**FONDAZIONE CUEIM**

## Services in evolution

# Aphorisms

1. *The man who asks a question is a fool for a minute, the man who does not ask is a fool for life.*
   *(Confucius)*

2. *Turtles can tell more about the roads than hares.*
   *(Kahlil Gibran)*

3. *Instead of complaining that the rose bush is full of thorns, be happy the thorn bush has roses.*
   *(Chinese proverb)*

4. *Real generosity toward the future lies in giving all to the present.*
   *(Albert Camus)*

5. *...and each day that passes is a painting that I hang*
   *(A. Bono)*

# Papers from 19<sup>th</sup> Toulon-Verona Conference

# Papers from 19th Toulon-Verona Conference

# Who empowers whom?
# The role of organizational health literacy in empowering patients[1]

Carmela Annarumma - Rocco Palumbo - Mauro Cavallone

## Abstract

**Purpose of the paper**: *This paper aims to explore the organizational health literacy of pharmacies, which are believed to perform as critical patient navigators in the health care arena. Organizational health literacy is understood as the ability of health care organizations to establish clear and comfortable relationships with their patients, involving them in a co-creating partnership.*

**Methodology**: *A comparative research design was arranged. Two convenience samples of pharmacies operating in two regional sub-systems of the Italian National Health Service (INHS) were built. Sixty units of analysis were included in the study; their organizational health literacy was examined in absolute and comparative terms.*

**Results**: *The units of analysis were aware of their role in enabling patients, but they did not conceive organizational health literacy as being either a strategic or a managerial tool to enhance their ability to empower patients and engage them in value co-creation.*

**Research limitations**: *Since the research concerned two convenience, non-representative samples, it is not possible to claim the findings' generalizability.*

**Practical implications**: *Organizational health literacy should be conceived as a core idea inspiring pharmacies' activities. In particular, health literacy should be dealt with as a driver to raise the awareness of the pharmacy's role in enhancing the effectiveness and the appropriateness of care.*

**Originality of the paper**: *The scientific literature has focused most of its attention on the process of patient enablement; in contrast, the role of health care organizations in empowering patients has been overlooked. This is one of the first attempts to examine the organizational health literacy of pharmacies, investigating their ability to perform as patients' navigators.*

*Key words: organizational health literacy; health literacy; health communication; patient-centered care; pharmacies*

## 1. Introduction: framing patient empowerment in the health literacy perspective

Patient empowerment has been discussed as an innovative paradigm inspiring the provision of care. Indeed, it involves a "… *fundamental redefinition of roles and relationships of health care professionals and*

---

[1] Best paper for the 19th Toulon-Verona Conference "Excellence in Services University of Huelva in Andalucia, Spain, 5-6 September 2016.

*patients*" (Anderson and Funnell, 2005, p. 153). Patients are encouraged to develop and apply a comprehensive set of health-related skills and abilities, which allow them to perform as value co-creators (Funnell *et al.*, 1991). Self-determination and personal change are the main ideas at the basis of patient empowerment (Aujoulat *et al.*, 2007): education and information boost patients' ability to deal with health-related issues and to participate in the provision of health services (Bravo *et al.*, 2015).

Prigge and co-authors (2015) recently examined the antecedents of patient empowerment, pointing out that the enhancement of individual health-related competencies is critical for achieving patient involvement and improving self-efficacy perception. From this point of view, health literacy - that is to say "… *the degree to which individuals have the capacity to obtain, process, and understand basic health information and services needed to make appropriate health decisions*" (Baker, 2006, p. 878) - is assumed to be a requisite to patient empowerment (Palumbo *et al.*, 2016a, 2016b). Several authors claimed that patient empowerment initiatives may be counterproductive when addressed to people with limited health literacy (Wang *et al.*, 2016). Even though health literacy and patient empowerment may be depicted as independent concepts (Camerini and Schulz, 2015), the impacts produced by them are strictly intertwined (Schulz and Nakamoto, 2013).

To the authors' knowledge, both scholars and practitioners have concentrated their attention on the patient when depicting the attributes and the consequences of patient empowerment initiatives, focusing on: the states which allow patient involvement, the processes which lead to patients' enablement, and the behaviours through which patients participate in the provision of care (Palumbo, 2016a: Fumagalli *et al.*, 2015). In contrast, the role of health care organizations in empowering patients and in stimulating their engagement in the delivery of care has been overlooked (Willis *et al.*, 2014).

Organizational health literacy is rapidly growing as an effective approach to serve high need populations and to improve patients' ability to navigate the health care service system (Weaver *et al.*, 2012). Organizational health literacy may be understood as the ability of health care organizations to establish a friendly and co-creating partnership with patients, encouraging them to be involved in the provision of health services (Palumbo, 2016b). Brach and colleagues (2012) identified ten attributes which suggest the adoption of a health literacy approach in structuring health care organizations. In particular, a health literate health care organization: 1) has a style of leadership which makes health literacy integral to its mission, structure, and operations; 2) includes health literacy in its managerial actions, including planning, evaluation, patient safety, and quality improvement; 3) stimulates awareness of the consequences of limited health literacy on health outcomes; 4) encourages the participation of the population served in the design and delivery of care; 5) strives to meet the needs of the underserved population, overcoming stigma; 6) uses health literacy strategies in interpersonal communications at all points of contact with patients; 7) supports patients in navigating the health care system; 8) provides, designs and distributes print and audio-visual materials that

are easy to understand; 9) help patients in high-risk situations, including care transitions and communications about medicines; 10) communicates in a friendly and clear way what health plans cover and what services are financed out-of-pocket.

**Carmela Annarumma**
**Rocco Palumbo**
**Mauro Cavallone**
Who empowers whom?
The role of organizational
health literacy in
empowering patients

Organizational health literacy has been described as a flexible approach, which could be adapted to different kinds of health care organizations (Annarumma and Palumbo, 2016; Hernandez, 2013). Among others, pharmacies have been found to play a critical role in supporting patients to properly function within the health care service system (Palumbo and Annarumma, 2015). In fact, pharmacists are likely to perform as trusted patient navigators, as they are able to grasp the information needs of the latter and fill their knowledge gaps (Rosenthal *et al.*, 2014). Echoing these considerations, the scientific literature has variously claimed that pharmacists are able to help patients in handling complex drug regimens, play a critical role in inciting the self-management of care and encouraging significant life-style changes; they provide patients with support and counselling to comply with medical prescriptions and foster patient involvement in the provision of care (Collins *et al.*, 2014; Johnson, *et al.*, 2013; Jennings and McAdam Marx, 2012; Abramowitz, 2009). Furthermore, the ability of pharmacists to meet patients' information needs has been considered as a predictor of increased relationship commitment between the patients and the health care service system which, in turn, produces better health outcomes (Alghurair *et al.*, 2012).

Drawing on these arguments, this paper has a twofold purpose. On the one hand, it is aimed to explore whether organizational health literacy is understood as a strategic tool by pharmacies; on the other hand, it examines what kinds of initiatives are arranged and implemented by pharmacies in order to enhance organizational health literacy. A comparative approach was adopted in an attempt to identify either similarities or dissimilarities in the behavior of pharmacies operating in different health care sub-systems.

This paper is organized as follows: the second section briefly depicts the study's research design and methodology, providing some details on the two convenience samples which were built for the purpose of this research; moreover, the tools which were used to assess the pharmacies' organizational health literacy are described. The third section summarizes the main findings of the research, emphasizing that pharmacies could adopt different approaches to increase their organizational health literacy and involve patients in a co-creating relationship. The findings of the study are critically discussed in the fourth section, which paves the way for interesting conceptual and practical implications. The concluding section summarizes the relevance of this research, discussing organizational health literacy as a fundamental ingredient of the recipe for patient empowerment.

## 2. Research design and methods

A comparative research design was developed and implemented for the purpose of this study (Boddewyn, 1970). Such a comparative approach allowed to delve into the novelty of the topic investigated, leading to a more

reliable understanding of pharmacies' awareness of organizational health literacy issues. Sticking to the prevailing literature (George, 1979), a focused and structured research method was devised. On the one hand, attention was concentrated on the organizational health literacy skills of pharmacies; on the other hand, a structured approach to assess the pharmacies' ability to establish a friendly and comfortable relationship with their users was embraced.

In line with the exploratory nature of this study, a theoretical sampling drove the selection of the units of analysis (Fox-Wolfgramm, 1997). Two convenience samples of both municipal and private pharmacies operating in two different regional sub-systems of the Italian National Health Service (INHS) were built. One sample consisted of thirty pharmacies operating within a health care sub-system suffering from financial distress and whose governance model was mainly inspired by New Public Management principles (Sarto *et al.*, 2016). The second sample consisted of thirty pharmacies operating in a virtuous regional sub-system steered according to a Public Governance approach (Bovaird and Löffler, 2009). In total, sixty units of analysis were included in this study. Their organizational health literacy skills were examined in both absolute and comparative terms.

To assess the organizational health literacy levels of the units of analysis, a self-reporting survey was drawn up, based on the Health Literacy Assessment Tool which was devised by the US Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) to evaluate the ability of pharmacies to meet patients' information and knowledge needs (Jacobson *et al.*, 2007). In particular, the Health Literacy Assessment Tool aims to assess the health literacy-related readiness of pharmacies from three different points of view: environment, patients, and staff (O'Neal *et al.*, 2013). In light of the specific purposes of this study, neither the environment nor the patient perspectives were contemplated to assess the organizational health literacy of the units of analysis. Rather, attention was focused on staff perspective, with the specific intent of appreciating the awareness of organizational health literacy-related issues on the part of the pharmacies' employees.

The items of the self-reporting survey concerned three conceptual domains related to organizational health literacy: 1) the accessibility of printed information materials; 2) the friendliness of interpersonal communication between the pharmacy staff and patients; and 3) pharmacy staff sensitivity to health literacy-related issues. The original English version of the assessment tool was independently translated into Italian by two scholars with competence in the field of health management. The translation from English to Italian was realized in light of the institutional and organizational peculiarities of the INHS. The two drafts of the translated survey were duly compared, in order to identify any divergences and to settle them. Whenever the translators were unable to settle their disagreements, a third independent scholar was invited to participate in the discussion in an attempt to reach an agreed solution. The final draft of the Italian survey was translated back to English by a native English speaker, in order to check its consistency with the original version of the questionnaire. A pilot test was performed involving three pharmacies which were not included in the two convenience samples, but showed

comparable characteristics with the units of analysis. The respondents were asked to fill in the survey and to disclose their perceived meaning for each item of the tool. The pilot test results highlighted several minor issues concerning a few items of the survey, which were resolved in light of the respondents' comments.

**Carmela Annarumma**
**Rocco Palumbo**
**Mauro Cavallone**
Who empowers whom?
The role of organizational
health literacy in
empowering patients

A formative model was adopted, according to which the three latent constructs of the self-reporting survey were determined as a combination of different items (Coltman *et al.*, 2008). It was assumed that: the items defined the constructs; the items were not interchangeable; any variation in the layout of the questionnaire implied significant changes in the conceptual domains of the constructs (Diamantopoulos and Siguaw, 2006). The final version of the survey consisted of 35 items, which were asymmetrically distributed within the three conceptual domains: 9 items formed the "print materials" section; 11 items were included in the "clear verbal communication" area; and 15 items constituted the "sensitivity to literacy" domain.

Drawing on the original version of the Health Literacy Assessment Tool (O'Neal *et al.*, 2013; Jacobson *et al.*, 2007), a 9-point Likert scale was attached to each item of the survey: values close to 1 indicated a strong disagreement with the statement reported in the item, while values close to 9 revealed a strong agreement with it. Several items of the questionnaire were reversed, for the purpose of minimizing any risks of "response set" (Weijters *et al.*, 2010); the risk of misresponse to reversed items was taken into consideration when examining the collected data (Swain *et al.*, 2008). The units of the analysis that showed a tendency to answer a series of questions by following a preconceived schema were excluded from the analysis.

The survey was addressed to a single key informant for each unit of analysis. The pharmacy's senior manager was identified as the preferred respondent. Whenever he or she was unable to participate in the study, a substitute employee of the pharmacy was approached, taking length of service and organizational position as the main eligibility criteria. The respondents' average age was 42; they had a length of service ranging from 4 to 18 years. Approximately two out of three respondents were female. Most of the key informants were in charge of the management of the pharmacy. Less than one out of four respondents were pharmacy clerks. All of the members of the sample were doctors of pharmacy.

## 3. Findings

### 3.1 The pharmacies' awareness of organizational health literacy issues

Interestingly, all the units of analysis showed significant awareness of health literacy-related issues. As depicted in Figure 1, the pharmacies involved in the two convenience samples self-reported - on the average - adequate health literacy levels for the three conceptual domains of the survey, that is to say "print materials", "verbal communication", and "sensitivity to literacy".

