper focus was proposed by Senior (2002): every change phenomenon can be described in three dimensions - frequency, scale, and approach to management (cfr. (Tab. 1).

Tab. 1: A characterization of change management

Approach	*Frequency*	*Scale*
Planned	Discontinuous	Fine tuning
Emergent	Incremental	Incremental adjustments
	Incremental in leaps	Modular transformation
	Continuous	Corporate Transformation
	Continuous in leaps	

Source: Adapted from Senior, 2002

From the perspective of change pace, we can identify at least five methods. The first, 'discontinuous change', is characterized by rapid changes in strategy, structure, or culture - or in all three together (Grundy, 1993) - and it includes discrete readily identifiable events with a clear beginning and end. 'Incremental change', however, concerns discrete incidents related to particular organizational issues or aspects, which are addressed sequentially. When incremental change does not take place within a frame of periodic review or according to scheduled processes, we can talk about 'incremental change in leaps', characterized by periods of stagnation that are followed by periods of rapid change to reach a tipping point (Romanelli e Tushman, 1994). In contrast, change is 'continuous' when the organization as a whole adopts an approach of monitoring and constantly adapting to exogenous and endogenous changes (Luecke, 2003). When there are strong temporal discontinuities and the clustering of change episodes alternating with periods of relative stasis, we refer to change as being 'continuous in leaps'.

The scale of change is the second relevant variable. In the classification proposed by Dunphy and Stace (1988), we move on to the concept of 'fine tuning', the adaption of personnel and procedures to a given strategy, 'incremental adjustment' referring to discrete changes in procedures or organizational structure, 'modular transformation' associated with the change of an entire sector of the enterprise, to the radical concept of 'corporate transformation' involving the entire corporate structure.

Two types of approaches emerge from the literature. The classical idea of 'planned change' (Elrod II and Tippett, 2002) provides that before

adopting a new behavior, it is necessary to identify the unacceptable elements of current behaviors and to define actions to bridge the gap. In such approaches, the clear priorities are the ability to define the areas of change, to design the path toward it, and to promote the participation of the relevant actors to bring about the change, starting from top management. In contrast, the approach of 'emergent change' proposes the necessity of governing change from the bottom of the transformation, given the distance between top management and the strategic sensors that signal the problems, and the relative conservatism of management. In this case, change is viewed as a continuous and open process, able to handle uncertainty and complexity.

This debate has recently been revived by the reflections on change wrought by scholars dealing with lean management practices.

TPS, lean manufacturing and WCM

The most important factory transformations developed in recent decades in the automotive industry are primarily *lean* production methods originating from Toyota (*Toyota Production System* or TPS), stylized by Shingo and Ohno (Ohno, 1988). The novelty introduced by the TPS can be summarized in two basic features: reduction of production costs resulting from attention to cutting time (*Just in Time*, JIT) and the centrality of the human factor, in particular operational staff (Sugimori *et al.,* 1977) who actively participate in setting up production processes, reducing waste, and establishing multifunctional teams. These elements are integrated with other tools such as statistical quality control and *zero inventory* methods (Monden, 1983).

An understanding of such practices can be traced to MIT's research program on the automotive industry (Womack *et al.,* 1990) that formalized and popularized the concepts of *lean management*. This is a systematic approach in which change is realized to adapt to an indirect stimulus (Spear e Bowen 1999), as opposed to normative approaches such as the TPS that is of a prescriptive nature (Shah and Ward, 2003).

The Western attempt to adopt Japanese methods is represented by WCM (*World Class Manufacturing*) (Hayes and Wheelwright, 1984) and stems from the awareness of productivity gaps in the U.S. manufacturing industries with respect to the Japanese one. WCM embodies a set of practices, implying that the use of best practices would lead to superior performance. Such practices are mainly rooted in the TPS experience and include, among others, workforce participation, workforce skills and capabilities, competition through quality, and incremental improvement approaches (Flynn *et al.*, 1999). The method is currently articulated around a set of technical and managerial pillars, whose number has grown over time as a result of inclusion of new strategic instances and application areas. Schonberger (1986) considered seven pillars, whilst the current mainstream implementation includes ten pillars (Yamashina, 2013). The WCM approach is fostered by the World Class Manufacturing Association, a not-for-profit organization of manufacturing companies founded in 2006; in 2013, it included 166 companies in 16 different countries. It supports

and audits the introduction of WCM practices worldwide and assigns "WCM Awards" to the leading plants (Chiarini and Vagnoni, 2015).

Alongside the efforts to standardize and codify Japanese tools and practices, there exists the opposite tendency to differentiate from the management approaches originating in Toyota, by introducing specific variations better suited to local contexts (Netland, 2013).

The Fiat-Chrysler Automobiles (FCA) group has centered the improvement of its production process on the logic of WCM that, based on ten technical pillars and ten managerial pillars, introduces and propagates the process over seven stages.

The process of introducing WCM in FCA represented a turning point for the entire group, from 2005 onward (Ketter, 2008). In the period 2006-2009, the spread and adaptation of the WCM system had already produced a number of results in terms of efficiency and the development of organizational practices (Ketter, 2010): by the end of 2012, WCM had already been introduced in 109 plants, representing coverage of 95% of the total operating costs of the group (FIAT, 2013).

Lean management approaches pursue a steady pace of introduction and change, mainly in order to secure integrity and stability (Bhasin, 2012). Likewise, WCM exhibits an incremental nature in its application, as it provides for the identification of a pilot (*Model Area*) that allows experimentation in the introduction of techniques and principles, to be extended subsequently to the entire structure only if proven helpful. It is common practice, particularly with respect to each facility, to designate a department or an implementation model for a project addressing a specific pillar of WCM.

The typical factor triggering improvement initiatives is that of *Cost Deployment*. This pillar allows the assignment of costs or losses to the conditions of inefficiency that occur in an operating environment (Yamashina, 2013). This method allows prioritizing, by efficiency levels, the areas and contexts in which to intervene, in addition to measuring the potential savings achieved by such intervention.

Combining the main findings of the literature on change management with the specific perspective contributed by scholars investigating lean management techniques, more in general and specifically WCM, allows us to indicate two research goals. The first, most obvious, goal becomes that of understanding WCM and similar techniques within the more general change management literature. The second is that of improving the understanding of the duality between the concepts of emergent and planned change. As we have seen, this dimension is considered as a dichotomous key and oppositional, from different interpretive currents, and yet it remains unclear how this opposition plays out during change implementation.

3. Method and field of research

In this section, we first illustrate the research strategy adopted to make sense of the change management process conducted by FCA at the

Pomigliano plant. Next, we summarize the plant's history and highlight the elements that characterized the factory's transformation.

3.1 The strategy of research

Method and data collection strategy

The aim of this study is that of improving our understanding of the process of change management, specifically enhancing our comprehension of its critical success factors, as this has been clearly identified as one of the most glaring gaps in the existing literature on change management (Todnem By, 2005). For this reason, we decided to adopt the empirical analysis of a single, exemplary, case (Yin, 1994) that can represent an ideal laboratory for such an endeavor. This choice is justified essentially by our need for a case that could be objectively considered a success according to standard organizational measures of performance, and yet, that allowed a level of access compatible with the need to understand the process of managing change in its details.

Our analysis of the case required a recursive interaction between data collection and coding and theorization (Yin, 1994; Denzin and Lincoln, 1994). During a preliminary phase, we relied mainly on open-format interviews with three key informants to roughly reconstruct the change management process. At this stage, we integrated the narrative with internal corporate documents and press releases and other publicly available written materials (e.g. communications to investors). The authors independently open-coded the materials. This stage was combined with a second phase in which open codes were matched against the theory-driven concepts derived from our starting analytical framework illustrated in section 2. The concepts and the narratives thus constructed were used to inform the semi-structured interviews of the following phase that largely confirmed the robustness of the constructs. One might argue that the relatively small number of interviews of insiders of the plant - at all levels - conducted in this stage does not offer a comprehensive picture of the process. However, we found that that theoretical saturation (i.e. the convergence of data around common themes) occurred after just 6-7 interviews (Duncan *et al.*, 2001). The third phase, where we refined the starting theoretical framework enriching it with the constructs emerging from the coding, followed. This method allows a reconstruction of the causal relationships between the constructs under examination and at the same time permits an appreciation of its complexity, including a view toward deriving regulatory constructs (Eisenhardt, 1989; Eisenhardt e Graebner, 2007). The triangulation of different data sources (documents, interviews, presentations and direct observations) allows cross-validation and verification of the reliability of sources in terms of accuracy of the data and the subsequent results (Yin, 1994).

Below we present the results of our analysis in narrative form using excerpts of select interviews, to draw a more accurate and vivid picture of the setting.

Data

We can distinguish three main sources in our process of data collection. The first was based on the collection of documents, internal to the FCA group or from other sources, which reconstruct, albeit in a simplified way, the type of organizational intervention used in restructuring the Pomigliano plant. The field work in support of the documents took place at various times: the tours of the plant allowed direct observation of factory work and interaction with members of the press department, the assembly department, and the metrological center, in addition to participation in the DIM (Daily Improvement Meeting). Finally, a third source is represented by interviews with several informants in order to precisely reconstruct the process of change management as it occurred at Pomigliano (Tab. 2.)

Tab. 2: Sources of data to support research

Interviews	Subject of interview	Interviewees	Date	Location
	Pomigliano plant manager	2	18/07/2014 13/02/2015	Pomigliano
	Former Pomigliano plant manager	1	21/11/2014	Torino
	Pomigliano HR director	1	13/02/2015	Pomigliano
	Former Pomigliano director of personnel	4	14/05/2014 18/07/2014 21/11/2014 13/02/2015	Trento, Pomigliano (2), Torino
	HR Director of FCA Manufacturing	1	21/11/2014	Torino
	Director of Manufacturing of FCA EMEA	1	21/11/2014	Torino
	Team Leaders	3	13/02/2015	Pomigliano
	Supervisors	2	13/02/2015	Pomigliano
Documents		Origin	Title	
		FCA	Presentation: The organizational revolution of Pomigliano	
		FIAT	Sustainability Reports - 2011-2015	
Field observations	Date		18/07/2014 13/02/2015	

Source: Our elaboration

3.2 Our research setting: the Pomigliano plant

The FCA plant in Pomigliano has a lengthy history. In 1938, the IRI (Istituto per la Ricostruzione Industriale, a State-owned Holding) decided to create an Alfa Romeo production center for military aircraft engines.

In the mid-1960s, a mass-market production project was launched to manufacture a four-door car intended for middle class buyers, known as 'Alfa-Sud' (Pesce, 2013). Pomigliano was a typical Taylor-style plant, with an assembly line, reliance on division of labor, and a very hierarchical organization.

In 1986, the IRI decided to sell Alfa Romeo to FIAT. The production of various models of the new FIAT-Lancia-Alfa Romeo Group was assigned. FIAT put in place a strategy dedicated to trimming down the Pomigliano plant. From 12,800 employees in 1987, they downsized to just 5,000 in 2002. The plant output rose to around 200,000 cars per year in the period 1989-90 and peaked in 2001. In the following years, there was a steady decline in production. In 2005, the production was in fact equal to roughly half of that in 2001 (Simone, 2006).

In 2007, the Pomigliano plant produced the Alfa Romeo models 159, 147, and the GT, by then advanced models. The plant was deemed problematic, to say the least. The absenteeism rate was quite high. A sizable number of employees happened to be absent for any plausible reason, like soccer matches or elections: in 2008 alone, there was a 30% absentee rate for electoral permits. (Mania, 2007). Moreover, very few employees wore work uniforms, and precautionary safety gear was not used.

The product defect rate was high, at roughly ninety percent (Mania, 2007). The prevailing logic was quantitative: it consisted in producing a certain number of cars per day, without regard to quality, but required the reworking of numerous pieces prior to salability. Between January and November of 2007, there were 150 micro-strikes that halted production without prior warning.

In early December 2007, FIAT announced a plant revitalization plan that would drastically change the workflow. With an investment of 110 million Euros - 70 designated for the redesign of the equipment layout and 40 for retraining employees and paying them two months' salary during the training phase (Volpato, 2011).

During the traditional pre-Christmas "family day" celebrated with employees and their families, Sebastiano Garofalo, plant manager, explained that the risk of plant closure was high and what lay ahead was a last chance: if the new investment and training failed, there would be no further opportunity.

A single event symbolized the turning point: with systems down, the plant began layout improvements and intensive training programs that would last until March 2, 2008. From the second quarter of 2008, the European car market was hit by an unprecedented crisis and the plant was forced to drastically reduce production levels.

The survival of Pomigliano was linked to the launch of a new car model with positive sales prospects. Marchionne, CEO of the group, evaluated the possibility of bringing production of the model *Nuova Panda* to the plant.

The strategic action involved complete reorganization of the production process according to the principles of World Class Manufacturing (WCM) in order to make the Pomigliano plant a laboratory example for eventual application of the new system to the rest of the Italian FIAT-Chrysler plants (Campagna *et al.*, 2015).

3.3 The WCM at Pomigliano: operational profiles

The path to redesigning productivity at the Pomigliano plant reflects the FCA orientation toward the WCM, starting with daily operations. At

first glance, the WCM can be traced back to traditional *lean* methods, only with customization. For example, the Poka-yoke design is evident in simple and effective technological solutions such as the requisite routing of departments along the line, visual and audible assembly signals, and calibrated instrumentation.