*Fig. 1: Average scores for "print materials", "clear verbal communication", and "sensitivity to literacy" sections (n=60)*
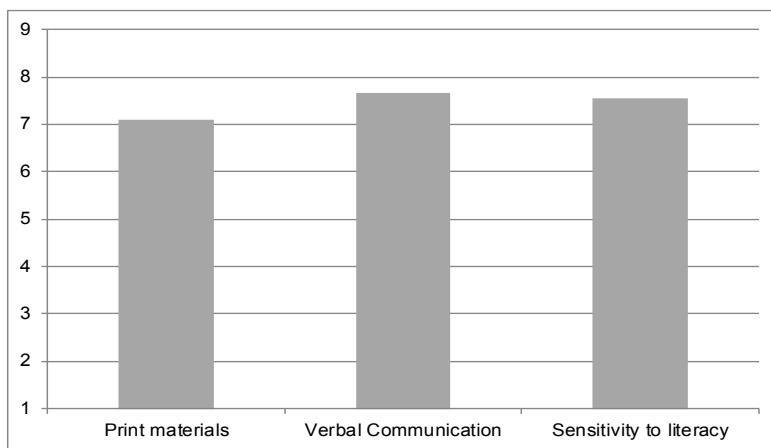


Source: Authors' elaboration

The pharmacies showed the highest average value in the "verbal communication" section (μ = 7.65; σ = 0.72). On the one hand, the respondents were consistent in claiming that they were aware of the difficulties met by patients in navigating the health care service system. From this point of view, the establishment of a friendly and comfortable relationship with patients was widely presented as a critical approach to support patients in effectively accessing, collecting, and understanding relevant health information for the purposes of health protection and promotion. Also, the units of analysis revealed a high sensitivity to literacy (μ = 7.55; σ = 0.67), identifying problems incurred by patients in fully understanding and complying with clinical prescriptions as the most important determinant of poor health outcomes. The scores achieved in the "print materials" section (μ = 7.10; σ = 0.31) were high, but they were lower compared with both "verbal communication" and "sensitivity to literacy". In short, it could be argued that - in spite of the significant awareness of health literacy on the part of the units of analysis – several barriers prevented pharmacies from designing and implementing an organizational health literate environment.

The two samples revealed several peculiarities which suggested a potential influence of institutional variables and contingent factors on the pharmacies' willingness and ability to deal with health literacy-related issues. As illustrated in Figure 2, Convenience Sample 2, that is to say the pharmacies that operated in a virtuous regional sub-system of the INHS, were likely to disclose higher self-reported awareness of health literacy issues. This was true for all the conceptual domains of the survey. The units of analysis that belonged to the regional sub-system suffering from financial distress (Convenience Sample 1) showed diluted sensitivity to organizational health literacy as well as lower attention to the design and implementation of an organizational health literate environment.

**Carmela Annarumma**
**Rocco Palumbo**
**Mauro Cavallone**
Who empowers whom?
The role of organizational
health literacy in
empowering patients

*Fig. 2: Average scores for "print materials", "clear verbal communication", and "sensitivity to literacy" sections for Convenience Sample 1(n=30) and Convenience Sample 2 (n=30).*
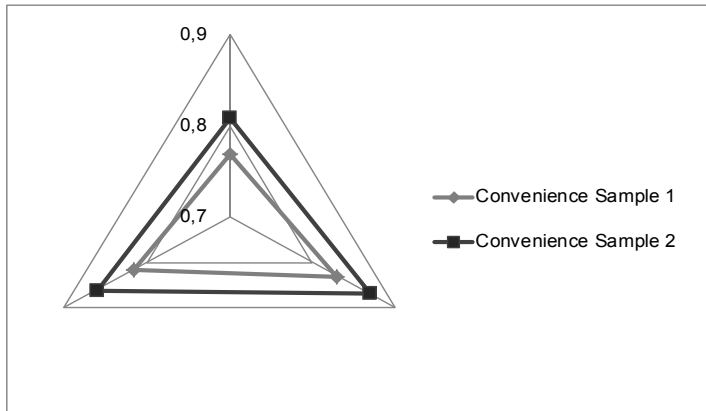


Source: Authors' elaboration

Figure 3 provides a detailed description of the behaviors of the two convenience samples. On the one hand, Convenience Sample 1 exhibited more common inconsistencies among the different shades of organizational health literacy. In most of the cases, the pharmacies of the regional sub-system suffering from financial distress were likely to pay significant attention to the arrangement of clear verbal communication approaches in order to improve their ability to establish a co-creating relationship with patients. However, such thoughtfulness towards health literacy did not seem to be echoed in terms of both designing friendly and easy to understand print materials or of sensitivity to organizational health literacy-related issues. On the other hand, the units of Convenience Sample 2 showed greater consistency in the scores for the three conceptual areas of the survey. The pharmacies that disclosed high sensitivity to organizational health literacy were consistent in reporting greater propensity to use tailored communication strategies and friendly print materials to assist patients in navigating the health care environment. In contrast, pharmacies disclosing limited sensitivity to organizational health literacy issues were more likely to neglect the role of easy-to-understand written and oral information to improve patients' ability to deal with health-related issues.

In sum, all of the units of analysis were found to be aware of the importance of organizational health literacy in designing a supportive and effective health care environment. This result did not seem to be affected by the contingency factors of the two regional sub-systems that were taken into consideration for the purpose of this study. Nonetheless, the pharmacies that operated in the virtuous regional sub-system were more willing to adopt an organizational health literacy perspective in designing oral and print communication materials. The units of analysis belonging to the regional sub-system suffering from financial distress self-reported greater propensity to use specific communication strategies in order to

help their patients in navigating the health care arena. On the contrary, they paid only limited attention to the role played by print information materials in improving their organizational health literacy. In line with these considerations, the two samples disclosed different approaches and accounted for different initiatives to enhance pharmacies' organizational health literacy.

*Fig. 3. Average scores by units of analysis (n=60) for "print materials", "clear verbal communication", and "sensitivity to literacy"*
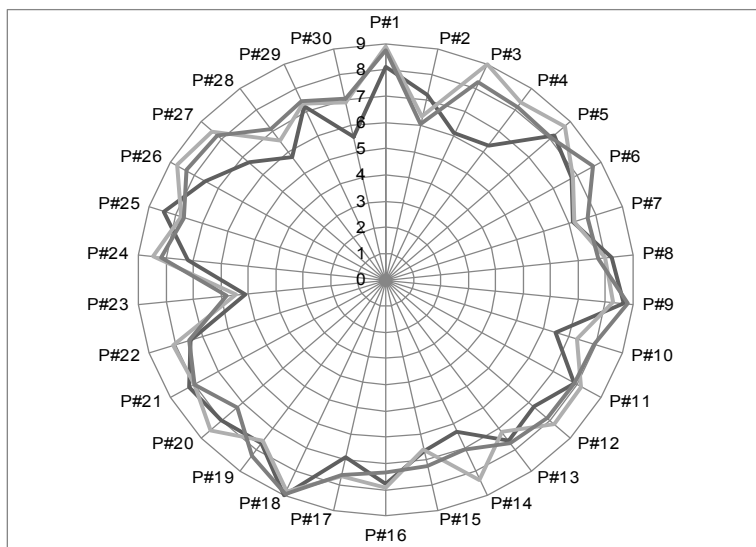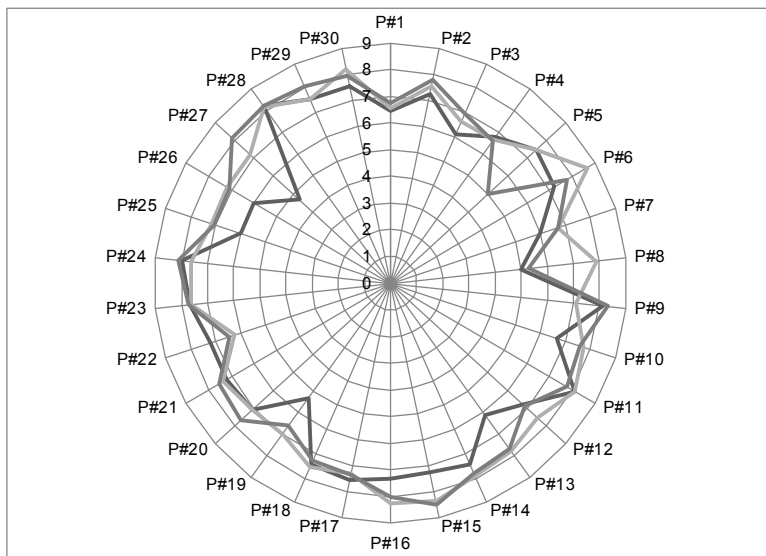


Source: Authors' elaboration

*3.2 The pharmacies' initiatives to enhance organizational health literacy*

**Carmela Annarumma**
**Rocco Palumbo**
**Mauro Cavallone**
Who empowers whom?
The role of organizational
health literacy in
empowering patients

The pharmacies were consistent in reporting that they had devised tailored and effective signage to support patients in navigating the organizational environment. Moreover, the pharmacies' employees perceived that people living with limited health literacy were not likely to ask health care professionals for additional information when they were concerned about a health-related issue. From this point of view, the adoption of an organizational health literacy approach in arranging print information materials was assumed to prevent the risks of patients' confusion and misunderstanding. In most of the cases, the organizational layout of the pharmacies was designed in light of the specific information needs of the served population, in order to allow patients' better access to the services offered by the pharmacy.

Print information materials were primarily aimed at providing patients with useful information about timely health topics; in addition, ongoing health-related issues were depicted in posters and brochures, which were devised according to both national and international guidelines. Also, the units of analysis were consistent in claiming that the language they used for the design of health information materials was familiar, clear, and free of jargon, in an attempt to increase patients' ability to understand and process health information. Interestingly, only a few pharmacies reported using either tables or graphs to enhance the comprehensibility of health information materials. In other words, print information materials mainly consisted of text, with limited use of images and charts to assist patients in processing and interpreting health information.

While the units of analysis of Convenience Sample 2 stated that they used both pamphlets and brochures to inform patients about the offered services, the pharmacies included in Convenience Sample 1 were not likely to do so. In addition, in Convenience Sample 1 the pharmacy staff was not encouraged to participate in specific training courses aimed at improving their ability to design and communicate friendly print information materials. Conversely, the units of analysis of Convenience Sample 2 were more engaged in encouraging their workforce to attend training courses ($\mu CS2 = 7.13$ vs. $\mu CS1 = 6.97$).

In general terms, the units of analysis were aware of the importance of identifying an organizational delegate who is entrusted with tackling problems concerning print information materials. On the whole, only 14 out of 60 units of analysis stated that encountered difficulties in identifying such a delegate. This was especially true for the units of analysis of Convenience Sample 2, which showed greater difficulty ($\mu = 6.53$) as compared with the units of Convenience Sample 1 ($\mu = 7.03$) in assigning the responsibility to increase the friendliness of print information materials to a member of the pharmacy staff. Both the pharmacies that operated in the regional sub-system suffering from financial deprivation and those that operated in the virtuous one encouraged their staff to use plain and clear language to explain medical jargon and clinical issues to the patients ($\mu CS1 = 7.73$ vs. $\mu CS2 = 8.40$). Most of the units of analysis pointed out that front-office employees were used to checking patients' understanding

of the health information provided by using the teach-back method, that is to say by asking them to repeat the key points of the communicated messages. To improve their communication strategies and be more effective in interacting with patients, pharmacy employees were likely to assess whether patients were aware of the main health problem they were facing and of the importance of medication adherence in effectively managing their health-related problems.

While the units of analysis of Convenience Sample 2 revealed that they had a private space within the pharmacy where confidential information could be discussed with patients, this was not true for the units of analysis of Convenience Sample 1. However, only 22 out of 60 units of analysis self-reported to be able to effectively manage the relationship with patients for whom Italian was a second language. In addition, the pharmacy staff was usually argued to be unable to meet the information needs of non-Italian speaking patients. Lastly, the senior management of the pharmacies was not likely to launch specific policies intended to increase employees' awareness of organizational health literacy issues or to arouse their willingness to deal with them. This was particularly true with regard to Convenience Sample 1, whose scores ($\mu = 6.97$) highlighted a weak commitment on the part of their senior management towards the promotion of these policies.

In sum, all of the units of analysis showed significant sensitivity to organizational health literacy. Actually, most of the respondents agreed in declaring that patients' health literacy skills played an important role in improving their medication adherence and their compliance with clinical prescriptions. In line with these considerations, pharmacy employees were consistent in maintaining that their activity did not solely concern the delivery of drugs and medications. Rather, they operated as crucial patient navigators, supporting them in properly handling health information.

The respondents indicated several circumstances in which the pharmacy staff had to pay particular attention to the patients' health literacy skills, since inadequate understanding of health information could pave the way for negative consequences on health outcomes. First of all, the changes in the health treatments that were prescribed to patients were considered as critical events entailing a significant risk due to impaired compliance and poor medication adherence: the lower the health literacy skills of patients, and the poorer the organizational health literacy of health care settings, and the higher the risks that the change in health treatments could turn into reduced medication adherence and poorer health outcomes. Relevant differences between the convenience samples were registered in handling changes in health treatments and in coping with patients suffering from financial deprivation; in both circumstances, the units of Convenience Sample 1 performed worse than Convenience Sample 2. In addition, patients' anger and irritation towards the functioning of the health care system was found to be difficult to manage by the pharmacy staff in both convenience samples.

As compared with the units of analysis of Convenience Sample 2, the pharmacies that operated within the regional sub-system suffering from financial distress pointed out several difficulties in meeting the information and knowledge needs of people living with limited health literacy due to the

perception of time limitations. Moreover, the pharmacies of Convenience Sample 1 reported that they faced problems when trying to adapt their communication strategies and approaches to the specific functional, interactive and critical competencies of low health literate patients. All of the units of analysis stated that their employees were duly committed to providing patients with tailored and clear information about the attributes and the recommendations of over-the-counter drugs which were easy to access and to understand.

**Carmela Annarumma**
**Rocco Palumbo**
**Mauro Cavallone**
Who empowers whom?
The role of organizational
health literacy in
empowering patients

Overall, in both samples only a few pharmacies stated that the staff attended specific training activities aimed at enhancing employees' awareness of organizational health literacy issues. Besides, the senior management of the municipal pharmacies did not encourage the participation of the pharmacy staff in training activities in the field of health literacy, since they considered them not to be crucial for the improvement of organizational outcomes. Time and resource constraints were identified as the main barrier to the enhancement of the pharmacies' sensitivity to literacy.

## 4. Discussion

The pharmacies involved in this study reported a high awareness of organizational health literacy-related issues. Interestingly, the units of analysis showed high scores with regard to print information materials, clear verbal communication, and sensitivity to literacy. Confirming the insights of the scientific literature which identifies the enhancement of the patient-provider relationship as a crucial step to establishing a link between health literacy and health outcomes (von Wagner *et al.*, 2009), the findings of this paper revealed that pharmacies paid particular attention to oral interactions between the pharmacy staff and patients. In fact, pharmacists are likely to detect and meet the special information needs of low health literate patients, thus compensating for the propensity of physicians to overestimate individual health literacy skills (Kelly and Haidet, 2007).

In spite of these considerations, it seems that the organizational commitment of pharmacies to the enhancement of organizational health literacy is still poor (Palumbo and Annarumma, 2015). The units of analysis included in this study were consistent in reporting that time limitations and lack of interactive and linguistic skills were the most significant barriers to the establishment of adequate relationships with patients, thus confirming what has been found in previous research (Tarn *et al.*, 2006). This is especially true when patients have a strong need for timely and relevant health information, since they face multiple diseases and have to comply with different medication treatments (Edwards *et al.*, 2015). However, most of the units of analysis reported that they were unable to provide patients with tailored health information materials in order to improve their ability to navigate the health care service system.

Several additional considerations could be drawn from the comparison between the units of analysis of the two samples which were built for this study, emphasizing both differences and similarities. An insightful

reflection could be developed dealing with pharmacies' willingness to increase the quantity and the quality of the information provided to patients. On the one hand, the units of analysis were found to be committed to improving their support to people living with limited health literacy. On the other hand, these initiatives were mainly led by individual employees, while they lacked institutional legitimation. This situation was especially common among the pharmacies that operated in the regional sub-system suffering from financial distress, where the scarcity of available resources did not allow senior management to pay adequate attention to the promotion of organizational health literacy. On the contrary, the units included in Convenience Sample 2 revealed greater propensity for enhancing the quality and the quantity of information in order to support patients in effectively handling health-related issues.

In line with these arguments, the training of pharmacy staff that aimed at boosting individual interactive skills appears to be a fundamental ingredient of the recipe for better patient-provider interactions. However, only a few pharmacies reported involving their employees in training activities in the fields of communication and health literacy. This finding is striking, since most of the pharmacies were consistent in perceiving clear verbal communication as a strategic tool for improving the organizational ability to establish co-creating relationships with patients. In particular, interactive skills allow the pharmacy staff to anticipate and meet the special information needs of four categories of patients at special risk of limited health literacy: 1) older adults; 2) people with a low level of education; 3) the disadvantaged population; and 4) immigrants who are not able to properly function within the health care service system.

With specific regard to the latter, the number of immigrants currently living in Italy is rapidly growing, as a result of the dramatic growth in the rates of three main categories of immigration: family class, economic immigrants, and refugees (Cavallone, 2007). Since pharmacies operate as an important point of contact between patients and the health care service system and act as critical patient navigators, they should enhance their interactive skills in order to better support immigrants in navigating the health environment. To achieve this aim, tailored communication strategies and tools should be devised and implemented by improving the ability of pharmacies to deal with non-Italian speaking patients. They should provide customized messages, supported by translations in other languages (i.e. English first) and non-verbal or para-verbal components. Delving into these arguments, it is worth noting that the item of the survey which showed the lowest average value ($\mu = 5.5$) was the statement: "*the pharmacy provides ad hoc services to patients for whom Italian is a second language or for non-Italian speaking patients*". Therefore, there is a strong need to fill the gap between the special information needs of immigrants and the ability of pharmacies to establish a friendly and comfortable relationship with them.

It is interesting to point out that the pharmacies that operated in the regional sub-system suffering from financial stress performed better as compared with their counterparts operating in the virtuous sub-system in four items of the survey: 1) patient counselling; 2) employees

involvement in specific training courses in the field of print information design and delivery; 3) ability to establish a friendly relationship with non-Italian speaking patients; and 4) introduction of tailored communication strategies to deal with people living with problematic health literacy skills. These findings should be considered as a hint of the change that is affecting the units of analysis. Their strong awareness of health literacy-related issues could be conceived as a signal of their willingness to improve their strategies and operations in an attempt to anticipate and meet the growing needs of the served population.

**Carmela Annarumma**
**Rocco Palumbo**
**Mauro Cavallone**
Who empowers whom?
The role of organizational
health literacy in
empowering patients

The pharmacies included in Convenience Sample 2 were consistent in achieving higher scores as compared with their counterparts of Convenience Sample 1 in both the: "*use of brochures and pamphlets to provide patients with adequate information on the services offered by the pharmacy*" and the "*availability of a private space to discuss confidential topics with patients*". On the one hand, these findings suggest a greater entrepreneurial propensity of the pharmacies that operated in the virtuous regional sub-system, which is echoed by a wider availability of financial resources that could be addressed to improve organizational health literacy; on the other hand, they imply greater attention to the implicit information needs of patients.

For the sake of argument, the "counselling corner", which was found to be common among the pharmacies of Convenience Sample 2, is a catalyzer for the establishment of friendly, comfortable and co-creating relationships between patients and the pharmacy staff, thus increasing the ability of the latter to anticipate and satisfy the expectations of the former. From this point of view, the greater ability of the pharmacies that operated in the virtuous region to support patients who had to deal with high-risk situations, including care transitions, substantiates the worthiness of the inclusion of these issues in the design of pharmacies' organizational and communicational framework. These results confirm the value added by the ability of pharmacies to establish a friendly and co-creating relationship with patients, which is not merely aimed at the sale of drugs and medication, but also concerns patients' ability to properly function within the health care service system.

The findings of this paper should be read in light of its main limitations. Since the research concerned two convenience, non-representative samples of pharmacies operating within the INHS, it is not possible to claim the generalizability of the results discussed above. However, this study was able to provide several intriguing insights into the awareness of organizational health literacy of Italian pharmacies, emphasizing the similarities and the dissimilarities between entities operating in different regional sub-systems. The decision to focus on the staff's self-perception of organizational health literacy, ignoring both the environment and the patients' perspectives, affected the reliability of this research. Nevertheless, it managed to shed the light on the importance of organizational health literacy within Italian pharmacies, paving the way for further conceptual and empirical developments. Future efforts will be addressed at expanding this study to a representative sample of Italian pharmacies in order to strengthen the validity and the reliability of the research.

## 5. Conclusions

The relevance of this paper is twofold, suggesting both conceptual and practical implications. With regard to the former, organizational health literacy is becoming a key issue for the future of pharmacies, emphasizing their role as patient navigators. Scholars should be encouraged to examine the specific characteristics of organizational health literate pharmacies. In particular, the attributes of print information materials, verbal communication strategies and organizational sensitivity to literacy should be discussed for the purpose of increasing pharmacies' ability to support low health literate patients in navigating the health care service system.

The organizational health literacy of pharmacies should be sought at both the institutional and the managerial levels. On the one hand, the engagement of professional associations in the initiatives aimed at promoting pharmacies' organizational health literacy is critical for fostering the adoption of a health literate approach in reimagining the relationship between pharmacists and patients. With specific regard to the Italian context, the Federation of the Orders of Italian Pharmacists (FOFI) could play a significant role in promoting the sensitivity of literacy to its associates, thus encouraging the involvement of pharmacies in the appropriate functioning of the health care service system. In fact, pharmacies should be understood as a critical knot of the local health care environment, which supports the patients in navigating the health system properly and in matching the levels of care they access with their specific health-related needs.

Finally, organizational health literacy should be conceived as a core idea inspiring the activities of all pharmacies' human resources. In other words, health literacy should be dealt with as a driver to raise awareness of the pharmacy's role in enhancing the effectiveness and the appropriateness of the health care service system. Accordingly, the willingness to improve the level of organizational health literacy should be inspired by a systemic approach. Adhering to these arguments, pharmacists would experience a significant evolution of their role. Rather than acting merely as drug sellers, they would represent critical mentors of their patients, providing them with advice and information that would allow an increased ability to effectively function within the health care environment. This will pave the way for momentous improvements in patients' quality of life and for the strengthening of the sustainability of the health care service system. In summary, the findings of this study suggest that better health outcomes, less expenditure and a higher level of self-care could be reached by means of meaningful efforts in advancing the friendliness and organizational health literacy of pharmacies.

## References

ABRAMOWITZ P.W. (2009), "The evolution and metamorphosis of the pharmacy practice model", *American Journal of Health-System Pharmacy,* vol. 66, n. 16, pp. 1437-1446.

**Carmela Annarumma
Rocco Palumbo
Mauro Cavallone**
Who empowers whom?
The role of organizational
health literacy in
empowering patients

ALGHURAIR S.A. (2012), "What elements of the patient-pharmacist relationship are associated with patient satisfaction?", *Patient Preference and Adherence,* vol. 6, n. 1, pp. 663-676.

ANDERSON R.M., FUNNELL M.M. (2005), "Patient empowerment: reflections on the challenge of fostering the adoption of a new paradigm", *Patient Education and Counseling*, vol. 57, n. 2, pp. 153-157.

ANNARUMMA C., PALUMBO R. (2016), "Contextualizing Health Literacy to Health Care Organizations: Exploratory Insights", *Journal of Health Management,* vol. 18, n. 4, pp. 611-624.

AUJOULAT I., D'HOORE W., DECCACHE A. (2007), "Patient empowerment in theory and practice: polysemy or cacophony?", *Patient Education and Counselin*g, vol. 66, n. 1, pp. 13-20.

BAKER D.W. (2006), "The Meaning and the Measure of Health Literacy", *Journal of General Internal Medicine*, vol. 21, n. 8, pp. 878-883.

BODDEWYN J. (1970), "Comparative Management Studies: An Assessment", *Management International Review*, vol. 10, n. 2-3, pp. 3-11.

BOVAIRD T., LÖFFLER E. (2009), *Public Management and Governance*, Routledge, London.

BRACH C., DREYER B., SCHYVE P., HERNANDEZ L., BAUR C., LEMERISE A.J., PARKER R. (2012), *Attributes of a health literate organization*, The National Academies Press, Washington, DC.

BRAVO P., EDWARDS A., BARR P.J., SCHOLL I., ELWYN G., MCALLISTER M. (2015), "Conceptualising patient empowerment: a mixed methods study", *BMC Health Services Research*, vol. 15, n. 1, pp. 252-265.

CAMERINI A.L., SCHULZ P.J. (2015), "Health Literacy and Patient Empowerment: Separating Conjoined Twins in the Context of Chronic Low Back Pain", *PLOS-One*, vol. 10, n. 2, e0118032.

CAVALLONE M. (2007), "Gestire la comunicazione di marketing nella società multiculturale: problemi aperti e implicazioni per il management", *Mercati e Competitività*, vol. 1, n. 1, pp. 95-117.