Lean management tools are used systematically: statistical quality control, *Kanban*, and Andon signals, just to mention a few. Another obvious tool is holding a regular meeting at the start of each shift to discuss, consolidate, and continuously improve work process and best practices; the *Daily Improvement Meeting* (DIM) is an instrument used pervasively for internal processes but scarcely applied to supply relationships. However, it is important to identify the peculiarities of the selection process that have led to the use of these instruments in the factory setting.

The timing of the interventions

Pomigliano had been undergoing upgrades since 2008. The operation of the plant was interrupted for about two months for the introduction of a series of changes aimed at reorganizing production lines, improving the layout of certain departments, and redefining certain assembly processes for the Alfa Romeo models. On this occasion, certain continuous improvement (*kaizen*) initiatives were developed through the involvement of workers, as well as some sessions of intensive training aimed at learning the WCM principles and instruments. The latter was achieved by training 266 employees who in turn developed tutorship initiatives for the remaining (approximately 7,000) plant workers (Ketter, 2008). These activities were instrumental in improving internal performance indicators (such as absenteeism and injury rate) as well as external ones (product warranty work), but were not yet connected to a full implementation of WCM ideas (Ketter, 2008).

In the introduction of the WCM, there was no identification made of a specific Model Area in which to focus the improvement process, nor was a specific aspect of the production process addressed. Rather the process involved the abandonment of almost all of the pre-existing production practices in favor of operational solutions far removed from the *status quo*.

Another interesting element of the WCM implementation is Cost Deployment: the systematic introduction at the Pomigliano plant consisted of developing a completely new product, namely the *Nuova Panda* model, previously made in Thychy (Poland) where the production took place in terms of efficiency. La *Nuova Panda* is a model with very low margins, and requires significant production volumes and minimal time intervals between the production launch and the first sales (time to market). In 2010, the production was moved to Pomigliano, while the production of the Lancia Ypsilon was transferred to Poland (Ketter, 2010).

The choice of the *Nuova Panda* represented a challenge implemented in relatively controlled conditions: the aim of Cost Deployment was to improve an already known and relatively efficient process.

WCM Pillars and other planned choices

The WCM can be introduced through ten technical and ten managerial

pillars. The fundamental method for the introduction of the WCM and the distinctive aspect of this model is the human factor. Each pillar of the WCM emphasizes the involvement, empowerment, and operational autonomy of workers, in particular through education and training.

Many of the technical and organizational choices that characterized the introduction of the WCM in Pomigliano and led to its diffusion are fairly common and can be found in many *lean* experiences (Netland, 2013). First, the overall restructuring of the production layout consisted in defining functional departments for certain stages that could not be engineered ergonomically within the line (upstroke and downstroke auto body paint coating), and including only the intermediate production stages on the line.

Still today, the standardization of the division of labor is oriented toward the multi-specialization of skills, and such standardization is specifically required to receive WCM certification. This arrangement is accompanied by job rotation at the workstations, managed by the teams themselves in order to facilitate the acquisition of comprehensive and widespread knowledge on the part of employees.

A small division between technical and managerial roles was also designed, through the presence of technologist staff figures in the departments and supply table instrumentation that had been previously operated by specialized staff units. This element too demonstrates the broad delegation of decision-making and accountability extended within the team.

3.4 The elements of transformation at Pomigliano

Discontinuity (I): Work Place Integration and study of the Virtual Line

The first novelty in change management for the Pomigliano plant took place with the implementation of the so-called Work Place Integration (WPI). The WPI is an exercise in micro planning of tasks involving characteristics that are new with respect to the traditional approaches; the goal is to achieve a production line that allows employees to work at their best, with some measure of discretion. This macro-objective results in the definition of sub goals in ergonomics, safety, internal material handling, and respect for the work environment, autonomy and quality. The first step saw the virtual reconstruction of the assembly line on paper, representing the proposed modification of the exact sequence of the workstations and the flow of materials and labor. The WPI saw the involvement of 182 employees, including 69 workers from the Pomigliano plant and 50 experts in WCM techniques from other plants in the group. Thus the tasks of individual workstations were performed by mixed groups of expert ergonomists, task specialists (workers), and technologists from all the plant departments in order to ensure continuity and consistency of the workflow. The result of this work was the total redesign of transformation process. Notably, however, some cardinal principles of the organization of work at the plant were established: (1) the work team (*il dominio*) and team leader (*il capo-dominio*) and (2) the rethinking of the Elementary Technological Units (UTE).

The work team is a group of six workers led by a skilled worker, the team leader. Each team is in charge of a portion of the production process and operates a contained, although variable, number of elementary operations, such as the assembly. A team is characterized by a division of labor into individual stations accompanied by a consistent job rotation, entrusted at the time of its execution to local employee choice. The operative rule for promoting job rotation is the so-called 3x3x3 rule: three people must know all of the stations of the work team, at least one person must know at least three stations, and for three critical positions, several workers must be interchangeable. The rotation allows a better understanding of the overall team task and a lower level of stress attributable to repetition of tasks. The team is the basic organizational unit of the plant, but also the unit around which the other organizational structures have been designed. In particular, specialists (engineers) and management are thought to provide support for the work of the teams and to allow them to fully develop their potential. There is a genuine redefinition of these roles from essentially managerial tasks and control to team support and problem solving. This is described perfectly by one of our interviewees:

> Team Leader 2: [Team Leaders already existed] but they used to report everything, everything had to go through the supervisor. Then the supervisor, in turn, went up to his boss… there was a long process to follow […] [if I have a problem] now, by contrast, I go straight to my peer.

Even the layout provides a clear indication of change: offices are located at the center of the plant in a transparent glass enclosure that facilitates the exchange of visual cues and direct access to the area of specialized knowledge from the line.

The team leader is central to the reorganization of FCA. In the initial setup phase, the team leader selects, in part, the individual members of his/her team. At this time, the team leader also oversees their training on the 'micro plants' (see later sections) and gradually places them in the line. From an operational standpoint, the team leader has two essential tasks: the basic task of replacing any missing elements of his/her team, and supporting team members in solving problems on the line. This also means that the team leader has the responsibility for any line shutdowns owing to problems in assembly associated with the team's workstation. It is the responsibility of the team leader to signal the team's operational failure or problems in lead-time consistency that become global and shut down the line. Line shutdown is required if the problem is not resolved within 100 seconds.

The team leaders were identified in the first phase of the organizational change management through a selection aimed at identifying individuals with sound technical training (possessing secondary school training consistent with the job tasks), experience, relatively young age and high motivation level. The selection was then continued in the specific micro plant training, in which phase the search concretely focused on strongly process- and result-oriented individuals. This stage focused not on the hire of new workers, but rather on the selection and training of experienced

personnel. In the previous organization of the plant, teams had been formed of ten people, but often expanded to twelve or thirteen. Therefore, the ability of the team leader to closely supervise the line was in fact very weak, a fact making its position stressful. In addition, the team leader had a nearly exclusive supervisory role without having responsibility for the team's precise results.

The UTE had been a cornerstone of the organization of the Pomigliano plant even in the pre-FCA era. The UTE had been conceived as a 'small factory' and identified by a production goal. Within the UTEs were present all the professionals necessary for the transformations and their support (technological experts, material logistics managers, supervisors) with a series of quantitative and qualitative targets relative to a result. The new UTEs were different: they did not map the product in an isomorphic way, but could rather be seen as a collection of teams prepared sequentially without assigned objectives. In addition, the activity of supporting the main line was no longer assigned to the UTEs, but rather arranged and assigned according to a logical process as a whole throughout the UTEs.

Discontinuity (II): the Workshop

In April 2011, the plant held a training workshop that involved 150 workers from all organizational levels. The Workshop had multiple goals, each instrumental to the implementation of the production line in its Virtual Line design, and characterized by the use of heterogeneous work groups for training, formal roles, and professional history.

The individuals involved were divided into small groups of four to five units, each of which had the task of dealing with a specific topic related to the plant and its ongoing change. The Workshop was clearly a turning point in the life of the plant:

> Team Leader 2: The workshop has represented a very important element of change. The workshop has been an experience during which… we all got together, people from different levels, from the director to us, the team leaders… we formed groups of mixed people.

In total twenty-five different mini-projects were developed in this way to cope with several critical points proposed by the reorganization. The most relevant result, however, was the precise definition of new key roles: the team leader, the supervisor as a sort of second-level team leader who coordinates a comprehensive set of teams, specialists, and technicians, with the task of continuously supporting the line both from an operational point of view and the point of view of incorporating ideas of continuous improvement. From the training perspective, consistent with the objectives, concepts related to the new way of doing things were emphasized. In particular, other than redefining roles, emphasis was made of the concept that each operator would bear personal responsibility with regard to results, particularly in terms of product quality, reaction time in response to problems, and proposal of innovative solutions for improvement.

The FCA management was convinced of the need for full staff involvement to succeed in transforming the Pomigliano plant. A

distinguishing feature of the previous factory organization was the perception of a notable gap between management and workers. The division of labor, of the Taylors style, between those responsible for designing the work system (managers) and those performing the work (workers) meant for the latter a strong demotivation accompanied by an equally strong lack of responsibility, with reverberations on the results and on the degree of responsibility claimed for such results. The new manufacturing approach was characterized by the move toward a widespread use of discretion even among the workers, and required that all workers take responsibility, resulting in a decentralization of decision-making. The first passage to the new system consisted in the Workshop: the working groups were formed to enable direct communication between managers, employees, and line workers.

> Team Leader 1: […] because they [blue collars] found a completely different plant, we all started from the same level, this is why there was no past. We all started from the same experience, as if we had entered the factory for the first time.

It is clear, from the design intent already explained in the section on Work Place Integration, that the team leader was the central element in the new production method put into place in the FCA plants. Given the projected transformation, the selection of the team leaders became central to the successful implementation of the new factory system. Beyond defining certain critical demographic and attitudinal characteristics requisite to the role, the workshop represented the ideal setting to seek out individuals with proactive problem-solving approaches and offered an opportunity to identify those who would become the first team leaders.

From the perspective of training, the Workshop was crucial. Teamwork in the new factory organization directly corresponded to the way different groups approached plant problems during operations. In the team, being the primary work unit in the new factory, the responsibility was widespread and shared by all. The role of the new team leader was not to "supervise" the work of the others for monitoring and evaluation purposes, but rather to support and assist other team members, correct any problems that arose, and establish procedures for carrying out job rotation and on-the-line training. The philosophy behind the Workshop was, therefore, that of transforming individual attitudes in the direction of taking on greater responsibility and involvement. This was true for those selected as team leaders, but also line workers and managers, and technical staff and directors, who saw the corresponding transformation of their *modus operandi*. In fact, the management in the new configuration mainly assumed the task of supporting the line.

The discontinuity (III): the micro plant

One key element in structuring the organizational transformation of the Pomigliano plant was that so-called *micro plant* ("*pilotino*"), a simplified representation of the assembly line for the primary purpose of training staff in the operations associated with each stage of the assembly line. The

particularity of the micro plant with respect to the line stations was the ability to regulate the assembly timing and methods, thus facilitating the ability to learn the tasks and understand the relationship between actions performed and results obtained.

The micro plant already existed.

> Supervisor 1: … but it was far away from us. It was located in Turin, not all of us knew of its existence. As a supervisor, I knew it after 4 years. On the contrary, now it is something fully integrated in our plant.

In order to understand the profound change introduced at Pomigliano in the use of the micro plant, it is essential to describe how the plant management chose to use this tool.

> Supervisor 1: In the past, the training sessions were carried directly on the assembly line, on the car, and that created many problems. Today, we don't do that, we use the micro plant. The worker and his/her team leader move to the micro-plant to train. Only after receiving the certification […] they are allowed back to the actual assembly line.

The micro-plant is, in essence, a real assembly line, located in an area of the plant dedicated to training, and in which it is possible to instruct workers in the various assembly actions required at each workstation. In the micro plant, instructors are able to observe individuals in training in order to comment on their performance.

Currently, the micro plant is utilized in two ways to reach an even more valuable set of learning objectives. The methods employed were those traditionally used as described above, and new virtual reality methods. In the latter, workers could be trained to carry out operations using Virtual Reality tools, particularly viewers and haptic interfaces (specifically gloves), to enhance perceptual feedback corresponding to actions taken on a virtual line, where machinery and objects simply appear before the operator. This method presents some definite advantages: it is extremely safe as it avoids potentially dangerous physical contact with machinery and moving parts; it allows assessment of work in progress in order to manage and improve aspects of the job critical to productivity or ergonomics prior to progressing to the line itself; and finally, it allows the employee to contribute actively to the job design by proposing measures to improve standard procedures prior to inserting them on the line, in full coherence with the WCM's strategy of continuous improvement.

4. Toward a new change management model?

The change management model adopted by FCA is not easily classified in the traditional categories found in the literature: on the one hand, it presents elements attributable to more analytical schemes; while on the other hand, the process of change presents certain unique traits that suggest the presence of a highly innovative practice. Three dimensions characterize the adopted model of change:

a) the presence of discontinuous elements that allow signaling of the need for profound changes in the factory system;
b) the use of change management ideas based on *seeding* employees on the line and on the subsequent propagation of the practice;
c) the targeted selection of certain WCM pillars related to human resource development as a means of transforming production processes.

The first dimension prompts the notion of radical change (Lewin 1947), characterized by the application of the classic unfreezing-change-refreezing technique. The obvious approaches is the proposal to discontinue certain elements from the past to serve the dual purpose of providing a moment for organizational redesign and signal the passage from one state of transformation to the next.

The most important element in this regard was clearly the Workshop, from which arose the decision to close the plant and radically redesign its organization: in fact, all interviewees agreed that, on both substantive and symbolic levels, it was a pivotal moment in the beginning of the revolution in Pomigliano. The Workshop represented the moment of the conceptual *freeze* of the choices taken. The elements of radical transformation were to reverberate even on related decisions such as the redefinition of hierarchical levels (from seven to five) and job descriptions, in the team leader selection process with its questioning of pre-existing roles, and in the introduction of mixed teams of techno structural experts and operators.

The literature also emphasizes the importance of signaling the discontinuity through appropriate communication interventions that highlight the moment the change begins and crystallize its characteristics for all to see. In the case of Pomigliano, the Workshop sought to achieve four converging goals: a) to communicate the scope and the significance of the change in order to overcome the conservatism present in complex organizations, particularly in situations where the risk perceived by the individual is very high (job security); b) to identify a leadership adequate to meet the new challenges associated with reorganization; c) to train people for the reality of the new factory; d) to emphasize, even if only symbolically, the break with the previous work climate. According to its participants, the Workshop achieved these goals. Even the manner of development of the UTE represented a further example of breaking with the old: the intervention was decidedly different from the Fordism style, which saw a clear separation between techno-structural specialists, delegated to task design, and line operators. In particular, there was less role separation even physically: the planning responsibility was shared, to enhance divergent views that allow a better understanding of the phenomenon that typically need to be managed in a *lean* perspective.

At Pomigliano it was decided that production would recommence with a model never before produced in that plant and that the entire process would be revolutionized; however, the technical, economic, and operative features that characterized the production of the Panda were known *a priori* and imposing them at Pomigliano meant relying on a context of reference that was at least partially known and controlled.

The change assumed a global dynamic that, after starting with a relatively reduced fraction of the line workers, gradually extended the

knowledge of the new practices and value systems to the entire plant system. The crucial moment consisted in the seeding choices, namely the identification, selection, and training of the staff members who in turn would become the principal agents of organizational change.

The selection process began even prior to the workshop, during which it increased in importance, and culminated in the identification of the team leaders. At this stage, the positions and roles reached previously were called into question and selection of the new figures was carried out primarily based on the attitudes that facilitate the sharing of knowledge. The team leaders constituted the first group of line staff exposed to the innovative problem-solving practices, as well as the operative tools and methods of WCM. This first group was systematically exposed and trained in practices emphasizing the elements of accountability, empowerment, and work engagement. Only in a later phase were the work groups formed, granting ample freedom to the team leaders in the selection of their staff.

Finally, the WCM pillars were the tools that guided change, in an incremental nature, through seven phases toward the subsequent Model Area: as one might have guessed, this structure was not precisely the case.

The technical and managerial pillars of the WCM are by their nature strongly interconnected and characterized by the development of complementarity and positive cross-effects. This aspect suggests the possibility of identifying certain pillars as primary factors of change and utilizing them indirectly to govern the development and coordination of subordinate pillars. For example, the pillar of Cost Deployment addresses cost and waste reduction; as a result, the levels of safety and quality (directed by other pillars) are improved in direct measure to the reduction of waste and inefficiency (Chiarini e Vagnoni, 2015). This flexibility appears to be an original feature of the WCM and demonstrates significant potential for adaptation to different production environments (Yamashina, 2013; Netland, 2013).

Tab. 3: Comparison of Change Models

	Clean slate / Big bang	Model Area	Pomigliano/Seeding
Pros	- Allows optimization of entire process - Top-down standardization of internal process - Allow change of internal culture - Fast	- Allows controlled testing of new solutions - Allows workers to significantly contribute to change - Low cost - Facilitates learning by doing	- Relatively fast - Allows workers to strongly contribute to change - Allows learning by doing. - Bottom-up standardization of entire process - Conserves part of past (that which is compatible with the new culture)
Cons	- Very costly in terms of financial/ human resources - Any pre-existing skills and knowledge are discarded - Generates problems related to internal communication and acceptance ("not invented here", poor motivation among those accustomed to working in a different way)	- Slow implementation process - Difficulty with portability of solutions from one problem area to another - Requires good starting point in terms of the efficiency of the entire plant (few bottlenecks)	- Possible conflicts between those who agree and those who reject change (creation of factions) - Requires great care in choosing the change agents (team leaders)

Source: Our elaboration

In Table 3, we compare the "Pomigliano seeding" model described herein to the prevailing models found in the literature. The design of a change model with such characteristics allows a balance of the benefits and the disadvantages from the different change models detailed in the literature (Clean Slate, Model Area), particularly in regards to the speed of implementation and achievement of results, the flexibility of application, and the possibility of maximizing organizational dynamics and coordination.

5. Conclusions

The restructuring project at the Pomigliano plant presents several interesting aspects, on the one hand relevant for similar cases in the Italian industrial landscape, but on the other hand for the peculiarity of the approach followed by the FCA management and staff in implementing a remarkable upheaval in what appeared to be a plant condemned by deeply unsatisfactory work culture and management. Among the many possible themes, we chose to focus on the analysis of the organizational transformation process.

The main contributions of this work to the debate on change management are two. The first, of a substantive nature, concerns the particular method of triggering the change process adopted by FCA at the Pomigliano plant. To implement change, the FCA management chose the path, seemingly hybrid in nature, of progressive contamination. It was neither a 'revolution in a vacuum' nor an incremental approach, but rather the identification of change agents (team leaders) that were then disseminated in the new departments with the dual role of selecting their fellow workers and mentoring them in learning new tasks. At the same time, a few 'pillars' or dimensions of change were chosen that then helped to activate the other dimensions that make up the WCM philosophy chosen by FCA.

Our second contribution is conceptual in nature and goes toward a different understanding of the relationship between the emergent and the planned aspects in the implementation of change. Traditionally these two methods are viewed as conflicting and incompatible. It is clear, however, from close observation of the FCA events that we are facing a different model: change is planned, in the sense that the methods of change are identified in an essentially bottom-up design, in such a way that the agents of change themselves produce the greatest and most important part of the change. The management plays an important role in supporting and sustaining the improvement initiatives arising from their own work team.

Of course, these results should be viewed in a precise framework. Specifically, the special, even unique, traits related to the context of the FCA plant make it a complex task to apply and extend the results verified herein. In particular, it is useful to note that specific conditions of their industrial relations heavily influenced the path FCA followed in implementing change.

For this reason, a first obvious direction for future research is the extension and application of WCM to other projects in plants of the FCA group located elsewhere. From this comparison of the process, it would be possible to determine more easily the manner in which the Pomigliano plant's peculiarities fostered a particular and favorable outcome. A second extension, of a more general nature, would include a comparison of the practices of adoption of WCM in other firm contexts, in particular in companies with a longer history of "lean" work practices.

Bibliography

BHASIN S. (2012), "An appropriate change strategy for lean success", *Management Decision*, vol. 50, n. 3, pp. 439-458.

BURNES B. (2004), "Kurt Lewin and the planned approach to change: A re-appraisal", *Journal of Management Studies*, vol. 41, n. 6, pp. 977-1002.

CAMPAGNA L., CIPRIANI A., ERLICHER L., NEIROTTI P., PERO L. (2015), *Le persone e la fabbrica. Una ricerca sugli operai Fiat Chrysler in Italia*, Guerini Next, Milano.

CHIARINI A., VAGNONI E. (2015), "World-class manufacturing by Fiat. Comparison with Toyota Production System from a Strategic Management, Management Accounting, Operations Management and Performance Measurement dimension", *International Journal of Production Research,* vol. 53, n. 2, pp. 590-606.

DENZIN N.K., LINCOLN Y.S. (1994), *Handbook of qualitative research,* Sage, Thousand Oaks.

DUNCAN M., MOULY S., NILAKANT V. (2001), "Discontinuous change in the New Zealand police service-A case study", *Journal of Managerial Psychology,* vol. 16, n. 1, pp. 6-19.

DUNPHY D., STACE D. (1988), "Transformational and coercive strategies for planned organizational change: Beyond the OD model", *Organization Studies*, vol. 19, n. 3, pp. 317-334.

EISENHARDT K.M. (1989), "Building theories from case study research", *The Academy of Management Review*, vol. 14, n. 4, pp. 532-550.

EISENHARDT K.M., GRAEBNER M.E. (2007), "Theory building from cases: opportunities and challenges", *Academy of Management Journal,* vol. 50, n. 1, pp. 25-32.

ELROD P.D. II, TIPPETT D.D. (2002), "The 'death valley' of change", *Journal of Organizational Change Management*, vol. 15, n. 3, pp. 273-291

FIAT (2013), *2012 Sustainability Report - Economic, Environmental and Social Responsibility*, Torino.

FLYNN B.B, SCHROEDER R.G., FLYNN J. (1999), "World class manufacturing: an investigation of Hayes and Wheelwright's foundation", *Journal of Operations Management* vol. 17, pp. 249-269.

GRUNDY, T (1993), *Managing Strategic Change,* Kogan Page, London.

HAYES R.H., WHEELWRIGHT S.C. (1984), *Restoring our competitive edge: Competing Through Manufacturing,* John Wiley, New York, NY.

KETTER S. (2008), *World Class Manufacturing, International Investor Day,* Torino, http://www.fcagroup.com.

KETTER S. (2010), "World Class Manufacturing: Towards excellence at Fiat Group", *International Investor Conference, Paris,* http://www.fcagroup.com

KING S., PETERSON L. (2007), "How effective leaders achieve success in critical change initiatives, part 2: why change leadership must transcend project management for complex initiatives to be successful", *Healthcare Quarterly,* vol. 10, n. 2, pp. 72-75.

LEWIN K. (1947), "Frontiers in Group Dynamics: Concept, Method and Reality in Social Science; Social Equilibria and Social Change", *Human Relations,* vol. 1 (June), pp. 5-41.

LUECKE R. (2003), *Managing change and transition,* Harvard Business School, Boston, Mass.

MANIA R. (2007), "Pomigliano la fabbrica difettosa da rieducare", in *La Repubblica* 27 dicembre.

MONDEN Y. (1983), *Toyota Production System, GE,* Institute of Industrial Engineers, Atlanta.

MORAN J.W., BRIGHTMAN B.K. (2001), "Leading organizational change", *Career Development International,* vol. 6, n. 2, pp. 111-118.

OHNO T. (1988), *Toyota Production System: Beyond Large-scale Production*, Productivity Press, New York.

NETLAND T. (2013), "Exploring the phenomenon of company-specific production systems: one-best-way or own-best- way?", *International Journal of Production Research,* vol. 51, n. 4, pp. 1084-1097.

PESCE G. (2013), *Alfasud, una storia italiana. La fabbrica di Pomigliano d'Arco dal fascismo alla globalizzazione,* Ediesse, Roma.

ROMANELLI E., TUSHMAN M.L. (1994), "Organizational Transformation as Punctuated Equilibrium: An Empirical Test", A*cademy of Management Journal,* vol. 37, n. 5, pp. 1141-66.

SCHONBERGER, R.T. (1986), *World class manufacturing: the lessons of simplicity applied*, ASQC Quality Press.

SENIOR B. (2002), *Organisational Change, 2nd Edn.*, Prentice Hall, London.

SHAH R., WARD P.T. (2003), "Lean manufacturing: context, practice bundles, and performance", *Journal of Operations Management,* vol. 21, n. 2, pp. 129-149.

SIMONE C. (2006), "Crisi Fiat Auto: la natura, le cause, gli effetti", *Sinergie*, n. 69, pp. 213-235

SPEAR S., BOWEN H.K. (1999), "Decoding the DNA of the Toyota production system", *Harvard Business Review*, vol. 77, n. 5, pp. 96-106.

SUGIMORI Y., KUSUNOKI K., OHO F., UOHIKAWA S. (1977), "Toyota production system and Kanban system Materialization of just-in-time and respect-for-human system", *International Journal of Production Research,* vol. 15, n. 6, pp. 553-564.

TODNEM BY R. (2005), "Organisational change management: A critical review", *Journal of Change Management,* vol. 5, n. 4, pp. 369-380.

VOLPATO G. (2011), *Fiat group automobiles. Le nuove sfide*, Il Mulino, Bologna.

WOMACK J.P., JONES T.D., ROOS D. (1990), *The Machine That Changed the World*, Rawson Associates, New York.

YAMASHINA H. (2013), "World Class Manufacturing Introduction"; http://wenku.baidu.com/view/07c001d2240c844769eaeea2.html, visitato in data 29 Gennaio 2016.