COLLINS S., BARBER A., SAHM L.J. (2014), "Pharmacist's Counselling Improves Patient Knowledge Regarding Warfarin, Irrespective of Health Literacy Level", *Pharmacy*, vol. 2, n. 1, pp. 114-123.

COLTMAN T.D., MIDGLEY D.F., VENIAK S. (2008), "Formative versus reflective measurement models: Two applications of formative measurement", *Journal of Business Research,* vol. 61, n. 12, pp. 1250-1262.

DIAMANTOPOULOS A., SIGUAW J.A. (2006), "Formative versus reflective indicators in organizational measure development: a comparison and empirical illustration", *British Journal of Management*, vol. 17, n. 4, pp. 263-282.

FOX-WOLFGRAMM S.J. (1997), "Towards Developing a Methodology for Doing Qualitative Research: The Dynamic-Comparative Case Study Method", *Scandinavian Journal of Management,* vol. 13, n. 4, pp. 439-455.

EDWARDS M., WOOD F., DAVIES M., EDWARDS A. (2015), "'Distributed health literacy': longitudinal qualitative analysis of the roles of health literacy mediators and social networks of people living with a long-term health condition", *Health Expectations,* vol. 18, n. 5, pp. 1180-1193.

FUMAGALLI L.P., RADAELLI G., LETTIERI E., BERTELE' P., MASELLA C. (2015), "Patient Empowerment and its neighbours: Clarifying the boundaries and their mutual relationships", *Health Policy*, vol. 119, n. 3, pp. 384-394.

FUNNELL M.M., ANDERSON R.M., ARNOLD M.S., BARR P.A., DONNELLY M., JOHNSON P.D., TAYLOR-MOON D., WHITE N.H. (1991), "Empowerment: an idea whose time has come in diabetes education", *The Diabetes Educator*, vol. 17, n. 1, pp. 37-41.

GEORGE A.L. (1979), "Case studies and theory development: The method of structured, focused comparison", in Lauren P.G., *Diplomacy: New approaches in history, theory, and policy*, Free Press, New York, NY, pp. 43-68.

HERNANDEZ L.M. (2013), *Health Literacy: Improving Health, Health Systems, and Health Policy Around the World: Workshop Summary*, The National Academies Press, Washington, D.C.

JACOBSON K.L., GAZMARARIAN J.A., KRIPALANI S., MCMORRIS K.J., BLAKE S.C., BRACH C. (2007), *Is Our Pharmacy Meeting Patients' Needs? A Pharmacy Health Literacy Assessment Tool User's Guide, Agency for Healthcare Research*, Rockville, MD.

JENNINGS B.T., MCADAM MARX C. (2012), "Implementation of a pharmacist-managed diabetes program", *American Journal of Health-System Pharmacy*, vol. 69, n. 22, pp. 1951-1953.

JOHNSON J.L., MOSER L., GARWOOD C.L. (2013), "Health literacy: A primer for pharmacists", *American Journal of Health-System Pharmacy*, vol. 70, n. 11, pp. 949-955.

KELLY P.A., HAIDET P. (2007), "Physician overestimation of patient literacy: A potential source of health care disparities", *Patient Education and Counseling*, vol. 66, n. 1, pp. 119-122.

O'NEAL K.S., CROSBY K.M., MILLER M.J., MURRAY K.A., CONDREN M.E. (2013), "Assessing health literacy practices in a community pharmacy environment: Experiences using the AHRQ Pharmacy Health Literacy Assessment Tool", *Administrative Pharmacy,* vol. 9, n. 5, pp. 564-596.

PALUMBO R. (2016a), "Contextualizing co-production of health care: a systematic literature review", *International Journal of Public Sector Management*, vol. 29, n. 1, pp. 72-90.

PALUMBO R. (2016b), "Designing health-literate health care organization: A literature review", *Health Services Management Research*, vol. 29, n. 3, pp. 79-87.

PALUMBO R., ANNARUMMA C. (2015), "Exploring the Organizational Health Literacy of Municipal Pharmacies: The Quest for a Health Literate Organizational Environment", *Toulon-Verona Conference "Excellence in Services"* , August, 31st – September, 1st 2015, Palermo, Italy, p. 401-416.

PALUMBO R., ANNARUMMA C., ADINOLFI P., MUSELLA M. (2016a), "The missing link to patient engagement in Italy The role of health literacy in enabling patients", *Journal of Health Organization and Management,* vol. 30, n. 8, pp. 1183-1203.

PALUMBO R., ANNARUMMA C., ADINOLFI P., MUSELLA M., PISCOPO G. (2016b), "The Italian Health Literacy Project: Insights from the assessment of health literacy skills in Italy", *Health Policy,* vol. 120, n. 9, pp. 1087-1094

PRIGGE J.K., DIETZ B., HOMBURG C., HOYER W.D., BURTOND J.L. (2015), "Patient empowerment: A cross-disease exploration of antecedents and consequences", *International Journal of Research in Marketing,* vol. 32, n. 4, pp. 375-386.

Carmela Annarumma
Rocco Palumbo
Mauro Cavallone
Who empowers whom?
The role of organizational
health literacy in
empowering patients

ROSENTHAL M., MORALES E., LEVIN S., MURPHY L. F. (2014), "Building a team to fight diabetes: Pharmacy students' perceptions about serving as patient navigators", *Currents in Pharmacy Teaching and Learning*, vol. 6, n. 4, pp. 595-604.

SARTO F., VERONESI G., KIRKPATRICK I., CUCCURULLO C. (2016), "Exploring regionalism in public management reforms: the case of the Italian hospital sector", *Policy and Politics*, vol. 44, n. 4, pp. 525-545.

SCHULZ P.J., NAKAMOTO K. (2013), "Health literacy and patient empowerment in health communication: the importance of separating conjoined twins", *Patient Education and Counseling*, vol. 90, n. 1, pp. 4-11.

SWAIN S.D., WEATHERS D., NIEDRICH R.W. (2008), "Assessing Three Sources of Misresponse to Reversed Likert Items", *Journal of Marketing Research*, vol. 45, n. 1, pp. 116-131.

TARN D.M., HERITAGE J., PATERNITI D.A., HAYS R.D., KRAVITZ R.L., WENGER N.S. (2006), "Physician communication when prescribing new medications", *Archives of Internal Medicine*, vol. 166, n. 17, pp. 1855-1862.

VON WAGNER C., STEPTOE A., WOLF M.S., WARDLE J. (2009), "Health Literacy and Health Actions: A Review and a Framework from Health Psychology", *Health Education and Behaviour*, vol. 36, n. 5, pp. 860-877.

WANG R.H., HSU H.C., LEE Y.J., SHIN S.J., LIN K.D., AN L.W. (2016), "Patient empowerment interacts with health literacy to associate with subsequent self-management behaviors in patients with type 2 diabetes: A prospective study in Taiwan", *Patient Education and Counseling*, vol. 99, n. 10, pp. 1626-1631.

WEAVER N.L., WRAY R.J., ZELLIN S., GAUTAM K., JUPKA K. (2012), "Advancing organizational health literacy in health care organizations serving high-needs populations: a case study", *Journal of Health Communication*, vol. 17, n. S3, pp. 55-66.

WEIJTERS B., CABOOTER E., SCHILLEWAERT N. (2010), "The effect of rating scale format on response styles: The number of response categories and response category labels", *International Journal of Research in Marketing*, vol. 27, n. 3, pp. 236-247.

WILLIS C.D., SAUL J., BITZ J., POMPU K., BEST A., JACKSON B. (2014), "Improving organizational capacity to address health literacy in public health: a rapid realist review", *Public Health*, vol. 128, n. 6, pp. 515-524.

## Academic or professional position and contacts

**Carmela Annarumma**
Research Fellow of Management
University of Salerno - Italy
e-mail: cannarumma@unisa.it

**Rocco Palumbo**
Research Fellow of Management
University of Salerno - Italy
e-mail: rpalumbo@unisa.it

**Mauro Cavallone**
Associate Professor of Management
University of Bergamo - Italy
e-mail: mauro.cavallone@unibg.it

# Improving the quality of the information flow among top managers[1]

Elena Giaretta - Paola Castellani - Alessandro Garofalo

## Abstract

**Purpose of the paper**: *The paper aims to identify the factors that can affect the quality of horizontal information flows at top management level and suggest a method for their removal.*

**Methodology**: *From a theoretical perspective that draws from studies on managerial information systems, on top management horizontal communication and on total quality management, a method (narrative action research method, NARM) has been proposed, which is based on the direct involvement of the participants in the flow, in this specific case top managers. The method has been tested on 18 large organizations. Individual interviews of top managers and collective meetings with them were set up to assess their degree of satisfaction in relation to the quality of the flow.*

**Findings**: *This method has allowed to find that the factors which the quality of the information flow depends on are mainly organizational-relational in nature, thus highlighting the circular causality relationship between the quality of the information flow and organizational well-being.*

**Research implications**: *From a theoretical-conceptual viewpoint, this study has focused on the issue of the strategic information flow and its problems from a relational perspective that appears to have received less consideration in literature.*

**Practical implications**: *The method has proved effective in improving the quality of the process, with benefits in terms not only of decision-making capacity but also of organizational climate.*

**Originality of the paper**: *The method is the result of the original combination of the action research principles of change promotion and narration and problem solving techniques, which are respectively at the base of role-playing and quality circles.*

*Key words: senior executive information flow; communication among top managers; information quality; organizational well-being*

## 1. Introduction

The *information flow at top management level* is a topic that has raised interest in literature as it is linked to decision-making in the more consolidated corporate areas (production, marketing and sales, finance and control, etc.) and involves corporate figures (department chiefs or top managers) that participate to a significant extent in value creation.

---

1   Best paper for the 19th Toulon-Verona Conference "Excellence in Services", University of Huelva in Andalucia, Spain, 5-6 September 2016

Even though they more frequently refer to the overall information system, researchers have undertaken many an investigation on the issue, mainly, however, from an organizational and information technology viewpoint.

This study is based on a different perspective which, considering the information flow as a process involving individuals, timeframes, methods, places and motivations, combines the technical-formal dimension with the more emotional human component, in line with what has been described as a *socio-technical approach* (Avgerou and McGrath, 2007; Stahl, 2007; Prida and Grijalvo, 2008; Xiang *et al.*, 2014). We adopt in this way a perspective that in turn combines the information systems discipline with the intra-organizational communication approach referred to horizontal top management relationships (Mom *et al.*, 2007; Raes Anneloes, 2011). The information indeed is integrated by behaviours, values, meanings, emotions and moods which have a significant impact on internal relationships and the results that they can produce.

The dual technical and social dimension that comes into play in information exchanges creates obstacles of a different nature that can make the flow fluidity complicated.

Based on these considerations, the study aims at identifying the factors that influence the quality shortfalls of the information flows and suggesting an effective method to identify and remove them, beginning with the following research questions:
- *What does the quality of top management information flow depend on?*
- *How can the quality of top management information flow be improved?*
  To this end, the paper has been structured as per the following stages:
- Literature analysis aimed at: 1) contextualising the study within the discipline of managerial information systems and suggesting contributions from a horizontal top management communication perspective; 2) defining the concept of quality of the information flow from a user's viewpoint.
- Methodological considerations relating to the organizations taking part in the investigation (unit of analysis) and to the research strategy.
- Description of the data collection methods (interviews, narrative action research method and final phone interviews).
- Presentation of the results (factors that may create flow quality shortfalls, method for identifying and removing them).
- Discussion: interpretation of the results in light of the research questions.
- Conclusion: research contribution and limitations.

## 2. Conceptual background and hypotheses

### 2.1 The managerial information flows from a relational perspective

The topic of information exchanges among top managers is typically a part of the discipline of "information systems" that, in summary, collect, process, store and spread information in order to support the various

corporate activities (Maggioni, 1983; Kanter, 1984; De Marco, 2000). A whole range of different elements contribute to these systems, such as, data and information, rules, processes and organizational-information technology procedures, technological infrastructures and individuals. The obviously different nature of these elements logically justifies the multi-disciplinary approaches adopted, with investigations that range from information technology considerations, to organizational and economic-managerial aspects, without neglecting communication and psycho-sociological elements.

**Elena Giaretta**
**Paola Castellani**
**Alessandro Garofalo**
Improving the quality of the information flow among top managers

In this context, however, the critical areas on which studies since the Sixties have specifically focused on are linked to the *organizational architecture*, i.e. the processes to design, develop and maintain effective data processing methods, and *information technology infrastructure*, i.e. those technologies (calculators, computer networks, electronic information storage and transmission procedures) required to implement these processes.

Despite resorting to different logics, both approaches have shown a particular interest in managing information for the *managerial activities*, probably stimulated by the objective difficulty to formalise a manager's job as a set of procedures, in view of the complexity of the decisions that a manager has to make (Maggioni, 1983; Finkelstein, 2003; Snowden, 2004; Paul *et al.*, 2014; Smith, 2015; Kelman *et al.*, 2016). Proof of the ample space given by literature to this topic is the proliferation of studies on *managerial information systems* (Keen and Scott Morton, 1978; Sprague and Watson, 1989; Bullinger and Huber, 1990; Turban, 1993; Martinez, 2004; Laudon and Laudon, 2006; Roberts, Campbell and Vijayasarathy, 2016; Riitta, Mari-Klara and Matti, 2018), including Management Information Systems, Decision Support Systems, Executive Information Systems, Group Decision Support Systems and Business Intelligence Systems.

These systems have added important sophistication levels and, albeit aimed at times, at replacing the individual, they still retain an *instrumental* role vis-à-vis the decision making-process, which, however, should not be taken for granted given the resistance typically put up by managers (Martinez, 2004; Laudon and Laudon, 2006). Perhaps, also for these reasons and considering the separation at least at conceptual level between the information system and the information technology system, whilst acknowledging the great potential offered by information technology, literature appears to be experiencing a fall in contributions merely related to technical issues and application systems (De Marco *et al.*, 2010). Indeed, technologies exist only to the extent to which there are individuals who own them and decide to use them (Martinez, 2004).

Therefore, in addition to organizational procedures and information technologies, focus was also placed on the understanding of the individuals who relate to and use the information systems to interact with one another in line with the so-called *socio-technical approach* (Williams and Edge, 1996; Mumford, 2000).

These contributions are mainly in the technology-user relationship area (Agrifoglio and Metallo, 2010). However, we believe that useful

contributions could also stem from the study of the ways of mutual conditioning between information exchanges and relational mechanisms from an intra-organizational communication perspective. In other words, an information system may not work properly not only due to the obstacles linked to the use of technologies and the resistance that these generate, but also due to issues linked to relationships between the individuals who exchange information. So, if it is true that if two people who have chosen beforehand not to communicate it is unlikely that they will do it for the sole effect of information technologies (Zack and McKenney, 1995), it is also true that their interpersonal communication problems may generate an impact on the quality of the information and vice versa.

According Hambrick, "executives act on the basis of their personalized interpretations of the strategic situations they face and these personalized construals are a function of the executives' experiences, values and personalities. As such, the theory is built on the premise of bounded rationality. Informally complex, uncertain situations are not objectively "knowable" but, rather, are merely interpretable" (Hambrick, 2007; Buyl *et al.* 2016).

On the basis of these assumptions we have the first hypothesis: *the information quality problems depend on relational communication issues rather than technological and organizational factors.*

This hypothesis refers specifically to top management whose decisions typically require, in addition to experience and judgment skills, a knowledge based on different information sources and the involvement of other managers (Sprague, 1980; Daft *et al.*, 1987; Laudon and Laudon, 2006) thus implying interconnection and interdependence conditions.

From this perspective, in this study we adopt the organizational communication approach from an interpersonal point of view and within the top management team working processes (Smith *et al.*, 1994; Amason and Sapienza, 1997; Zorn and Tompson, 2002) based on the following theoretical justifications:

- the information is the link that connects the parties that make up the corporate system (Saraceno, 1973; Maggioni, 1983). Similarly to language, information has sense and meaning only if is used by at least two people within formal and informal networks (Spence, 1969; Daft *et al.*, 1987).
- The giving out and receiving of information is the elementary objective of all kinds of communication (Spence, 1969).
- Executives' decision-making difficulties involve communicating with the people involved (Alavi, 1982), also because information is often conveyed through symbols and language systems and influenced by the so-called "equivocality" generated by the lack of a common perspective (Daft *et al.*, 1987).

In this sense, the way in which information is defined, found and used, and of which a manager may be, depending on the circumstances, either a designer or a spectator, can determine or derive from the internal climate by structuring and re-structuring power, conflict and alliance relationships (Laudon and Laudon, 2006; Mastrobernardino, 2010; Yang, 2015; Kano and Verbeke, 2015; Desai, 2016; Bosse and Phillips, 2016).

The way in which organizational climate is determined by information exchanges has been the subject of special interest in literature. In this connection, an aspect on which researchers focused, albeit with reference not only to the top management teams, concerns the relationship between perception of quality and adequacy of information received (getting enough information) and trust (Ellis and Shokley-Zalabak, 2001), which in turn influences the employee's involvement (Thomas *et al.*, 2009) through the perception of general openness in the organization (listening to the others, encouraging difference of opinion, being frank and candid with others).

**Elena Giaretta**
**Paola Castellani**
**Alessandro Garofalo**
Improving the quality of the information flow among top managers

Several studies have also shown a positive relationship between communication satisfaction and organizational commitment (Raina and Britt Roebuck, 2016; Postmes *et al.*, 2001; Trombetta and Rogers, 1988; Varona, 1996) or organizational climate, albeit in a very wide and multidimensional sense, of which communication among top managers represents just one of the many variables (Invernizzi *et al.*, 2012; Fiocca, 2002).

In any case, such relationships appear to be mainly investigated in terms of the impact of information on interpersonal relationships. At this point we should also stress the existence of a reverse relation, i.e. interpersonal interactions-information, as part of a dual circuit.

*2.2 The identification of information needs from a quality perspective*

The research hypothesis outlined in the previous paragraph underlies the concept of quality of the information flow which can draw from the studies on Total Quality Management (Juran, 1981; Ishikawa, 1985) according to which this quality lies in the ability to meet the expectations of the counterpart which, in this specific case, are top managers. This approach is based on the assumption that the knowledge of their activities and information expectations can be an effective impulse to developing proposals for managing information in line with the approach that in the area of marketing is defined *demand pull perspective*, which, however, is not shared by those who maintain that the initiative should be taken by information technology and organization specialists.

In view of the above, the discipline of information systems, when referring to the *quality of the information flow*, focuses on the *information attributes* from a contents, time, place and form-method perspective. In summary, with special reference to managerial decision-making processes, information should be (Maggioni, 1983; Laudon and Laudon, 2006):
- *relevant*, excluding any useless information which, in addition to not being necessary, may, in the not infrequent cases of "information overload" (van der Heijden, 2009) be even harmful, especially for managerial processes that typically require summarised information;
- *reliable or accurate,* albeit approximate, which is a function of both the loaded data and the data processing procedures, which also includes its *completeness*;
- *clear*, a function of the complexity of language, of the possible electronic format and transmission procedures, which may render information inaccessible and therefore unusable;

- *prompt and/or timely*, both in terms of response times and regularity. At any rate, the recipient should receive the information early enough to make his or her choices;
- *immediately usable*, without the need for further processing.

But above all, information should meet the requirements of its recipient taking into account the peculiar features of the choices to support or a multitude of special information needs (Baccarani, 1988) which, in the case of managerial activities, are subject to frequent change.

From the perspective of information exchanges that we have adopted herein, it may be worthwhile contextualising the information flows in a typical process logic where each manager is at the same time "internal supplier and customer" (Berry, 1981) of information.

Therefore, when defining a quality information flow, a first step is to correctly identify suppliers and recipients, also with a view to reducing the risks of information *overload*, which occur when the same piece of information is provided by different centres, as well as *ambiguity and inconsistency* which is typical in cases where the one information need is met through different and/or conflicting information. In this respect, we should consider that the interrelationships that the information system generates among top management departments are rather complex and hard to define, also due to the integration perspectives among different information subsystems.

Then it is essential that the corporate figures know and are able to express their information needs, specifying the types of information that they consider essential as well as the procedures and timeframes of their presentations, which, again, is not a simple thing for a manager (Aron, 1969).

Different methods have been devised to know what are the information needs of corporate figures, including *business system planning, critical success factors analysis* and *systems analysis* (Maggioni, 1983; Laudon and Laudon, 2006).

The first two methods are both based on interviews of a sample of managers in order to understand how the information required to make decisions is obtained and used. However, in the second case, the assessment is limited to top managers and the information needs are linked to a small number of variables considered by such managers as relevant for the purpose of observing the activities for which they are responsible (Rockart, 1979).

Wider and more complex is the *systems analysis* procedure that requires a 360 degree mapping of a company and its information systems, based not only on user interviews, but also on records, procedures and operations examined by an analyst for the purpose of identifying possible problematic areas. In this case, an improvement-oriented perspective stands out as an additional element. Under this procedure, we can assess alternative solutions in economic-financial, technical and organizational terms by comparing the cost-benefits of each alternative.

The methods described above are part of the logics that are typical of auditing and that require systematic and documented checks by external analysts, in any case by entities other than the individuals who make use of

the information systems (Kanter, 1984). The summary considerations that we can make on such methods include:

- users, managers in particular, are involved only indirectly through interviews;
- these are rather complex and time consuming methods due to the quantity of data, records and procedures to be analysed and assessed and, as a result, they are more expensive;
- a critical issue is often the identification of the actual information needs in a process logic (when, where and how);
- the improvement-oriented perspective is not always included;
- the identification of the reasons behind the different information types and issues does not appear to have been considered.

By overcoming the critical issues described above, the second research hypothesis suggests that a *useful method for identifying top management's specific information needs, for the purpose of improving the quality of communication exchanges, should include the following prerequisites:*

- *simple procedures and exclusive focus on information flows;*
- *direct involvement of participants in the flow from an internal supplier-customer perspective;*
- *identification of issues underlying possible shortfalls;*
- *improvement-oriented approach;*
- *reduced role of external analysts to aim for independent operating conditions.*

To this end, the research came up with a model incorporating these features, which was later tested on 18 organizations.


## 3. Methodological considerations

### 3.1 Unit of analysis

The investigation was conducted on 18 organizations selected in light of the degree of their organizational complexity in terms of departments, where the complexity was linked, among many other factors, to the size of the organization.

Indeed, in large organizational complexes, not only is the volume of required information wider, but also the communication circuits are larger, the number of interconnection points is greater, the processing and dissemination of records become more complicated and the information production process plays a key role.

The background assumption, in other words, is that in structured and formal organizations, the issue of top management communication is more urgent and likewise the need to have a quality communication flow. The full availability and the high degree of interest shown by the participating companies is a clear confirmation of this.

Then, among the many organizations, that in line with this criterion were entitled to participate in the investigation, a selection was made based on previous contacts made by the authors in previous researches.

We cannot name the participating organizations due to their specific request not to do so. However, we can provide an aggregate representation

in terms of size, nature of the property, type of reference market, sectors, geographical location and globalisation.

In providing a summary profile, we can say that they are mainly medium-large organizations (16 out of 18, i.e. approximately 89%), private organizations (16 out of 18, equal to approximately 89%), business to consumer organizations (13 out of 18, equal to 72%) and industrial organizations (12 out of 18, equal to almost 67%).

In Fig. 1 the group is further broken down, albeit in a summary fashion, by sectors, which results in a distribution of the sample over a wider range of sectors.

Fig. 1: Unit of analysis by sector
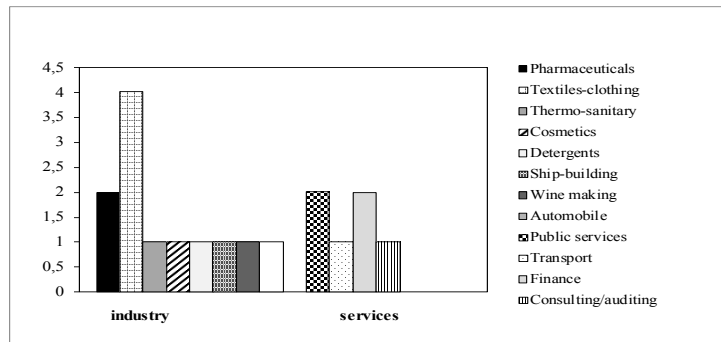


Source: our elaborations

Moreover, from a geographical perspective, most of them are Italian companies (16 out of 18), with exactly half of them (9) based in North-Eastern Italy while the other half are spread over the country.

Albeit not a majority, it should be mentioned that almost 40% of the organizations participating in the investigation were globalized.

Then, in each organization the study was conducted on top management. In other terms, the investigation saw the participation of the main department chiefs with a degree of participation between 71% and 92%.

## 3.2 Research strategy

The research strategy of this study is influenced by Gummesson's *interactive research approach* (2001).

This is a very open and eclectic approach and, intentionally, a bundle of various methods. In this specific case, interactive research, under the influence of the inspiring principles of ethnography (Brewer, 2000) and action research (McArdle and Reason, 2007), is the result of the *joint* application of sundry techniques (collective meetings, individual interviews and narrative action research method, which we will describe shortly) with this application being *repeated* in each of the 18 participating organizations.

In practice, the investigation involved 18 organizations and their main department chiefs with the aim of analysing the process whereby information is exchanged.

Elena Giaretta
Paola Castellani
Alessandro Garofalo
Improving the quality of the information flow among top managers

The 18 cases were investigated during 10 years of professional experience while the average duration of the involvement of each organization was approximately 6 months.