YIN R.K. (1994), *Case study research. Design and methods,* Sage, Thousand Oaks.

sinergie
italian journal of management
Vol. 36, N. 105, 2018

Academic or professional position and contacts

Loris Gaio
Associate Professor of Management
University of Trento - Italy
e-mail: loris.gaio@unitn.it

Sandro Trento
Full Professor of Management
University of Trento - Italy
e-mail: sandro.trento@unitn.it

Marco Zamarian
Associate Professor of Organization Studies
University of Trento - Italy
e-mail: marco.zamarian@unitn.it

sinergie
italian journal of management

ISSN 0393-5108
DOI 10.7433/s105.2018.08
pp. 159-178

FONDAZIONE CUEIM

The evolution of tourism in the digital era: the case of a tourism destination[1]

Received
19th January 2018
Revised
20th February 2018
Accepted
19th March 2018

Fabiana Sciarelli - Valentina Della Corte
Giovanna del Gaudio

Abstract

Purpose of the paper: *This paper studies the recent changes in the tourism business because of the increasing amount of information on the web and the consequent level of uncertainty and complexity, both for the demand and for the firms.*

Methodology*: This paper systematises the process of evolution in tourism in the digital era and its consequences for tourist destinations. The topic is verified empirically through a panel of experts and case study methodology to study the experts' opinions on the process, with reference to the city of Naples.*

Findings*: The tourism sector has been one of the first mover sectors in ICT and digital development, with consequent evolution of the value chain and business-to-consumer relationships. The growing amount of available information has paradoxically generated an 'informative syndrome', which at times makes these relationships more difficult and complex.*

Research limits*: This paper indicates the limit of studying the issue with reference to a single case study. It represents a first step of wider research that will require further analysis, both in terms of the number of case studies and with reference to demand.*

Practical implications*: The quality of information and professionalism are of fundamental importance in a sector characterised by dynamism and turbulence. Marketing policies require a total revision both for firms and for tourist destinations.*

Originality of the paper: *This paper considers numerous aspects of the tourism sector, both on the offer and demand side. Its originality derives from the analysis of the evolution of this sector for tourists and firms, in the face of the informative syndrome issue.*

Key words: tourism evolution; digital era; informative syndrome; fake competitive news

1. Introduction

In the digital age, tourism has been and remains a booming economic sector. This applies to both domestic and international tourism, and encompasses the main tourist destinations around the world. According to recent research, it is expected that people travelling abroad (which

[1] For the realization of this work, thanks to: Gesac Capodichino, Federalberghi Napoli, Cimatour, Starhotels SPA, Fiavet Campania, Unione Industriali Tourism Division (Naples) and Prof. Sergio Sciarelli, constant example of guidance and rigor in scientific activity.

account for 700 million today) will become 1.8 million by 2030 (World Trade Organization, 2016). These data are the result of a set of favourable factors that are able to balance and overcome the unfavourable factors (particularly terrorism and economic crisis). Throughout this growth in tourism flows, the progress of information technology has played, and will continue to play, a fundamental role. In this regard, in 2015, online travel reached the value of $500 billion, with an increase of 11% per year (World Trade Organization, 2016). These numbers are significant and will expand exponentially in the future (since the beginning of 2017, it has been estimated that one in every two vacations is booked online). Airbnb reached 300,000 customers in 2017, offering 45 million houses in 81 million cities, and expecting to reach one million customers by 2028 (Il Sole 24 Ore, 28/02/2018). This process has been progressively enriched by the creation and development of social networks, and by the increasing use of mobile telephones as multifunctional tools. Today, Web 4.0 refers to an intelligent web that is able to enhance the user's experience (Wei, 2013). These factors have expanded the level of knowledge about tourist destinations, with relative offers, and have enabled the masses ready access to the tools and information to select from a variety of choices. The multiple factors interplaying in this sector and the overlapping perspective between demand and offer have rendered the evolution of tourism more dynamic and unpredictable. In particular, some factors occupy a central position within the evolutionary scheme of tourism, including the increasing amount of information, the variability in demand and the hyper-competition of the offer (Coshall, 2009; Michopoulou and Buhalis, 2008).

However, while the increasing amount of information has widened the knowledge of potential tourists, it has also increased the complexity of the choices, and caused increased difficulty in performing a systematic information search. All these factors have upset the sector, in line with the forecasts of previous contributions (Sciarelli and Della Corte, 2011).

With reference to the offer side, there has been a real revolution in the relationships within the value chain, even compromising the role and survival of some traditional firms, and thereby changing their pivotal positions and relative activities (for example, some airline companies and even tourist destinations-rather than internet providers-offer very powerful destination management systems).

Meanwhile, the demand side tends to assume the characteristics of greater variability and unpredictability. The methods and tools used to acquire information have impressively changed over time, and the main decisions and evaluations appear to be influenced much more by word of mouth or clicks within social networks, as expressions of the tourist experience (Coshall, 2009).

In such a scenario, the complexity of the decision-making process depends on a complex set of behavioural patterns (Decrop, 1999; Han *et al.*, 2009), alternatives (McCabe *et al.*, 2017) and interactions (Smallman and Moore, 2010) between demand (tourist) and offer (different players in the tourism industry), as well as depending on social, economic, political, technological and environmental factors (such as terroristic attacks, environmental disasters and political instability).

Within the evolution of the tourism sector (changes in demand), this paper analyses, both theoretically and empirically (through a panel of experts), the problem of the increasing amount of information for consumers, and the effect of the consequent complexity deriving from the sometimes excessive amount of faithful/unfaithful 'reviews' (including fake news-often used as a competitive weapon) on the behaviours of demand, as well as on the evolution of the offer side. In particular, the sector has been widely covered by digitalisation (now labelled as Industry 4.0) (Chiarini and Vagnoni, 2017), according to a process that has revolutionised the behavioural schemes of the demand side, and the value chain relationships of the offer side (De Nisco *et al.*, 2012; Napolitano and De Nisco, 2004). This has also changed the approaches to promoting tourist destinations.

This paper analyses the evolution of the tourism sector with a glimpse into the changes in the roles of the actors in the value chain, as well as in the business-to-consumer relationships. This paper presents a literature review on the topic to verify the existence of eventual gaps. As discussed in the next section, some of our questions have not yet been answered; thus, we used these as research questions. On this basis, we decided to test our critical analysis with experts/operators from the tourism sector, concentrating on the city of Naples. This first step has been pivotal before conducting a specific analysis of the demand.

2. Literature review

Nowadays, information and communications technology (ICT) is not only important for travel purchases, but also because of the influence of online information and reviews (Buhalis and Law, 2008) on the 'planning process, including pre-, during-, and post-trips' (Simeon *et al.*, 2017). This is the reason that the topic of 'informative syndrome' must be dealt with as an overlapping perspective between demand and supply. The word 'syndrome' derives from the ancient Greek term 'συνδρομή', which, in the medical field, refers to a set of symptoms occurring altogether, constituting a serious disorder. As a consequence, specialist doctors must analyse these symptoms to determine the appropriate therapy to alleviate them.

As in medicine, the 'informative syndrome' in the tourist decision-making process consists of a series of manifestations that are evidence of identifiable patterns and causes (e-word of mouse, word of mouth, terroristic attacks and environmental damages). Informative syndrome expresses an excess of factors that, in this case, are connected with the redundancy and sometimes excess of information available on the internet. This is the reason that tourist managers must understand and monitor this process to determine the correct strategies to promote and commercialise their destinations. Hence, the case of online reviews has changed the way people search for information (Fotis *et al.*, 2012; Pan and Fesenmaier, 2006) and has influenced effective choices and decisions to visit a destination.

Some studies have demonstrated that one-third of potential visitors use online opinions to obtain information about a destination (Gretzel and Yoo, 2008) because they assert that online reviews are the best informative

means to select a destination. More precisely, potential tourists use the online reviews of tourists that have already experienced the destination as the main source of information before making a final decision (Gretzel and Yoo, 2008). The growing complexity of tourists' choices and the process of purchase (how the decision-making process is developed) seriously influence the management of tourist destinations and tourist firms.

In regard to the critical points of the offer, the excessive weight placed on reviews, big data analysis and user profiling activity have generated excessive demand dependency (Fuchs *et al.*, 2014). This has required the development of different skills and expertise (such as analytics, information and technology managers). In this process of increasing chaos, redefinition of roles and repositioning, destination management plays a key role through its ability to build and transmit a destination image characterised by increasingly distinctive, unique, exclusive and emotional traits that are able to convey special and non-replicable experiences.

Tourist products that are intangible and difficult to evaluate before purchase (Casaló *et al.*, 2015; Della Corte, 2013) have generated new ways of exchanging information through travel communities, social networks and online travel agencies (Brunetti *et al.*, 2011). Meanwhile, the information and knowledge offered by tourists through ICT allow destination management organisations to better understand the strengths and weaknesses of their destinations (Kim *et al.*, 2007; Simeon *et al.*, 2017; Xiang and Gretzel, 2010).

In this scenario, in the supply chain, we can identify four main innovations in response to the evolution of demand (Li *et al.*, 2006; Wu *et al.*, 2012): more incisive presence on the web and social networks, differentiation of value proposals addressed to users, increase in people's mobility and lower prices.

The digital expansion has imposed an adequate 'web presence' (including the preparation of sites and participation in social networks) of destinations, hotel facilities and transport carriers to be able to offer the innovations required by demand and to share information with customers (Hays *et al.*, 2013; Mich, 2011; Mich *et al.*, 2003).

Web marketing has contributed to the development of demand in three directions. It has created the stimulus for connection with potential customers, built a relationship of trust with appropriate guarantees, and implemented both pull and push strategies to improve the quality of information (Rita, 2000). The result of web activities can be positive or negative in terms of brand image related to destinations, accommodation facilities and so forth. The above distinction appears to be particularly important because it enables the understanding of the possible unfavourable influences that social networks can have on the quality of information-either exalting false benefits or hiding the real benefits.

Continuing the examination, the second positive aspect in the evolution of the offer is represented by the increasing differentiation of products, with more personalised proposals (travel organisation even for small groups of travellers) as an answer to the increased segmentation of demand (Duman and Kozak, 2010). The differentiation of the offer favoured by the web has represented, and will represent in the future, a valid product

policy. However, the latter will be favoured by the creation of transversal networks resulting from stronger application of the brand extension policy (Brondoni, 2000).

The third positive aspect for tourism development is undoubtedly the progress made in both domestic and international mobility (Puar, 2002). The increase in air transport (especially point-to-point connections), the speed and convenience of railway connections and the strengthening of motorway networks have had very favourable influences on the accessibility of a growing number of destinations, and have contributed significantly to the development of both domestic and international tourism (Bieger and Wittemer, 2006).

The fourth main factor in the evolution of supply is linked to more a effective use of the price lever. This is in the case of differentiation of tariffs and the ability to offer cheaper quotes-albeit with minor ancillary services (the classic example is that of low-cost airfares)-and application of particularly discounted prices for very early bookings (Mangion *et al.*, 2005). In general, an overall foreign attention on the quality/price relationships of the provided services is required.

All these aspects have influenced firm-specific activities in the value chain, as well as their relative role.

3. Evolution of the tourism chain

Analysing the digital economy indicates that the overall effect of the 'disintermediation' process (Stamboulis and Skayannis, 2003) in the tourism value chain has seen a dramatic change. Figure 1 displays how strategic marketing activities have evolved during the last 20 years.

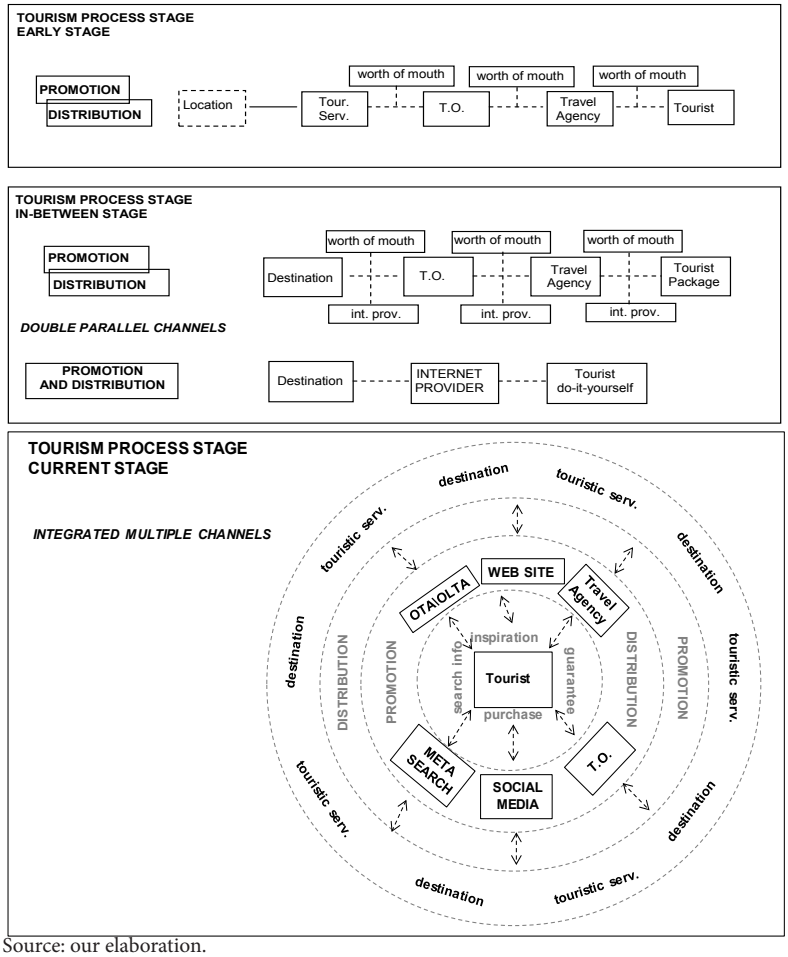
During the early-stage years of 1996 to 2000 in figure 1, there existed a classical scheme that began with the destination with all of its connected tourist services. This "productive" system then interacted with the distribution channels, made of tour operators (in this phase considered wholesalers) and travel agencies. In this model, the business-to-business relationships played a key role in meeting the customer.

The symbolic date of the early-stage framework is 1996, when the online travel agency started to appear (Expedia was born in 1996, while Priceline appeared in 1997) and online tickets began being used. Hence, on this date, tourists started to autonomously purchase the components of travel, which reinforced the increase of the 'do it yourself' ('DIY') tourist (Franch *et al.*, 2001). At this stage, the communication of tourist services was mainly managed by travel agents, despite the phenomenon of 'disinterested' word of mouth being present at all steps of the process.

During the in-between stage (2001 to 2006), the framework was more complex than in the previous stage, because distribution and communication started to be interrelated, and not only overlapping. In this stage, the first differentiation appeared in terms of tourists' typologies (DIY and dynamic packaging), which arose to create two parallel and coexisting channels of promotion and distribution. The tourist package followed a path that was very similar to the traditional process stage seen before, with the difference that it began using the internet to search information. The

DIY tourist instead used internet providers to research information and make purchases, thereby proposing an apparent overlap of the functions. Even more, the DIY tourist used the internet for both functions, yet not necessarily the same providers.

Fig. 1: Tourism process stages



Source: our elaboration.

Distribution and communication were characterised by the multi-channel strategy (Koo *et al.*, 2011). At the end of the in-between stage, destinations started to commercialise their offers through tour operators and destination management systems, and this phenomenon led to the definition of multiple integrated channels.

In regard to the current stage, from the offer side, the framework shows:

- A complete overlap between the communication and distribution process (Buhalis and O'Connor, 2005). In the past, even if some channels-such as TripAdvisor or Google-were only specialised in communication, they now also act as distribution channels, and vice versa (booking).

- The components of the real offer, such as the travel agencies, are addressed to a virtual offer, in the formula of dynamic packaging either proposed by tour operators (or online travel agiencies) or, in a broader sense and out of the real scheme of packaging, by airline companies' websites (Della Corte, 2013; Mich *et al.*, 2004).
- The offer has become more differentiated and huge. As aforementioned, some specific factors contribute to this variety: the progress of the means of transport, long-distance travel, low-cost strategies applied by many companies, some destinations becoming 'accessible' (Prideaux, 2000) even if the prices were high in the past, technology online opens to a wider market, since it can be reached by more targets on the demand side and used also by micro and small companies on the offer side.
- The sources of both information and distribution are shaped by a plurality of actors that can create confusion in the tourist's mind (Sigala, 2011; Urry, 2003). Nowadays, tourists are aware of the vastness of booking channels (Hadjikakou, 2013). Internet providers have also become a source of inspiration because they allow consumers to choose where to go, on the basis of travel costs.
- The overabundance of available information has determined the need for new human resources and schemes that can organise and systematise the existing information (Wöber, 2003).

From the demand side, the model highlights:

- The union between the type of package tourist and 'DIY' system. Previous existing differences are now less evident because they can be confused with each other until the stage of purchase (Luque-Martínez *et al.*, 2007). In both cases, tourists use information available on the internet to find inspiration and necessary information for their choice, and verify the information received on the internet by a tour agent- either real or online.
- The guarantee on one side (tour operators and online travel agencies) and the risk (Kozak *et al.*, 2007) on the other side (dynamic packaging displayed by airline companies and so forth).
- Tourists can gain direct access to a tourist product by using a destination management system that simultaneously promotes and gathers firms' proposals of commercialisation regarding the destination (Morgan *et al.*, 2007).

Today, the web offers an open logic, whereby tourists not only search for information and acquire travel tickets, but also find sources of inspiration and guarantee. However, they also often experience great difficulty in understanding which information is reliable, among the many information sources and information overload.

4. Why is there a problem of information 'syndrome'?

Considering the digital revolution, travellers now require a series of pieces of information on the destinations and services to select (Fuchs and Reichel, 2011). In particular, the focus on the destination, whose

promotion is mainly entrusted to public bodies, is often the first step in the decision-making process, since the destination must essentially represent the 'umbrella brand' for the entire trip (Pike, 2009).

Over the last 20 years, the search for information has become simpler, but more complex at the same time. The sources of information are much more numerous (internet, specialised magazines, surveys on countries to visit, daily press, sites to be consulted, television and film services). However, the negative consequence is the occurrence of a sort of informative syndrome for those who must make choices. The fundamental problem of research is not only collecting and processing the necessary data from various sources, but also knowing how to discern reliable data, thereby avoiding the risk of making choices based on poor information (Buhalis and Law, 2008). This involves a selection process that is neither simple nor quick.

Nowadays, the tourist, although benefiting from the use of digital tools, runs the risk of being submerged by data, news and facts (Livitin *et al.*, 2008). This phenomenon is considered an effect of two causes that are somewhat interdependent: the difficulty and variety of the factors on which to base knowledge because of the multiplication of information sources, and the lower reliability of some of these sources (Livitin *et al.*, 2008). The obviously negative consequence is that, to eliminate uncertainty and reduce risks, the tourist, while being able to take advantage of a broader range of information, must be able to evaluate factors of non-homogeneous quality. This is mainly because of the inclusion in the market of so-called 'influencers', who are able to guide and often condition demand. The judgements and so-called 'reviews' widely available in social networks are not always objective and can unfortunately weigh on the final choices of the consumer. The phenomenon is attributable mainly to people who are well-known on the web ('web stars') and can be exacerbated by the participation of organisations specialised in building partisan opinions that aim to propose offers that are not always for the benefit of tourists. Influencers spread 'social' content that can generate many interactions, through which, depending on their recognised reliability, they are able to influence their followers (Murphy *et al.*, 2018).

In relation to the quality of the information, the danger of manipulating the data made available to consumers is of substantial importance (Kimura *et al.*, 2007; Stieglitz and Dang-Xuan, 2013). The increasing weight of unofficial and semi-official spaces has contributed to reducing the aspect of trust creation because of the weight of judgements that are not always objective or may even be intentionally distorted (Karpovich, 2010). In this regard, with a seemingly risky parallel, the counterfeiting of products-a phenomenon that is widespread in the manufacturing industry-is moving or is likely to relocate with increasing importance in the field of tourism services through precisely 'constructed' information that is partially or totally different from reality (Murphy *et al.*, 2018).

Moreover, the strong competition and the difficulty for consumers to orient their choice of destination in the composite world of information have favoured the emergence of international operators that are indirect influencers of demand through specialised sites, including Booking.com, Trivago, TripAdvisor and Expedia. These sites provide information

mainly on accommodation and catering facilities, yet are capable of having a decisive influence on the choice of particular destinations or on the preference for trip duration and period (Hadjikakou, 2013). In practice, through the technique of 'reviews', customers can assign a rating to hospitality structures, which is translated successively into a Likert scale (usually from 1 to 10 or 1 to 5) and relative qualitative judgements (using adjectives such as 'fabulous', 'exceptional' and 'superlative').

In a study related to the behaviour of operators, it was difficult to estimate to what extent online information express autonomous and spontaneous judgements, and from which point they are constructed in an 'artificial' and misleading way by competitors or people that are not real clients.

The above discussion has indicated how tourists' behaviour is changing today, also in function of the profound changes in the sources and way of presenting information. If we recall the AIDA model (Della Corte, 2013; Della Corte and Sciarelli, 2005), a large role is played by both internet providers and means of transport. Social networks enable individuals to start word of mouth/mouse in real time. This generates a spontaneous process that is started and managed by the demand itself, mainly based on the concept of experiential marketing (Del Chiappa and Fortezza, 2017; Iaia *et al.*, 2014; Pencarelli and Forlani, 2002). Therefore, we decided to interview a panel of experts to verify how today's firms perceive the evolution of the tourism sector in the digital era, taking into account the current stage of development of the model and its main characteristics (overlap between the communication and distribution process, dynamic packaging in the broader meaning, destinations becoming more accessible, different sources of inspiration for information searching, disintermediation and so forth) to answer the following research questions:

RQ1: How do tourists search for destination information?

RQ2: What are the main changes on the offer side, and what are the roles of the involved actors?

RQ3: What are the sources of inspiration nowadays, and how easy is it for tourists to select and use them?

5. Methodology

To answer our research questions, we completed an experimental empirical analysis based on the method of a panel of experts (Lee *et al.*, 2010). This allowed verification of what the experts thought and perceived about the topic, and determined whether our critical observations and research questions had the right orientation towards a scientific study of the issue.

Acknowledging the need for applied expertise, the panel of experts was drawn by privileged testimonials, representatives of different tourism firms and specialists in both online and offline media (such as national and international representatives of the most important operators of tourist firms and airline companies). This methodology aligned well with the aim of the research, since the selected experts were knowledgeable about the

topic according to the overlapping vision between demand and offer. The expert panel was designed using the following categories: (1) tourism firms in the city of Naples, such as accommodation firms, tour operators and transportations firms; (2) managers involved in managing hotel chains and destinations; and (3) tourism sector associations with evidence of expertise in destination strategic management and marketing.

More precisely, the snowball sampling method was used, based on referrals from initial participants to generate other respondents. To secure participation, emails were sent between November and December 2017.

The experts were invited to participate via email through a letter written by the academic researchers. Two focus groups were organised. We studied the experts' opinions on the information contribution of online travel agencies (such as Booking.com, Trivago and social media) and online social travel networking (such as TripAdvisor), as well as on the informative syndrome, with specific reference to Naples as a tourist destination. The choice of a specific tourist destination was necessary to enable a unit of analysis on which to base the opinions, thereby rendering them more concrete and not too general.

Naples is the third-largest city in Italy after Rome and Milan, ranked by population. We chose Naples as the destination to examine for several reasons. First, it can be defined according to the six 'As' (Buhalis, 2000; Della Corte 2009; Della Corte and Aria, 2014, 2016) shaped by the following components: access, accommodation, amenities, attractions, ancillary services and assemblage. When all these factors coexist, the tourist destination can be conceived as an organised place that is able to attract tourist flows autonomously. In addition, the resources of the territory (local attractions, knowledge and culture) are able to attract tourists from all over the world. This city is experiencing interesting development in tourism (Table 1) in terms of increases in tourism flows, and has always been characterised by a rather contradictory image-as dangerous, chaotic and dirty, yet infinitely fascinating and wonderful for its cultural resources (Della Corte *et al.*, 2015).

Tab. 1: Tourist flows

Year	Arrivals	Overnights
2011	918,485	2,166,518
2012	892,896	2,292,213
2013	706,784	2,991,317
2014	720,349	2,891,104
2015	1,137,903	2,908,633
2016	1,238,214	3,292,057

Source: Ept, 2017

The data show a huge increase (+52%) of overnight stays from 2011 to 2016. There are no data available for the period 2016 to 2018, yet there has been a huge increase in airport flows and connections, in visitors to museums (between +10% and +15%) (MIBACT, 2016) and in hotels' rates of occupancy (constantly higher than 70%).

In recent years, the destination has known some positive experiences, such as advances in accessibility, a more widespread and positive image (both on television, in cinemas, in journals and in newspapers), a consistent increase in hospitality structures and subsequently in beds available (thereby hosting a higher number of tourist flows) and a more qualified professionality among the different firms in the sector. However, there remain serious and unresolved problems, such as the lack of a clear marketing strategy by local institutions, both offline and on the web, and lack of a local pivotal actor and business networks.

Recently, some lists of international rankings (such as in *The Telegraph and Business Insider*) declared that Naples is in the top five list of Italian destinations, stating that 'If Rome, Florence and Venice are world class, then Milan and Naples are not far behind: almost as rich culturally, and just as tempting in terms of eating, drinking and as springboards for other Italian destinations' (The Telegraph, 2018).

During recent years, 'much has been done recently to tidy up the center' (The Telegraph, 2018) and a series of strategic projects have been developed (such as DATABENC and URBACT). For example, the District of High Technology for Cultural Heritage (DATABENC) can be defined as an accelerator in creating an advanced cultural district to bridge the existing gaps in the strategic management approach of both the cultural and environmental heritage in its interconnections with the tourism industry. This district aims to use technology for the preservation and valorisation of the cultural heritage of the city of Naples. These projects have a socio-territorial value, characterised by an active pull of actors and firms. We conducted in-depth research on this topic, based on the variables illustrated in Table 2. The selection of these variables and their relative proxies originated from our review of the literature. Among the wide universe of the variables, the following variables summarise, according to an overlapping perspective between offer and demand, those representing the key issues in the digital era.

Tab. 2: Variables and proxies

Variable	Proxies
Information searching	- Existence of websites, social network pages and tourist communities for information search - Destination information on the internet - Influence of online information - Online prices of tourist products - Secure information about destinations
E-service quality	- Expected quality of online services pleases tourists - Online quality service meets tourists' needs and expectations - View of online clean environment attracts tourism - Reasonable cost of tourism product attracts tourists - Friendliness, politeness and respect for tourists
E-word of mouth	- Online messages to travellers about destination awareness - Effect of online messages from previous visitors to destination: the positive experience from previous travellers encourages other tourists to travel to the same destination; negative messages about the destination psychologically affect potential tourists
Tourist satisfaction	- Most tourists have a positive view about this destination - Most tourists have a negative view about this destination

Source: Adapted from Kotoua and Ilkan (2017)

The analysis was conducted on the basis of the most relevant sources deducted from the literature, as discussed in the first part of the paper.