For each of the organizations being investigated, the methods described below were applied. Since a prerequisite for the effectiveness and, better still, the commencement of the research was the awareness of the importance of the topic, preliminary meetings with the company top management were undertaken before the actual investigation in order to stimulate this awareness. In this context, the calculation of the overall cost of top management communication, in terms of man-hours, was particularly useful.

The choice to measure, together with the Ceo's, the cost of the human component of communication flows, and quantify it in a single amount, proved particularly effective in attracting the attention of top management and making it aware of possible issues and opportunities linked not so much to the reduction but rather to the optimisation of costs through the search for possible creative solutions.

Moreover, since the study required the direct and active involvement of individuals, another important assumption was the creation of a group climate that allowed individuals to feel comfortable and free to express themselves, and adopt a constructive approach. Thus, *collective meetings* were set up to encourage the participants to listen and participate, especially workshops on social anxiety and self-diagnostic working groups on listening skills.

At that stage, the top managers were *individually interviewed* for the purpose of assessing their degree of satisfaction in relation to the quality of the flow and identifying the ways they assess it.

Once the interviews were completed, the actual investigation was started based on an ad hoc method, i.e. the *narrative action research method* (NARM), which was the result of the original combination of the action research principles of change promotion and narration and problem solving techniques, which are respectively at the base of role-playing and quality circles.

Thus, the top managers were encouraged to reproduce a typical information flow situation according to the role-playing narration technique.

The aim was to detect any factors capable of creating situations of dissatisfaction, but also to promote in participants the ability of analysing the process in order to remove any shortfalls, in line with the problem-solving spirit which is typical of quality circles.

In brief, the directors of the different corporate departments, under the direct guidance and observation of the researcher, were gathered around a table where each was able to express both his or her information needs and requests and, in exchange, their responses to their peers' requests. The aim was to capture their ordinary activities and social meanings in line with the purest ethnography research, even though real-life situations or people in naturally occurring settings were not actually involved.

Furthermore, by adopting the features of role-playing and quality circles, the participants were provided with the opportunity of highlighting their feelings and experiences underlying the situation thus created. They were also provided with the chance to highlight their way to play in the interaction and communication stages, not only in the eyes of the observer but also of the participants themselves, who could then become aware of their attitudes, receive feedback on their behaviour, appreciate different opinions, improve their listening skills and promote changes to real life in line with the forms of action research.

From this perspective, the NARM played a dual role in this research. On the one hand, it was a research tool to collect data, especially the factors which the quality of the flow may depend on. However, at the same time, it was also used as a system to improve the quality of the information flow. The research aimed at testing its effectiveness by replicating it and highlighting the relevant benefits across the 18 organizations.

### 3.3 Data collection and analysis

#### 3.3.1 The interviews

Each top manager being interviewed was first asked to give a score between 1 (min) and 5 (max) to his or her overall degree of satisfaction in relation to the information exchanges with their peers.

The result was an indicator of the overall degree of satisfaction for each organization, with an average score of 2.24 for the 18 organizations, which is definitely less than satisfactory (3).

Then, we tried to identify the criteria on which the assessment was mainly based.

The responses were grouped in the following categories:
- lack of information ("I don't receive the information I ask for"; "no one is able to provide me with the information I need");
- lack of clarity of the information ("I can't understand the information I receive"; "the information is badly written and I have to read it a few times to understand it"; "many terms are beyond my comprehension");
- incomplete information ("I don't receive all the information I ask for");
- superfluous, ambiguous and inconsistent information ("I send the same request to different decision-making centres and receive different and conflicting answers"; "I don't know whom exactly I should ask for certain information");
- late information ("I receive the information after I take the decision for which I needed it"; "I'm late in my work because I don't receive the information on time");
- unreliable information ("at times I find mistakes in the information I receive").

Each of these variables has different importance depending on specific case, which makes scarcely meaningful any weight allocated to a variable.

The responses confirm more or less the more common features of quality information. The contribution provided by these interviews was that they also highlighted a situation of information needs that are not

made clear in the belief that no one is in a position to satisfy them. This allows us to identify, in addition to the category of "expressed needs" the category of "unexpressed (or latent) needs", which are better described with the NARM outlined below.

### 3.3.2 The narrative action research method (NARM)

This method has allowed us, in the first place, to take a snapshot of the top management true communication flows, through the perceptions by the various chiefs of department involved.

In other words, inter-departmental communication was examined as a process in its own right, i.e. considering the information as it flows: what, from whom to whom, when, how, where and why.

This phase of the investigation was undertaken in two stages.

Firstly, it was made a *mapping of information needs per department*.

Each department chief played the dual role of "recipient" and "provider", and expressed "information needs" and "information duties", respectively.

In other words, each executive defined the information needs of its departments vis-à-vis another, and listed in a specific chart all the information needs, both those expressed and those unexpressed, and showed, for each request, motivations, timeframes-frequencies, flow methods-means as well as the importance of the information.

For the sake of a better outcome of the experiment, managers were asked to highlight only the information that was essential to perform their decision-making duties, with the information being aggregated in macro-categories outlined separately in a detailed document.

At this point, each department was able to view and analyse his or her information duties and learn about the motivations that led to the requests, as well as the flow timeframes and methods, which aspects are not always predefined, perceived or agreed upon.

The charts were then cross-examined to obtain a data matrix containing the various information requests and, as a result, the information duties of each company department.

The data exchange matrix thus created, by revealing in writing and visually the information exchanged for the purpose of achieving the strategic objectives, has allowed an overall background view and a clear explanation of the exact breakdown of workloads, which is an important element for the following phase aimed at *understanding* and *negotiating*.

This phase, compared to the previous more technical phase, has shown a strong relational component that has allowed not just the observer, but also the participants, to better understand the reasons behind the shortfalls, which is an essential prerequisite for their removal and the start of improvement-oriented paths, in line with the very nature of problem solving that, at the time of an analysis, combines learning and change.

The chiefs of the different company departments in their role as both information "suppliers" and "customers" were gathered around a table in the same order as in the matrix to simulate the communication process. The information requests were examined one by one, discussed and, if required, changed or discarded.

This was the more "heated", delicate and controversial stage, in which objectives of use and needs were clarified, reasons leading to communication conflicts emerged and, above all, technical and especially human issues were revealed. And it was especially in this stage that transparency and listening skills turned out to be prerequisites.

*Understanding* was followed by *negotiation* mainly between the two individuals directly involved, but where everybody could contribute with suggestions. This led to the redefinition of the terms of exchange and the identification of ways of improvement, by directing the negotiation outcomes into a final matrix.

The most significant contribution of this process was above all in terms of relationships as, at the conclusion of the project, the organizations found a range of benefits, as confirmed six months later in phone conversations with top management, during which the managers were asked to confirm or otherwise the achievement of the following results:

1. greater integration of the major corporate areas with resulting improvement of decision-making skills (participation by and involvement of a growing number of staff in corporate projects), 16 cases out of 18, equal to approximately 89%;
2. better coordination between decision-making centres, 16 cases out of 18, equal to approximately 89%;
3. greater sense of belonging, 13 cases out of 18, equal to approximately 72%;
4. improvement of the corporate climate, 13 cases out of 18, equal to approximately 72%;
5. creation of conditions for a better listening climate also for the purpose of a greater sharing of corporate values, 14 cases out of 18, equal to approximately 78%;
6. language uniformity, 17 cases out of 18, equal to approximately 94%;
7. improvement of the overall satisfaction level per department, all cases.

## 4. Results

Whilst the interviews showed a degree of dissatisfaction as to the quality of exchanged information, the NARM allowed to go to the root of the shortfalls and identify the underlying causes.

During the NARM the reasons that may have caused information shortfalls emerged from the direct and open dialogue between the various top managers. The following list stemmed from the analysis of the recorded interviews: inconsistent language codes, unpleasant tone of voice, mistrust, information protection forms, information removal, result anxiety and fear of judgment, mistakes due to haste, misunderstandings and conflicts, difficulties in coordinating the flow, pressures on speed and meeting deadlines, lack of set deadlines, excessive workloads, poor regularity, lack of clarity on the relevance of the sender source.

Each of these factors influences in different ways the quality of the information flow as it may affect the capacity to supply the information, its clarity, thoroughness, consistency, timeliness, reliability and relevance of

its source. Fig. 2 shows the logical connection between factors and quality shortfalls depending on the outcome of the "understanding" phase of the NARM. For the sake of a better clarity, the factors that influence the quality of the information flow are arranged in the two side columns.

**Elena Giaretta**
**Paola Castellani**
**Alessandro Garofalo**
Improving the quality of the information flow among top managers

The table shows how different the reasons why the information *is not supplied (lacking)* may be. It may be a genuine choice not to supply the information as a form of protection that may be triggered by the unpleasant tone of the voice of the individual making the request. In the same way, the information may be lacking because it has been removed due to internal conflicts. But at times the information is lacking because it is not even asked for due to a sense of mistrust in pears pairs.

An unclear information may be the result of lexical discrepancies arising from the use of different language codes, but also of pressures on speed and meeting deadlines as well as excessive workloads that can cause mistakes due to haste.

At times information is there, but it is not complete. This situation is brought about by the factors described above, especially excessive workloads that often cause parts of an information request to be neglected.

Typical organizational aspects, such as difficulties in coordinating the flow and lack of clarity on the relevance of the sender source, can then cause an information overload where the information is supplied by different decision-making centres, and likewise ambiguity and inconsistency, when it is not clear whom a certain request should be addressed to or different and/or conflicting answers are supplied to the one information request, which, again, may be due to mistakes due to haste.

*Fig. 2: Factors that influence the quality shortfalls of the information flow*



Source: our elaborations

41
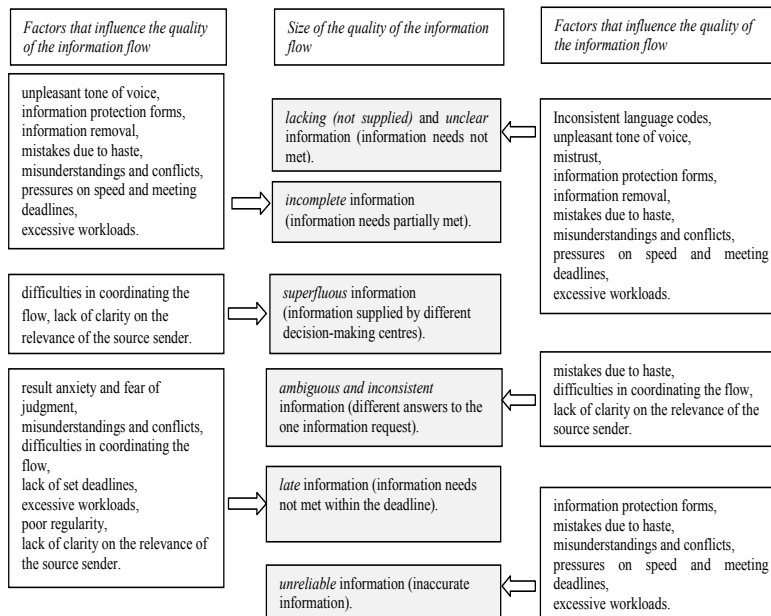
Often, the information *does not meet deadlines (it is late)*, causing chain delays or generating decisions without the support of the required information. In this case, the lack of set deadlines and a poor regularity, may add to the organizational factors earlier described (difficulties in coordinating the flow, excessive workloads, lack of clarity on the relevance of the source sender). Misunderstandings and conflicts can then intentionally delay the information, but a significant role can also be played by result anxiety and fear of judgment, where the fear of being assessed negatively for providing inaccurate or incorrect information may cause a lengthening of the time spent preparing the information.

Finally, information protection forms, mistakes due to haste, misunderstandings and conflicts, pressures on speed and meeting deadlines, and excessive workloads may generate inaccurate and therefore *unreliable* information.

In addition to the identification of those factors that can generate flow quality shortfalls, this study has enabled us to arrive at a *method* for their identification and removal based on role-playing narration technique and quality circuit problem solving technique, where this method draws inspiration from the action research principles of change promotion.

There are three core elements that define it and Fig. 3 provides a schematic description.

The method allows first of all to achieve a visual representation of the flow as a process, highlighting what, from whom to whom, when, how, where and why it flows (analysis-narration). Each department has the option of viewing the exchanged information in a matrix, visualize his or her information requests and duties and learn the reasons behind requests, as well as the flow timeframes and methods, where these aspects are not always predefined, perceived or agreed upon. The horizontal communication flows among the different company departments are basically made transparent, thus facilitating a better understanding of the communication process in its entirety.