6. Results and discussion

According to the panel of experts, Naples' promotion of tourist offers is still fragmented because there is no unique destination management system, but a variety of websites and social networks where tourists can obtain information during the pre-stage trip and the on-stage trip. Thus, the tourist image of Naples in terms of information is not coordinated.

The answers and reflections obtained through the panel of experts proceeded in the same direction, and the varied competences of the interviewed experts enriched and confirmed the complexity of this topic. According to some operators, tourists search information not only through local websites or social networks' fan page, but also through websites that deal with tourist information of Italy. For example, this is the case of visititaly.it-a website with connected social network pages with the function of being an Italian tourist guide. This website offers reservations and research for hotels, travel experiences, holidays in Italy, weather and maps. On this page, Naples, with its main attractors and experiences, has huge visibility.

Further, the experts highlighted the typical traits of Naples and its tourist products that can be defined as experiential (such as the Naples Vespa Tour, walking tour discovering the "esoteric version of the city of Naples"). These features make the search for information more oriented towards the experiences of living in the city, rather than the other components of the travel. This highlights the importance of websites such as viator.com, where tourists can book a special tour, or Booking.com and Airbnb to book accommodation. Hence, there are single online portals acting as '*dominus*' of this sector, where information is spread out through e-word of mouth and can both negatively and positively influence the purchase of a single service, rather than the destination itself.

According to the experts, destination information on the internet is only slightly useful because it is not centralised or connected to a booking engine. Further, the experts asserted that the existing reviews do not always represent the prevailing target. Therefore, Naples has a rather chaotic and disorganised online presence. Hence, destination information is not satisfying in terms of content. The lack of a systemic and coordinated offer generates a situation of chaos for information search, e-quality and e-word of mouth. Today, the management of tourist information is not the result of a strategic and coordinated process, but a spontaneous process without a clear strategic vision, and where some actors (such as accommodation providers-Booking.com and Airbnb) and some influencers (such as bloggers or social networks-Visit Naples, Napoli da Vivere and InfoTurismoNapoli) offer some information and subsequently guide the choice on the destination, also in function of the good relationship between quality and price that characterizes the Neapolitan offer system.

In addition, the viewed online information that has a strong influence on tourist purchases is connected with the food and beverage experience.

Tourists look for the best restaurants and pizzerias, as well as for the experience of street food.

The experts highlighted that sales are individual and not collective, and that further efforts are necessary to capitalise the sales of tourist products. With reference to the prices of tourism products online, the operators stressed that attention to the existence of price should be more concentrated on the single service, rather than on the existence of a dynamic package that combines the various components of the destination. Further, they asserted that one of the main strengths of the destination and its single services is the 'value for money' relationship, thereby confirming our previous observations regarding the role of internet providers in promoting Naples.

According to the experts, for the case of Naples, the informative syndrome must be strengthened during the induced level of marketing (pre-trip stage and purchase stage) and during the organic phase, through the actors that act as the best communicators and ambassadors of the destination (such as taxi drivers and transport firms). This would require specific training programs for these categories.

The panel of experts agreed on the role of Naples International Airport as the pivotal actor for promoting the city and for a series of initiatives to enhance the destination image. The lack of a destination management organisation and the contextual proactive capabilities of the airport's top managers have favoured the process of destination promotion by Naples International Airport. For example, the airport has implemented an innovative project called '#Naplestoday' to promote the city of Naples through digital channels (via storytelling, content and photographs disseminated on the internet) by national and international bloggers that describe Naples and its tourist products to reach a wider international public. Hence, the most influential bloggers around the world are able to promote Naples as a tourist destination. In the same direction, the panel of experts asserted that future promotion strategies must follow this approach.

In regard to the process of information searching and e-service quality and, more precisely, destination information on internet, the operators asserted that one of the most critical points is the prevalence of information in the Italian language, rather than in other languages. Basic information about historic and cultural attractions is presented in different languages, yet daily events, updated things to do and other initiatives are essentially presented in Italian. In regard to tourist satisfaction, the operators asserted that 90% of tourists have a positive view of this destination. The case of Naples shows that the experiences of previous travellers can both encourage other tourists to travel to the same destination, and negatively affect views of the destination. The positive experiences of previous travellers encourage other tourists to travel to the same destination when reviews describe the folklore of Naples and the real experiences of living in the destination. In contrast, Naples is still considered a dangerous city, and this information affects the views of potential tourists. In this regard, the experts asserted that is necessary to work on developing appropriate management of communication strategies.

Hence, the answer to RQ1-'How do tourists search for destination information?'-is connected with the fact that tourists search for information from local (single local firms and public websites), national (Italian websites and social networks) and international (bloggers and social media) sources. Tourists search for experiences, rather than single tourist products. However, they do not always find exhaustive and clear information because of an institutional lack of communication and promotion.

With reference to RQ2-'What are the main changes on the offer side, and what are the roles of the involved actors?'-both the theoretical part and case study analysis demonstrated that the advent of the internet and decrease of commercial mediation by classical intermediaries (tour operators and travel agencies) favour the big players. The analysis also showed that there is chaotic and sometimes confused information on the destination, which renders the decision process much more difficult for tourists, unless very highly motivated.

The panel of experts agreed on the necessity of stronger cooperation in this field, with the role of the Naples International Airport having the potential to be strengthened by an organised and validated process and structure. Further, different actors should coordinate their information strategies to avoid the fragmentation effects and the related asymmetric information between the demand and offer side. This also proves how the process is increasingly complex and full of actors that provide inputs of different types of information, and continuously interact with tourists and sometimes between themselves, as explained in our model.

With reference to RQ3-'What are sources of inspiration nowadays, and how easy is it for tourists to select and use them?'-as aforementioned, the panel of experts agreed that e-word of mouth is of paramount importance in the process of destination choice, even if, in the case of Naples, the current online reviews refer more to single services (such as hotels and restaurants), rather than the destination itself. In this direction, further efforts can be implemented to create a guided process promoted by the actors of the tourism offer. Hence, previous tourists' experiences influence the choice of a destination both positively and negatively. The positive effects can be observed in tourists' willingness to partake in an experiential tourist product, while the negative reviews lead to tourists choosing Naples as a city for daily tours, rather than to stay overnight. To cite an online example: 'the city still has an edge and bustle that can be challenging, especially in summer heat. As a result, you may want to come here on a day trip from nearby Sorrento, less than an hour by train, or from the island of Capri or the Amalfi Coast' (The Telegraph, 2018).

7. Limitations, conclusions and first hints for research and managerial agenda

This paper has discussed the changes occurring in tourism in the digital era, and the connected information syndrome issue. We performed an initial empirical test, which can be considered a first step of a wider research

project on the topic, connected with Industry 4.0 and internet of things (IOT) further developments. From this perspective, the tourism sector is very interesting because it began using the new ICT tools connected with social and web media marketing even before some manufacturing industries did. However, because of the fact that these tools are more open in their structure, there is a high risk, especially in services, of a redundancy of comments and a lack of trustful information that renders the decision process less clear and more uncertain. This aspect was analysed empirically with reference to a panel of experts, focusing the analysis on the field. For this reason, our findings cannot be generalised to the entire population of destinations. Nevertheless, this paper aimed to develop a 'state of art' within a precise context that can be used as a starting point to highlight the strengths and weaknesses of the current local offers in terms of tourist information management. This topic also requires analysis of the demand, which will be the object of further research.

The tourism business is changing profoundly in the era of globalisation and digitalisation. In spite of the critical times, of both economic and political nature, the responses given by both offer and demand have been appropriate, considering the actual context. In other words, although the risk factors and uncertainty during the tourist decision-making process have increased, the degree of professionalism and digital opportunities have been enlarged.

Fake news can express both a positive or negative judgement that does not coincide with reality. These reviews can be written to support a certain firm or destroy a brand's reputation (Cinman, 2008). The critical point of fake news can become greater and can be used as a competitive weapon, given the attention shown by tourists to so-called 'ratings'. Further, there is the need to apply "useful filters" for access to social networks and to the internet in general. If the problem of the abundance of information available in the digital age is added to the problem of the information's veracity, the concept of informative syndrome becomes better understood.

In regard to the demand side, the huge amount of information imposes a strict process of control on the authenticity and accuracy of informative elements. On the offer side, the tourist actors are trying to improve aspects of flexibility and guarantee for the customers (Xiang and Gretzel, 2010). The offer of flexibility (such as free cancellation or differentiation according to days and hours) can create wider stimuli for tourists. Further, the possibility of expanding the degree of flexibility is connected with large organisations that can exploit the power of the network.

The role of tour operators is lowering, competition is becoming increasingly aggressive and a few firms are leading the online market. This has caused travel agencies to almost disappear in the face of online travel agencies and internet providers, apart from specific niche initiatives. As aforementioned, the main players are airline companies (with airports) and internet providers. The increasing role and functions of posts, big data and target profile analyses run the risk of generating a backway process that has excessive dependence on demand and demand analyses (as confirmed by the increasing request for data analysts in firms) (Umachandran *et al.*, 2017). This paradoxically expresses a more adaptive approach in the face of

demand, as opposed to entrepreneurial Schumpeterian creativity to foster innovation.

Such facts support our deep concern regarding the informative syndrome. From a certain perspective, research can start examining the direct connections with the home destinations, and examining the destinations that are subsequently connected through a point-to point system.

With reference to the results of this research, which deserve to be further tested, in our opinion, the central focus provided by both the theoretical and empirical parts is the opportunity or need (given the significance of competition in a sector that is destined to become increasingly important) to establish a guaranteed authority in the tourism sector at the European level and international level. The correctness and reliability of information is an essential factor in this era, where the economy is oriented in the direction of effectiveness and transparency, and European legislators cannot ignore this "state of art". The quality of information and professionalism are of fundamental importance in a sector characterised by dynamism and turbulence.

In this chaos, a question arises about the future role of destination management (Della Corte and Sciarelli, 2012; Martini, 2005) and what its effect will be on city destinations. The capacity to build and communicate a destination image is increasingly characterised by distinctive, unique and exclusive emotional traits that generate specific experiences that cannot be duplicated or substituted. These aspects, combined with the cultural and individual socio-demographic factors previously outlined, can help make tourist destinations less vulnerable to abrupt changes in demand, as well as in facing crisis situations promptly. In other words, competition is mainly based on local systems of tourist offers (Della Corte, 2000) and on its capacity to be able to generate sustainable competitive advantage, through the experience that the demand itself communicates through its hints that we may be returning to genuineness and substance.

References

ASCHAUER W. (2009), "International Colloquium of Tourism and Leisure 5.-8. Mai 2008 in Chiang Mai", *Zeitschrift für Tourismuswissenschaft,* vol. 1, n. 1, pp. 101-103.

BARNEY J. (1991), "Firm resources and sustained competitive advantage", *Journal of management*, vol. 17, n. 1, pp. 99-120.

BIEGER T., WITTMER A. (2006), "Air transport and tourism-Perspectives and challenges for destinations, airlines and governments", *Journal of Air Transport Management,* vol. 12, n. 1, pp. 40-46.

BRONDONI S.M. (2000), *Patrimonio di marca e gestione d'impresa, Symphonya. Emerging Issues in Management,* Giappichelli, Torino.

BRUNETTI F., TESTA F., UGOLINI M. (2011), "Il cliente nell'agenzia viaggi", *Sinergie*, n. 66, pp. 181-211.

BUHALIS D. (2000), "Marketing the competitive destination of the future", *Tourism Management*, vol. 21, n. 1, pp. 97-116.

BUHALIS D., LAW R. (2008), "Progress in information technology and tourism management: 20 years on and 10 years after the Internet-The state of eTourism research", *Tourism management*, vol. 29, n. 4, pp. 609-623.

BUHALIS D., O'CONNOR P. (2005), "Information communication technology revolutionizing tourism", *Tourism recreation research*, vol. 30, n. 3, pp. 7-16.

CASALÓ L.V., FLAVIÁN C., GUINALÍU M., EKINCI Y. (2015), "Avoiding the dark side of positive online consumer reviews: Enhancing reviews' usefulness for high risk-averse travelers", *Journal of Business Research,* vol. 68, n. 9, pp. 1829-1835.

CHIARINI A., VAGNONI E. (2017), "Strategic management of industry 4.0. An exploratory research", *Atti del convegno Sinergie-Sima 2017 – Value Co-Creation: management challenges for business and society,* pp. 220-224.

CINMAN J. (2008), "Tough to manage reputations in a digital world: online", *Journal of Marketing,* vol. 2008, n. Jun/Jul 2008, p. 42.

COSHALL J.T. (2009), "Combining volatility and smoothing forecasts of UK demand for international tourism", *Tourism Management*, vol. 30, n. 4, pp. 495-511.

CROTTS J.C., ERDMANN R. (2000), "Does national culture influence consumers' evaluation of travel services? A test of Hofstede's model of cross-cultural differences", *Managing Service Quality: An International Journal,* vol. 10, n. 6, pp. 410-419.

DE NISCO A., MAINOLFI G., MARINO V., NAPOLITANO M.R. (2012), "Tourism experience, country image and postvisit intentions: a study on international tourists in Italy", *International Marketing and the Country of Origin Effect. The Global Impact of Made in Italy*, Edward Elgar Publishing, Cheltenham, pp. 65-80.

DECROP A. (1999), *Tourists' decision-making and behavior processes,* The Haworth press, New York.