*Fig. 3: The three core elements of NARM (Narrative Action Research Method) for the removal of information flow quality shortfalls*

| 1) ANALYSIS-NARRATION<br>*Mapping information needs per department* | Analysing information as it flows: what, from whom to whom, when, how, where and why.<br>Graphic view of the information needs per department vis-à-vis other departments (contents, motivations, timeframes-regularity, methods-means, importance).<br>Building up a matrix of information needs and duties per department. |
|---|---|
| 2) LEARNING<br>*Understanding* | Simulating the communication process sitting around a table in the order of the matrix.<br>Open discussion to clarify purposes, the reasons behind a request and any conflicts. |
| 3) CHANGE<br>*Negotiation* | Redefining the terms of the exchange and identifying ways for improvement.<br>Building a final matrix into which negotiation work flows. |

Source: our elaborations

Through process simulation, this method allows us to open a dialogue which, albeit at times controversial, helps to better understand the mutual needs and the reasons behind the shortfalls and reveal the human and technical components of the issues involved (learning).

**Elena Giaretta**
**Paola Castellani**
**Alessandro Garofalo**
Improving the quality of the information flow among top managers

By building on these assumptions, the method completed its cycle by negotiating new exchange terms and identifying ways of improvement, thus conveying the outcomes of the negotiations into a final matrix (change). Where feasible and necessary, we can also define principles and projects for reviewing the overall information architecture.

Along with a better logical connection of the flow, these changes can achieve greater levels of listening, respect and trust which in turn may have a beneficial influence on the decision-making capacity and the corporate climate as evidenced by the test conducted on the 18 organizations participating in the investigation, thus giving validity to the method.

## 5. Discussion

In conclusion, it may be useful to interpret the results in light of the research questions.

*1) What does the quality of top management information flow depend on?*

The attempt to provide an answer to this question relies in the list of factors that, according to the study, are behind the shortfalls of the top management information flow.

The analysis of their nature, in particular, allows us to develop some early useful considerations. In this respect, it is interesting to observe that, contrary to expectations, among them there are no technical aspects such as the computer system (hardware and software) or individuals' technical skills. This does not mean that they are not considered as important. It is more likely that these aspects are taken for granted, i.e. they represent *implicit conditions of quality*.

Therefore, the reasons behind the quality shortfalls, far from having technical connotations, show a different and dual nature. On the one hand, there are reasons associated with the *interaction* between decision-making centres (unpleasant tone of voice, mistrust, information protection forms, information removal, result anxiety and fear of judgment, mistakes due to haste, misunderstandings and conflicts). On the other hand, the remaining reasons are *organizational* in nature (inconsistent language codes, difficulties in coordinating the flow, pressures on speed and meeting deadlines, lack of set deadlines, excessive workloads, poor regularity, lack of clarity on the relevance of the sender source).

Thus, the first research hypothesis (*the information quality issues depend on relational communication issues, rather than technological and organizational aspects*) is partially confirmed. Indeed, significant is the conditioning power of relational aspects compared to merely technological aspects (not even considered), even though organizational issues retain their importance.

In other words, starting with the assumption that the quality of the information flow among top management features three dimensions,

*technical, organizational and relational*, in this study the technical component did not emerge as a critical component, as it is probably implicit and taken for granted. Instead, according to the perceptions by the participants in the investigation, the aspects that are more important in influencing the quality of top management communication are those of a relational and organizational nature.

These conclusions bring the issue closer to the established studies on *service quality*, where in addition to the technical component of quality, an important factor is the *functional quality* resulting from interactions by the customer, albeit in this specific case, the customer is "internal" to the organization (Gronross, 1984). Indeed, even in our case we are dealing with quality of a service, i.e. the information service that runs between internal suppliers and customers.

*2) How can the quality of the top management information flow be improved?*

The study has validated a method in order to improve the quality of the information flow, featuring the prerequisites suggested through the second research hypothesis:

- *simple procedures and exclusive focus on information flows;*
- *direct involvement of participants in the flow from an internal supplier-customer perspective;*
- *identification of issues underlying possible shortfalls;*
- *improvement-oriented approach;*
- *reduced role of external analysts to aim for independent operating conditions.*

Indeed, the method thus tested:

- is simple, as it is based on the coordinates of a *visual representation of the information flow* and on an exclusive *focus* on the information flow at top management level;
- involves the participating managers not only through interviews but also directly through role-playing and quality circle techniques, making them facilitators of change independently from an external analyst;
- promotes improvement based on the identification of the issues behind the information shortfalls in line with its three core principles: analysis, learning and change.

However, in order to be effective, it requires that at least one condition is met: commitment by the top management.

The feasibility of successfully tackling the communication issues that hinder the top management information flow depends to a large extent on the awareness of such management in perceiving the importance of the quality of information exchanges and relevant implications, not only from a financial perspective but also from a strategic viewpoint in terms of the impact they have on the corporate climate and the decision-making process.

Only where there is a very high awareness of an issue, can people focus on it and act to identify possible actions to change the situation.

And considering the special conditioning power of relational factors, the method makes sense only to the extent to which it is part of a wider project aimed at creating increasing levels of well-being inside the organization.

**Elena Giaretta**
**Paola Castellani**
**Alessandro Garofalo**
Improving the quality of the
information flow among top
managers

Whilst literature has maintained that the quality of information flows can affect the levels of well-being, the study has clearly revealed that a state of internal unease, which is implicit in interactions and within the organization, can affect the quality of the information flow, as part of an obvious circular causality relationship.

Therefore, the improvement of the quality of the communication among top managers is reliant on a more general satisfaction in the workplace, which in turn is associated with the levels of well-being. In this context it may be useful to recall the services "quality wheel" (Heskett, 1987), a sort of virtuous circle that is shaped as in Fig. 4.

*Fig. 4: The quality wheel in top management communication*
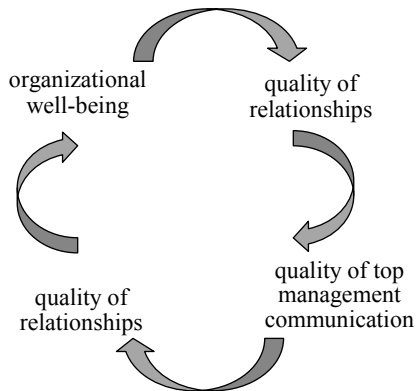


Source: our adaptation from Baccarani, 1988

By adapting the model to the quality of top management communication, this figure shows how it is the result of widespread levels of well-being inside the organization and these can, in turn, be influenced by the quality of communication.

In a mechanism of mutual conditioning, the data availability and accessibility required to work and live in the organization improves interactions among peers, generates trust, listening skills and respect thus spreading the organizational well-being with increasing levels of emotional investment. This, in turn, reduces misunderstandings and conflicts that can potentially be the cause of flow shortfalls (Bonfanti, 2005).

This model is particularly valuable with reference to the interactions at top management level which are typically very close and frequent and that are significantly influenced by behaviours, values and meanings and supported by fragile balances of power.

## 6. Conclusion: contribution and limitations of the research

From a theoretical-conceptual viewpoint, this study has focused on the issue of the strategic information flow and its problems from a relational perspective that appears to have received less consideration in literature.

Under the impulse of the action research principles applied to management - including a focus on the promotion and management of change inside an organization and the cooperation among the individuals involved in the project - we arrived at a method capable of detecting and removing the problems behind communication flow shortfalls.

In the study, this method played the dual role of both research tool and result, and such roles, rather than being "separate, consecutive stages", combine together to merge in line with the perspective which is typical of the interactive research approach adopted herein.

Considering the prevalent relational and organizational nature of the issues thus identified, the method devised offers a contribution that links top management communication to the issue of corporate well-being which in turn depends on the interpersonal and organizational relationships.

From an operational point of view, the study provides a method that, compared to the systems more commonly used, is relatively simpler as it focuses directly on the top management flow. But its most significant contribution is the overcoming of the need for an external analyst, as it provides for improvement-oriented paths set up directly by the managers-customers. In this sense, the information that can be obtained from the exchange matrix on which it is based can be of support, as it assesses, for instance, the commitment of a decision-making centre vis-à-vis another, the quantity of incoming and outgoing information handled by the one decision-making centre, the relationship between existing and non-existing information requested by the same department, the weight of the features of a piece of information (random, occasional, regular, existing, non-existing, etc.), and so forth.

As for its limitations, the success of the method may have been influenced by the exclusive reference to senior level managers who may appear to be more aware of the issues that concern their communication and that affect their decision-making effectiveness. In this context, it would be interesting to extend this method to lower levels, starting with middle-level management.

Again among the limitations, significant weight has the system's capacity to live a life of its own independently of the research. In the study, an external "direction" gave impulse to the method and directed it through the albeit silent presence of the observer. The ability to turn it into a concrete operational tool depends on the will of the company top management. Thus we go back to the question of sensitivity towards these issues linked to the awareness of the importance of top management communication for fostering corporate well-being and the importance of corporate well-being for fostering communication.

## References

AGRIFOGLIO R., METALLO C. (2010), "ERP Acceptance: The Role of Affective Commitment", in D'Atri A., De Marco M., Braccini A.M., Cabiddu F. (Eds.), *Management of the Interconnected World*, Berlin Heidelberg: Springer-Verlag.

Elena Giaretta
Paola Castellani
Alessandro Garofalo
Improving the quality of the
information flow among top
managers

ALAVI M. (1982), "An Assessment of the Concept of Decision Support Systems as Viewed by Senior-Level Executives", *MIS Quarterly*, vol. 6, n. 4, pp. 1-9.

AMASON A.C., SAPIENZA H.J. (1997), "The effects of top management team size and interaction norms on cognitive and affective conflict", *Journal of Management,* vol. 23, n. 4, pp. 495-516.

ARON J.D. (1969), *Information systems in perspective*, Computer Survey, December.

AVGEROU C., MCGRATH K. (2007), "Power, rationality and the art of living through socio-technical change", *MIS Quarterly*, vol. 31, n. 2, pp. 295-315.

BACCARANI C. (1988), *Mutamenti ambientali e condotta strategica delle imprese municipalizzate*, Cedam, Padova.

BERRY L.L. (1981), "The employee as customer", *Journal of Retail Banking*, vol. 3, n. 1, pp. 33-40.

BONFANTI A. (2005), "Alla ricerca dell'armonizzazione dei conflitti organizzativi interni all'impresa", *Sinergie*, n. 68, pp. 75-103.

BOSSE D.A., PHILLIPS R.A. (2016), "Agency Theory and Bounded Self-Interest", *Academy of Management Review*, vol. 41, n. 2, pp. 276-297.

BREWER J.D. (2000), *Ethnography*, Open University Press, Philadelphia.

BULLINGER H.J, HUBER H. (1990), "Which information systems do managers really need?", *European Management Journal*, vol. 8, n. 2, pp. 186-191.

BUYL T., BOONE C., MATTHYSSENS P. (2016), "Upper echelons research and managerial cognition", *Strategic Organization*, vol. 9, n. 3, pp. 240-246.

DAFT R.L., LENGEL R.H., TREVINO L. (1987), "Message Equivocality, Media Selection, and Manager Performance: Implications for Information Systems", *MIS Quarterly,* vol. 11, n. 3, pp. 354-366.

DE MARCO M. (2000), *I sistemi informativi aziendali. Temi di attualità*, Franco Angeli, Milano.

DE MARCO M., IMPERATORI B., ISARI D. (2010), "IS, Organization and Strategy: Convergence or Divergence? A Meta-Analysis", in D'Atri A., De Marco M., Braccini A.M., Cabiddu F. (Eds.), *Management of the Interconnected World*, Springer-Verlag, Berlin Heidelberg.

DESAI V.M. (2016), "The Behavioral Theory of The (Governed) Firm: Corporate Board Influences on Organizations' Responses to Performance Shortfalls", *Academy of Management Journal,* vol. 59, n. 3, pp. 860-879.

ELLIS K., SHOCKLEY-ZALABAK P. (2001), "Trust in top management and immediate supervisor: The relationship to satisfaction, perceived organizational effectiveness, and information receiving", *Communication Quarterly,* n. 49, pp. 383-398.

FINKELSTEIN S. (2003), *Perché i bravi manager sbagliano: e che cosa possiamo imparare dai loro errori*, Etas Libri, Milano.

FIOCCA R. (2002), "L'impresa: un insieme (organizzato) di persone che comunica", *Sinergie*, n. 59, pp. 77-90.

GRÖNROOS C. (1984), "A service quality model and its marketing implications", *European Journal of Marketing*, vol. 18, n. 4, pp. 36-44.

GUMMESSON E. (2001), "Are current research approaches in marketing leading us astray?", *Marketing Theory*, vol. 1, n. 1, pp. 27-48.

HAMBRICK D.C. (2007), "Upper echelons theory: an update", *Academy of Management Review*, vol. 32, n. 2, pp. 334-343.

HESKETT J.L. (1987), "Lessons in the service sector", *Harvard Business Review,* March-April, pp. 119-126.