DEL CHIAPPA G., FORTEZZA F. (2017), "Analisi delle motivazioni alla base del turismo matrimoniale: un'indagine esplorativa", *Sinergie Italian Journal of Management*, vol. 34, n. 101, pp. 141-157.

DELLA CORTE V. (2000), *La gestione dei sistemi locali di offerta turistica*, Cedam, Padova.

DELLA CORTE V. (2009), *Imprese e Sistemi Turistici. Il management,* Egea, Milano.

DELLA CORTE V. (2013), *Imprese e Sistemi Turistici. Il management*, II Edizione, Egea, Milano.

DELLA CORTE V., ARIA M. (2014), "Why strategic networks often fail: Some empirical evidence from the area of Naples", *Journal of Tourism Management*, vol. 45 , pp. 3-15.

DELLA CORTE V., ARIA M. (2016), "Coopetition and sustainable competitive advantage. The case of tourist destination", *Journal of Tourism Management,* vol. 54 , pp. 524-540.

DELLA CORTE V., SCIARELLI M. (2012), *Destination management e logica sistemica. Un confronto internazionale*, Giappichelli, Torino.

DELLA CORTE V., SCIARELLI M., CASCELLA C., DEL GAUDIO G. (2015), "Customer satisfaction in tourist destination: The case of tourism offer in the city of Naples", *Journal of Investment and Management,* vol. 4, n. 1-1, pp. 39-50.

DOLNICAR S. (2005), "Understanding barriers to leisure travel: Tourist fears as a marketing basis", *Journal of Vacation Marketing*, vol. 1.1, n. 3, pp. 197-208.

DRAKOS K., KUTAN A.M. (2003), "Regional effects of terrorism on tourism in three Mediterranean countries", *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, vol. 47, n. 5, pp. 621-641.

DUMAN T., KOZAK M. (2010), "The Turkish tourism product: Differentiation and competitiveness", *Anatolia*, vol. 21, n. 1, pp. 89-106.

FOTIS J., BUHALIS D., ROSSIDES N. (2012), "Social media use and impact during the holiday travel planning process", in Fuchs M., Ricci F., Cantoni, L., eds. *Information and Communication Technologies in Tourism,* Springer-Verlag, Vienna, Austria, 13-24.

FRANCH M., MICH L., MARTINI U. (2001), "A method for the classification of relationships and information needs of tourist destination players", in *Information and Communication Technologies in Tourism 2001*. Proceedings of the International Conference in Montreal, Canada, 2001. Eds. Sheldon P.J., Woeber K.W., Fesenmaier D.R., Vienna: Springer, 2001, p. 42-51. Proceedings of: ENTER 2001, Montreal (Canada), 24 -27 April 2001.

FUCHS G., REICHEL A. (2011), "An exploratory inquiry into destination risk perceptions and risk reduction strategies of first time vs. repeat visitors to a highly volatile destination", *Tourism Management*, vol. 32, n. 2, pp. 266-276.

FUCHS M., HÖPKEN W., LEXHAGEN M. (2014), "Big data analytics for knowledge generation in tourism destinations-A case from Sweden", *Journal of Destination Marketing & Management,* vol. 3, n. 4, pp. 198-209.

GRETZEL U., YOO K.H. (2008), "Use and impact of online travel reviews", in *Information and communication technologies in tourism 2008*, Springer-Verlag, Vienna, Austria pp. 35-46.

GUTMAN Y (2009), "Where do we go from here: The pasts, presents and futures of Ground Zero", *Memory Studies,* vol. 2, n. 1, pp. 55-70.

HADJIKAKOU M., CHENOWETH J., MILLER, G. (2013), "Estimating the direct and indirect water use of tourism in the eastern Mediterranean", *Journal of Environmental Management,* vol.1, n. 14, pp. 548-556.

HAN H., HSU L. T. J., LEE, J. S. (2009), "Empirical investigation of the roles of attitudes toward green behaviors, overall image, gender, and age in hotel customers' eco-friendly decision-making process", *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, vol. 28, n. 4, pp. 519-528.

HAYS S., PAGE S. J., BUHALIS D. (2013), "Social media as a destination marketing tool: its use by national tourism organisations", *Current issues in Tourism*, vol. 16, n. 3, pp. 211-239.

IAIA L., FAIT M., CAVALLO F., SCORRANO P., MAIZZA A. (2014), "Experiential marketing per il brand-land dei prodotti tipici: diventare marchio comunicando il territorio", *Atti del XXVI Convegno annuale di Sinergie 2014 - Manifattura: quale futuro?,* Università di Cassino e Lazio Meridionale, 13th-14th November 2014.

KARPOVICH A.I. (2010), "Theoretical approaches to film-motivated tourism", *Tourism and Hospitality Planning & Development,* vol. 7, n. 1, pp. 7-20.

KIM S.S., WONG K.K., CHO M. (2007), "Assessing the economic value of a world heritage site and willingness-to-pay determinants: A case of Changdeok Palace", *Tourism Management*, vol. 28, n. 1, pp. 317-322.

KIMURA M., SAITO K., NAKANO R. (2007), "Extracting influential nodes for information diffusion on a social network", *AAAI*, vol. 7 , pp. 1371-1376.

KOO B., MANTIN B., O'CONNOR P. (2011), "Online distribution of airline tickets: Should airlines adopt a single or a multi-channel approach?", *Tourism Management,* vol. 32, n. 1, pp. 69-74.

KOTOUA S., ILKAN M. (2017), "Tourism destination marketing and information technology in Ghana", *Journal of Destination Marketing & Management*, vol. 6, n. 2, pp. 127-135.

KOZAK M., CROTTS J.C., LAW R., "The Impact of the Perception of Risk on International Travellers", *International Journal of Tourism Research,* vol. 9, n. 4, July 2007, pp. 233 - 242

UMACHANDRAN K., FERDINAND D.S., JURČIĆ I., DELLA CORTE V. (2017), "e-commerce: A Social Engagement Tool", *OSR Journal of Economics and Finance (IOSR-JEF),* vol. 8, n. 5, pp. 60-64.

LARSEN S., WOLFF K. (2016), "Exploring assumptions about cruise tourists' visits to ports", *Tourism Management Perspectives*, vol. 17, January 2016, pp. 44-49.

LEE C.F., HUANG H.I., YEH H.R. (2010), "Developing an evaluation model for destination attractiveness: Sustainable forest recreation tourism in Taiwan", *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, vol. 18, n. 6, pp. 811-828.

LI G., WONG K.K., SONG H., WITT S.F. (2006), "Tourism demand forecasting: A time varying parameter error correction model", *Journal of Travel Research,* vol. 45, n. 2, pp. 175-185.

LITVIN S.W., GOLDSMITH R. E., PAN B. (2008), "Electronic word-of-mouth in hospitality and tourism management", *Tourism Management,* vol. 29 n. 3, pp. 458-468.

LUQUE-MARTÍNEZ T., ALBERTO CASTAÑEDA-GARCÍA J., FRÍAS-JAMILEN D.M., MUÑOZ-LEIVA F., RODRÍGUEZ-MOLINA M.A. (2007), "Determinants of the use of the internet as a tourist information source", *The Service Industries Journal,* vol. 27, n. 7, pp. 881-891.

MANGION M.L., DURBARRY R., SINCLAIR M.T. (2005), "Tourism competitiveness: price and quality", *Tourism Economics*, vol. 1, n. 1, pp. 45-68.

MARTINI U. (2005), *Management dei sistemi territoriali. Gestione e marketing delle destinazioni turistiche*, Giappichelli, Torino.

MCCABE S., LI X.R. (2017), "Digging deeper into decision-making of Chinese long-haul outbound tourists: A two-stage preference-estimation approach", *Journal of Destination Marketing & Management,* vol. 6, n. 3, pp. 267-275.

MICH L. (2011) "La web presence delle destinazioni turistiche. Facebook in Tourism", *eBook*, FrancoAngeli, Milano.

MICH L., FRANCH M., GAIO L. (2003), "Evaluating and designing web site quality", *IEEE MultiMedia*, vol. 10, n. 1, pp. 34-43.

MICH, L., FRANCH, M., MARZANI, P. (2004), "Guidelines for excellence in the web sites of tourist destinations: A study of the regional tourist boards in the Alp", *IADIS International Conference e-Society*.

MICHOPOULOU E., BUHALIS D. (2008), "Performance measures of net-enabled hypercompetitive industries: The case of tourism", *International Journal of Information Management*, vol. 28, n. 3, pp. 168-180.

MORAKABATI Y., KAPUŚCIŃSKI G. (2016), "Personality, risk perception, benefit sought and terrorism effect", *International Journal of Tourism Research,* vol. 18, n. 5, pp. 506-514.

MORGAN N., PRITCHARD A., PRIDE R. (2007), *Destination branding*, Routledge, UK.

MURPHY J., GRETZEL U., PESONEN J., ELORINNE A. L., SILVENNOINEN, K. (2018), "Household Food Waste, Tourism and Social Media: A Research Agenda", in *Information and Communication Technologies in Tourism*, January 2018, Springer, Cham, pp. 228-239.

NAPOLITANO M.R., DE NISCO A. (2004), "Vantaggio competitivo territoriale e configurazioni distrettuali nel turismo. Il ruolo e le potenzialità del cluster", G. Marotta (a cura di). *Nuovi turismi e politiche di gestione nella destinazione. Situazione e prospettive per le aree rurali della Campania,* Franco Angeli, Milano.

PAN B., FESENMAIER D.R. (2006), "Online information search: vacation planning process", *Annals of Tourism Research,* vol. 33, n. 3, pp. 809-832.

PENCARELLI T., FORLANI F. (2011), "Il marketing dei distretti turistici-sistemi vitali nell'economia delle esperienze", *Sinergie*, n. 58, pp. 231-277

PIKE S. (2009), "Destination brand positions of a competitive set of near-home destinations", *Tourism management*, vol. 30, n. 6, pp. 857-866.

PIZAM A., REICHEL A. (1996), "The effect of nationality on tourist behavior: Israeli tour-guides' perceptions", *Journal of Hospitality and Leisure Marketing*, vol. 4, n. 1, pp. 23-49.

PRIDEAUX B. (2000), "The role of the transport system in destination development", *Tourism management,* vol. 21, n. 1, pp. 53-63.

PUAR J. K. (2002), "Circuits of queer mobility: Tourism, travel, and globalization", *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies*, vol. 8, n. 1, pp. 101-137.

REISINGER Y., MAVONDO F. (2005), "Travel anxiety and intentions to travel internationally: Implications of travel risk perception", *Journal of Travel Research,* vol. 43, n. 3, pp. 212-225.

RITA P. (2000), "Tourism in the European Union", *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, vol. 12, n. 7, pp. 434-436.

ROEHL W.S., FESENMAIER D.R. (1992), "Risk perceptions and pleasure travel: An exploratory analysis", *Journal of Travel research,* vol. 30, n. 4, pp. 17-26.

SCIARELLI S., DELLA CORTE V. (2011), "Il comportamento del turista in condizioni di forte incertezza decisionale", *Sinergie*, n. 66, pp-137-152.

SIGALA M. (2011), "eCRM 2.0 applications and trends: The use and perceptions of Greek tourism firms of social networks and intelligence", *Computers in Human Behavior,* vol. 27, n. 2, pp. 655-661.

SIMEON M.I., BUONINCONTRI P., CINQUEGRANI F., MARTONE A. (2017), "Exploring tourists' cultural experiences in Naples through online reviews", *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Technology*, vol. 8, n. 2, pp. 220-238.

SIMPSON P.M., SIGUAW J.A. (2008), "Destination word of mouth: The role of traveler type, residents, and identity salience", *Journal of Travel Research*, vol. 47, n. 2, pp. 167-182.

SMALLMAN C., MOORE K. (2010), "Process studies of tourists'decision-making", *Annals of tourism research*, vol. 37, n. 2, pp. 397-422.

SÖNMEZ S.F., GRAEFE A.R. (1998), "Determining future travel behavior from past travel experience and perceptions of risk and safety", *Journal of Travel Research,* vol. 37, n. 2, pp. 171-177.

STAKE R.E. (2013), Multiple case study analysis, Guilford Press, New York. STAMBOULIS Y., SKAYANNIS P. (2003), "Innovation strategies and technology for experience-based tourism", *Tourism Management,* vol. 24, n. 1, pp. 35-43.

STIEGLITZ S., DANG-XUAN L. (2013), "Emotions and information diffusion in social media-sentiment of microblogs and sharing behavior", *Journal of Management Information Systems*, vol. 29, n. 4, pp. 217-248.

UMACHANDRAN K., FERDINAND D.S., JURČIĆ I., DELLA CORTE V. (2017), "e-commerce: A Social Engagement Tool", *IOSR Journal of Economics and Finance*, vol. 8, n. 5, pp. 60-64.

URRY J. (2003), "Social networks, travel and talk1", *The British Journal of Sociology*, vol. 54, n. 2, pp. 155-175.

WEI Y.W. (2013), "Exploring the Cultural Heritage Landscape in Web 3.0 Era Tourism", Doctoral dissertation, Politecnico di Torino.

WÖBER K.W. (2003), "Information supply in tourism management by marketing decision support systems", *Tourism Management,* vol. 24, n. 3, pp. 241-255.

WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION (2016), "The economic impact of travel & tourism", *World Trade Organization, World Travel & Tourism Council*, London, UK.

WU D.C., LI G., SONG H. (2012), "Economic analysis of tourism consumption dynamics: A time-varying parameter demand system approach", *Annals of Tourism Research*, vol. 39, n. 2, pp. 667-685.

XIANG Z., GRETZEL U. (2010), "Role of social media in online travel information search", *Tourism Management*, vol. 31, n. 2, pp. 179-188.

YANG E.C.L., SHARIF S.P., KHOO-LATTIMORE C. (2015), "Tourists' risk perception of risky destinations: The case of Sabah's eastern coast", *Tourism and Hospitality Research*, vol. 15, n. 33, pp 206-221.

Academic or professional position and contacts

Fabiana Sciarelli
Researcher and Adjunct Professor of Management
"L'Orientale" University of Naples - Italy
e-mail: fsciarelli@unior.it

Valentina Della Corte
Associate Professor of Management
University of Naples Federico II - Italy
e-mail: valentina.dellacorte@unina.it

Giovanna del Gaudio
Phd in Tourism Management
University of Naples Federico II - Italy
e-mail: giovanna.delgaudio@unina.it

sinergie
italian journal of management

ISSN 0393-5108
DOI 10.7433/s105.2018.09
pp. 179-199

FONDAZIONE CUEIM

Sinergie Italian Journal of Management

Useful information for readers and authors

Aims and scope

Sinergie, Italian Journal of Management (*formerly Sinergie, rivista di studi e ricerche*) is a peer-reviewed scholarly publication focusing on the principal trends in management, corporate governance and sustainable development.

Mission

- To build a bridge between business and society, and to bring the Italian management perspective to the international debate on business enterprise and its role in society.

Values

- Rigor in selecting the studies and papers submitted to the Journal.
- Innovation in research pathways and in service to readers.
- Consideration of 'voices' from the scientific community.
- Openness to all researchers-particularly young researchers.
- Internationalisation of relations with foreign researchers and journals edited in foreign countries.
- Simplicity, in the sense of valuing carefully crafted results and paying attention to interpersonal relationships.
- Respect for the thoughts of authors, staff and the audience.

Vision

- Connections between research, thought and managerial action are the foundation premises on which to build a future based on the common good.

Editorial policies

- The Journal is interested in papers with future scenarios/visions that contribute to Sinergie's mission to be a review that is oriented towards the future of business and management.
- The Journal has a generalist positioning, meaning that it intends to cover various management and corporate governance topics, including strategy, marketing, human resources and finance, without limiting itself to company functions or business sector boundaries that are too specialised.
- The Journal aims to promote both empirical and conceptual contributions that are not merely descriptive and/or quantitative in nature. Sinergie aims to balance relevance with rigor and encourages interpretation, critical discussion and reasoning with respect to the measurement of more or less significant phenomena.

Sinergie's publisher, Fondazione CUEIM, contributes to developing management knowledge by publishing additional editorial lines (with ISSN or ISBN):

- Sinergie Rapporti di ricerca, a printed publication dedicated to disseminating the results of relevant empirical research carried

out by CUEIM (Consorzio Universitario di Economia Industriale e Manageriale) and other research organisations.
- Sinergie Quaderni, a printed series of papers that collects contributions on a variety of topics related to business governance issues.
- Sinergie Management Research, an online publication for research reports (the research editor has to provide evidence of the review process).
- Sinergie Referred Electronic Conference Proceedings, which gathers the contributions presented during the annual Sinergie Conference or other conferences patronised by the Journal. In both cases, published papers are submitted to blind peer review.

SINERGIE
Address: Via Interrato dell'Acqua Morta, 26
37129 Verona, Italy
Tel. +39 045 597655; Fax +39 045 597550
E-mail: redazione@sinergieweb.it
Website: www.sinergiejournal.it

Peer review procedures

Sinergie is a double-blind reviewed journal. Each paper is submitted for evaluation by two anonymous independent reviewers, who are academics chosen among experts of the topic.

Editorials and explicitly indicated invited contributions are not subjected to peer review.

The peer-review process can lead to:
- acceptance of the paper as it is
- acceptance with minor proposals for improvements
- acceptance subject to substantial modifications
- rejection.

In the second and third cases, the paper will be sent back to the author/s, who has/have to return the paper within a specified timeframe after it has been revised on the basis of the reviewers' comments.

An annual meeting of the Sinergie panel of Appointed Reviewers is organised during the annual Sinergie Conference. The aim of the meeting is to improve the peer-reviewing process.

Guidance by editors in chief, guest editors and blind referees results in a 'training ground for young researchers', which was declared as Sinergie's mission by its founder, Giovanni Panati.

Reviewers apply the following criteria when assessing single papers:
1. correctness of the methodological approach
2. significance of the bibliographical base
3. clarity of exposition
4. originality/innovation
5. relevance from theoretical and empirical standpoints, and managerial implications.

Sinergie Italian Journal of Management is accredited by AIDEA (Accademia Italiana di Economia Aziendale) Italian Academy of Business Economics.

Publishing ethics

Authors who submit articles to Sinergie agree to the following terms.

The article has not previously been published in its current or a substantially similar form, and it is not under consideration with another journal. Sinergie requires all authors to submit original content. If authors have used the work and/or words of others, it must be appropriately cited or quoted. Redundant publication is only acceptable if it leads to different or new conclusions, or if it contains comparisons with new data. In all cases, it is important to reference the previously published work and ensure that the scope of the paper and its conclusions differ from the previous research. If the repetition has not been sufficiently highlighted, then a note of clarification may be required.

The article must not contain any unlawful statements and must not infringe any existing copyright. Authors must include the necessary permission of copyright released with the tacit/explicit assent of the authorities responsible in the place in which the article has been published. Such permission is necessary to reproduce in the article, in all media and in all countries any included materials, tables and figures that are not owned.

All authors will receive a final version of the article, take responsibility for the content, agree to its publication, the order of the authors listed on the paper and the allocation of paragraphs. In multi-authored papers, it is important that all authors who have made a significant contribution to the paper are listed. Those who have provided support but have not contributed to the research should be acknowledged on the first page of the article.

All authors, editors and reviewers have to declare any potential conflicts of interest in the research. In particular, conflicts of interest include: a) a financial or personal interest in the outcomes of the study; b) undisclosed financial support for the research by an interested third party; c) a financial or personal interest in the suppression of the research. A note that highlights the financial support received from third parties for the research, or any other possible conflicts of interest, must be included prior to review and published on the first page of the article.

All authors must read and adhere to the Journal's author guidelines.

Most importantly, ethical misconduct includes plagiarism, redundant publication (dual publication or self-plagiarism) and conflicts of interest.

Submission procedure and editorial rules

Authors who want to submit a paper to the Journal should comply with the submission procedures and the Authors' Guidelines, which are presented on the Journal's website.

Sinergie only publishes original work; therefore, submitted papers must not have previously been published in a refereed journal in its current or a substantially similar form, and it must not be currently under consideration for publication in another refereed journal (any explanation on the matter must be provided to the Editor in the accompanying e-mail).

Editors cannot provide any excerpts of the paper. Authors may download the PDF file of their paper's final layout from the Journal's website.

Authors are required to express their consent to the publication of their disclosed e-mail addresses, as stated by Italian Law D.Lgs. 196 of 30 June 2003. They must also commit themselves to respect the Journal's publishing ethics.

Authors may submit papers in English or Italian by sending the paper directly to the Publisher Secretary (redazione@sinergieweb.it).

The submission procedure requires authors to provide:

Two separate files, which are created using Microsoft Word for Windows:

- The first file should be called 'IA', and it should only include the title of the paper, information about the authors (qualifications, scientific sector, e-mail addresses and corresponding author's mobile phone number, which will be reserved for internal use), possible allocation of paragraphs, acknowledgements and references to research projects that led to the drafting of the paper.
- The second file should be called 'FP'. It must not contain any details regarding the author(s), or any information that could be traced back to the author(s) (e.g., acknowledgements and similar expressions).

Title
No longer than 125 characters (spaces included).

Abstract
No longer than 250 words. The Abstract must be structured according to the following layout: purpose of the paper, methodology, results, research limitations, practical implications and originality of the study.

Keywords
A minimum of three and a maximum of six keywords must be included to identify the framework of the study's main topic.

Length
The paper should not exceed 7.000 words, including charts, figures, tables, footnotes and references.

Text style
The body of the text and of the notes must be justified.
Italics may be used to emphasise certain parts of the text, and for English words that are not commonly used. Neither boldface (except in paragraph titles) nor underlining should be used.

Text graphic rules
Citations must be indicated by double quotation marks ("…") followed by the cited author's surname, year of publication, and page number(s) (e.g., Panati, 1981, 48–53). The author is responsible for referencing citations in the bibliography, which means that all citations in the text must correspond to their relative final bibliographical references before the file is uploaded. Citations that are not indicated in final references will be removed from the text. Footnotes are only to be used for comments, in-depth examinations and further remarks, and not as bibliographical references.

Tables and figures
Any tables and figures included in the paper must be numbered in progressive order, have a title (above the table/figure) and source (under the table/figure), be black and white (or grey if necessary), and be inserted in the Word document in the most appropriate position.
Tables, figures and graph files must be uploaded in their original format. Word (.doc or .docx), Excel (.xls) and PowerPoint (.ppt) files are accepted. Image formats that are not accepted include .png, .gif, .jpeg, .bmp and .pdf.

References and Internet websites
References must be placed at the end of the text. They should be listed in alphabetical order and, for authors with multiple references, ordered chronologically. References must follow these rules:

Books
GOLINELLI G.M. (2010), *Viable systems approach (VSA). Governing Business Dynamics*, Cedam, Wolters Kluwer, Padova.

Articles
BACCARANI C., GOLINELLI G.M. (2008), "The enterpreneur and the frontiers of complexity", *Sinergie*, n. 75, pp. V-X.

Book chapters
VARALDO R. (1987), "The internationalization of small and medium-sized italian manufacturing firms", in Rosson P., Reid S., (edited by), *Managing export entry and expansion: concepts and practice,* Praeger, New York.

Internet websites
Websites should be mentioned separately below the references.
http://www.cueim.it
http://www.univr.it

For papers being submitted in Italian, authors are required to provide:

- A title in Italian and in English of no more than 125 characters each (spaces included)
- An abstract in Italian and in English of no more than 250 words each. Both abstracts must be structured according to the following layout:
  (Italian abstract)
  - obiettivo del paper
  - metodologia
  - risultati
  - limiti della ricerca
  - implicazioni pratiche
  - originalità del lavoro

  (English abstract)
  - purpose of the paper
  - methodology
  - results
  - research limitations
  - practical implications
  - originality of the study.
- A minimum of three and a maximum of six keywords-in both Italian and English-that identify the framework of the study's main topic.

Subscription

2018 subscription fees

Italy		
- standard fee	€	200, 00
- researchers	€	150, 00
- students and PhD students	€	80, 00
- supporters	€	1.000, 00
- libraries	€	80, 00
- book shops	€	100, 00
Abroad		
- standard fee	€	240, 00

Subscription to the quarterly Sinergie is on an annual basis, starting from January of each year. It includes three issues of the journal and an additional issue (Rapporti di Ricerca or Quaderni di Sinergie). A supporter subscription entitles the subscriber to receive five copies of each issue and special visibility in the journal.

Each subscription is due for renewal by the end of April to guarantee subscribers a regular mailing of the publications. Late subscribers are entitled to receive back issues, which are sent at the end of the year.

Completion of the subscription procedure (subscription and payment offee + 22% VAT) within may 15th 2018 entitles the subscriber to attend the Sinergie-Sima 2018 Conference free of charge. This promotion is restricted to standard fees, researchers, students, Phd students and supporters. It is not available through libraries or bookshop.
A supporter subscription allows three people to attend the annual Sinergie Conference free of charge. More details may be found on the conference website.

To subscribe, complete the subscription form at:
www.sinergiejournal.it → Journal → Subscribe to Sinergie

Subscribers may pay for their subscription via:
- Paypal/prepaid credit card
- Bank transfer to the following account: Cueim Comunicazione Srl at BNL, Banking Agency Piazza delle Erbe, 19 Verona (Italy)—IBAN IT 75 E 01005 11700 000000000467—BIC/SWIFT CODE BNL2ITRR. In addition to personal identification data, please specify the reason for payment (Name Surname + Sub. Sinergie 2016).

To buy issues of Sinergie, visit the bookshop section at:
www.sinergiejournal.it → Bookshop

sinergie
italian journal of management

For more information, and to request back issues of the Journal, contact:

Administration, subscription and advertising
Annalisa Andriolo
Via Interrato dell'Acqua Morta, 26
37129 Verona
Tel. (+39) 045 597655; Fax 045 597550
Email: *amministrazione@sinergieweb.it*

Upon receiving the subscription request and payment, the administration office will issue the related note to the subscriber.

For subscriptions by public institutions, submission payments must be made only after the note has been issued. In this case, the number of the note and the name and surname of the subscriber must be indicated in the reason of payment.

Forthcoming issues:

Value co-creation:
le sfide di management per le imprese e per la società

I saggi di Sinergie

Transformative business strategies
and new patterns for value creation

Responsible Editor
Gaetano M. Golinelli

Registered with Law Court of Verona, Italy, reg. no. 570, 1 April 1983

500 copies printed by

GRAFICHE BAIETTA -Via Carcirago, 14, 37022 Fumane (VR) Italy - Tel. 045 770 2088
April 2018

€ 66, 00