INVERNIZZI E., BIRAGHI S., ROMENTI S. (2012), "Entrepreneurial communication and the strategic role of internal communication", *Sinergie*, n. 87, pp. 149-170.

ISHIKAWA K. (1985), *What is Total Quality Control?,* Prentice-Hall Inc., Englewood Cliffs, N.J.

JURAN J.M. (1981), *Juran on Quality Improvement*, Juran Institute Inc.

KANO L., VERBEKE A. (2015), "The Three Faces of Bounded Reliability: Alfred Chandler and The Micro-Foundations of Management Theory", *California Management Review*, vol. 58, n. 1, pp. 97-122.

KANTER J. (1984), *Management Information Systems,* Prentice-Hall, Inc., Engelwood Cliffs, N.Y., Usa.

KEEN P.G.W., SCOTT MORTON M. (1978), *D.S.S.: An Organizational Perspective*, Addison-Wesley.

KELMAN S., SANDERS R., PANDIT G. (2016), "I Won't Back Down? Complexity and Courage in Government Executive Decision Making", *Public Administration Review*, vol. 76, n. 3, pp. 465-471.

LAUDON K.L., LAUDON J. (2006), *Management dei sistemi informativi,* Pearson, Prentice Hall, Milano.

MAGGIONI V. (1983), *Il sistema informativo aziendale,* Cedam, Padova.

MARTINEZ M. (2004), *Organizzazione, informazioni e tecnologie*, Il Mulino, Bologna.

MASTROBERNARDINO P. (2010), "La governance del sistema impresa tra istituzionalizzazzione e azione del soggetto imprenditoriale", *Sinergie*, n. 81, pp. 135-171.

MCARDLE K.L., REASON P. (2007), "Action research and organization development", in Cummings T. (Eds.), *Handbook of Organization Development*, Sage Publications, Thousand Oaks, CA.

MOM T.J.M., VAN DEN BOSCH F.A.J., VOLBERDA H.W. (2007), "Investigating Mangers' Exploration and Exploitation Activities. The Influence of Top-Down, Bottom-Up, and Horizontal Knowledge Inflows", *Journal of Management Studies,* vol. 44, n. 6, pp. 910-931.

MUMFORD E. (2000), "A Socio-Technical Approach to Systems Design", *Requirements Engineering*, vol. 5, n. 2, pp. 125-133.

NOLAN R.L. (1982), "Managing Information Systems by Committee", *Harvard Business Review*, vol. 60, n. 4, pp. 72-79.

PAUL S., MÜLLER H., PREISER R., DE LIMA NETO F.B., MARWALA T., DE WILDE P. (2014), "Developing a management decision-making model based upon a complexity perspective with reference to the Bee Algorithm", *Emergence: Complexity and Organization*, vol. 16, n. 4, pp. 1-13.

POSTMES T., TANIS M., DE WIT B. (2001), "Communication and commitment in organizations: A social identity approach", *Group Processes and Intergroup Relations*, vol. 4, n. 3, pp. 227-246.

PRIDA B., GRIJALVO M. (2008), "The socio-technical approach to work organization. An essential element in Quality Management System", *Total Quality Management,* vol. 19, n. 4, pp. 343-352.

RAES A.M.L., HEIJLTJES M.G., GLUNK U., ROE R.A. (2011), "The interface of the top management team and middle managers: a process model", *Academy of Management Review,* vol. 36, n. 1, pp. 102-126.

RAINA R., BRITT ROEBUCK D. (2016), "Exploring Cultural Influence on Managerial Communication in Relationship to Job Satisfaction, Organizational Commitment, and the Employees' Propensity to Leave in the Insurance Sector of India", *International Journal of Business Communication*, vol. 53, n. 1, pp. 97-130.

RIITTA H., MARI-KLARA S., MATTI R. (2018), "Metaphors in managerial and employee sensemaking in an information systems project", *Information Systems Journal,* vol. 28, n. 1, pp. 142-174.

ROBERTS N., CAMPBELL D.E., VIJAYASARATHY L.R. (2016), "Using Information Systems to Sense Opportunities for Innovation: Integrating Postadoptive Use Behaviours with the Dynamic Managerial Capability Perspective", *Journal of Management Information System*, vol. 33, n. 1, pp. 45-69.

ROCKART J.F. (1979), "Chief Executives define their own data needs", *Harvard Business Review*, March-April, vol. 57, n. 2, pp. 81-93.

SARACENO P. (1973), "Introduzione all'edizione italiana", in Beer S., *L'azienda come sistema cibernetico*, Isedi, Milano.

SMITH K.G., SMITH K.A., OLIAN J.D., O'BANNON D.P., SCULLY J.A. (1994), "Top Management Team Demography and Process: The Role of Social Integration and Communication", *Administrative Science Quarterly*, vol. 39, n. 3, pp. 412-438.

SMITH W.K. (2015), "Dynamic Decision Making: A Model Of Senior Leaders Managing Strategic Paradoxes", *Academy of Management Journal*, vol. 1015, n. 1, pp. 58-89.

SNOWDEN D., STANBRIDGE P. (2004), "The landscape of management: Creating the context for understanding social complexity", *Emergence: Complexity and Organization,* vol. 6, n. 1/2, pp. 140-148.

SPENCE A.C. (1969), *Management Communication,* MacMillan, London.

SPRAGUE R.H. (1980), "A Framework for the Development of Decision Support Systems", *MIS Quarterly,* vol. 4, n. 4, pp. 1-26.

SPRAGUE R.H., WATSON H.J. (1989), *Decision Support Systems: Putting Theory into Practice,* Prentice Hall, N.J.

STAHL BC. (2007), "Ethics, Morality and Critique: An Essay on Enid Mumford's Socio-Technical Approach", *Journal of Association for Information Systems*, vol. 8, n. 9, pp. 479-490.

THOMAS G., ZOLIN R., HARTMAN J.L. (2009), "The Central Role of Communication in Developing Trust and its Effect on Employee Involvement", *Journal of Business Communication,* vol. 46, n. 3, pp. 287-310.

TROMBETTA J.J., ROGERS D.P. (1988), "Communication, climate, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment", *Management Communication Quarterly,* vol. 1, n. 4, pp. 494-514.

TURBAN E. (1993), *Decision Support and Expert Systems: Management Support Systems,* Macmillan, N.Y.

VAN DER HEIJDEN H. (2009), *Designing Management Information Systems,* Oxford University Press, New York.

VARONA F. (1996), "Relationship Between Communication Satisfaction and Organizational Commitment in Three Guatemalan Organizations", *Journal of Business Communication*, vol. 33, n. 2, pp. 111-140.

WILLIAMS R., EDGE D. (1996), "The Social Shaping of Technology", *Research Policy,* vol. 25, n. 6, pp. 865-899.

XIANG J., ARCHER N., DETLOR B. (2014), "Business process redesign project success: the role of socio-technical theory", *Business Process Management Journal,* vol. 20, n. 5, pp. 773-792.

YANG I. (2015), "Perceived conflict avoidance by managers and its consequences on subordinates' attitudes", *Business Ethics: A European Review*, vol. 24, n. 3, pp. 282-296.

ZACK M.H., MCKENNEY J.L. (1995), "Social Context and Interaction in Ongoing Computer Supported Management Groups", *Organization Science,* vol. 6, n. 4, pp. 394-422.

ZORN T.JR., TOMPSON G. (2002), "Communication in top management teams", in Lawrence R. Frey (Ed.), *New directions in group communication*, Sage Publications, Thousand Oaks, CA.

**Academic or professional position and contacts**

**Elena Giaretta**
Full Professor of Management
University of Verona - Italy
email: elena.giaretta@univr.it

**Paola Castellani**
Researcher of Management
University of Verona - Italy
email: paola.castellani@univr.it

**Alessandro Garofalo**
Garofalo & Idee Associate srl
email: garofalo@garofalo.it

# The contribution of systems and service research to rethinking higher education programs: a T-shaped model[1]

Marialuisa Saviano - Francesco Polese - Francesco Caputo
Leonard Walletzký

## Abstract

*Purpose of the paper: Building upon the advancements in knowledge proposed by the research stream about the "T-shaped professional", the paper aims to investigate the opportunities and key factors of rethinking traditional education models and programs by exploring the contribution of service research in the field of education through the interpretative lens of systems thinking.*

*Methodology: The paper traces a wide conceptual framework rooted in systems thinking and service research with the intent of highlighting the contribution of a T-shaped view in higher education programs. The proposed conceptual arguments are then tested through the analysis of the Master's Degree program in Service Science, Management and Engineering (SSME) of the Masaryk University in Brno (Czech Republic).*

*Results: The paper proposes basic arguments for the development of a T-shaped model in higher education programs and empirical evidence concerning the possibility of implementing an effective T-shaped approach based on systems thinking in order to rethink higher education programs.*

*Practical implications: The paper provides a path to combine traditional hyper-specialized knowledge with more dynamic and cross-sectional capabilities in higher education programs.*

*Originality of the paper: A wide perspective about the "T-shaped professionals" as a possible reference model in which vertical expertise is combined with horizontal capabilities and cross-sectional knowledge is proposed in the light of Systems Thinking and Service Research.*

*Key words: Education models; multi- and trans-disciplinary knowledge; systems thinking; service research; T-Shaped professionals.*

## 1. Introduction

Nowadays, the increasing complexity of social and economic dynamics is pushing both researchers and decision makers to search for new models, approaches, and instruments to better understand and face new challenges (Holling, 2001). Old approaches and perspectives are proving useless in supporting organizations in defining efficient, effective, and suitable managerial pathways and strategies (Boyatzis, 2006).

---

[1]   Best paper for the 19th Toulon-Verona Conference "Excellence in Services University of Huelva in Andalucia, Spain, 5-6 September 2016.

Building on these reflections, various authors have tried to identify requirements to enrich the set of knowledge, competences, and capabilities of organizations with new, more performant instruments (Allee, 1997; Yang, 2010). Several authors have focused their attention on the relationship between providers and users (Ravald and Grönroos, 1996), others have pointed to the role of organizational models in ensuring a more efficient and effective use of available resources (Pfeffer and Salancik, 2003), and to the contribution that Information and Communication Technologies can offer in terms of better acquisition, documentation, and application of the knowledge required to manage social and economic dynamics (Malecki, 1997).

Despite the advancements in knowledge offered by all these contributions, they appear to pivot mainly on the individual dimensions of company pathways and behaviours (relationships with the market, use of resources, knowledge management etc.). In addition, a holistic approach that is necessary to support organizational behaviours in facing emerging social and economic dynamics is still missing (Burnes, 2004).

Growing social and economic complexity can be interpreted as the consequence of the increasing interconnection between different dimensions, perspectives, and aims (Savory and Butterfield, 1998). This reveals the inadequacy of traditional hyper-specialized knowledge in supporting the effective understanding of dynamics as a whole (McMillan, 2008), and underlines the need to improve the capability of organizations and people to link different social and economic dimensions to a common interpretative path (Del Giudice *et al.*, 2016). Accordingly, a wider perspective inclusive of different hyper-specialized contributions and approaches is required to understand the multiple dimensions engaged in the construction of complexity (Barile *et al.*, 2015c).

In order to bridge this gap, the paper aims to enrich previous contributions regarding the management of emerging social and economic challenges by focusing on the role of human resources in understanding and managing the multi-faceted nature of complexity (Jackson and Schuler, 1995). More specifically, the work aims to investigate the following research questions: *1] How can Human resources support organizations in understanding and managing social and economic complexity? 2] What competencies, capabilities, and knowledge are human resources required to face emerging social and economic challenges? 3] Is it possible to define a common shared approach to train human resources to manage increasing variety?*

The structure of the paper is as follows: after this introduction, in section 2, a description of the theoretical and conceptual background underpinning our reflections is briefly presented . In section 3, a conceptual model devised to support the emergence of multi- and trans- disciplinary education programs is proposed. In section 4, the potential contribution of a change in perspective in higher education programs is discussed with reference to the case of the Master's Degree program in Service Science, Management and Engineering (SSME) of the Masaryk University in Brno (Czech Republic). Finally, in section 5 some concluding remarks and future lines of research are outlined.

## 2. Theoretical and conceptual background

### 2.1 The need for a multi- and trans-disciplinary approach in education

Marialuisa Saviano
Francesco Polese
Francesco Caputo
Leonard Walletzký
The contribution of systems
and service research to
rethinking higher education
programs: a T-shaped model

Over the last twenty years, increasing pressures imposed by social and economic changes such as globalization, the evolution in consumer lifestyle, and increasing peer to peer information sharing, have profoundly affected companies' strategies and behaviours (DeLanda, 2006). Many companies have perceived such emerging dynamics as a risk for their market shares and have tried to defend their position by focusing their attention on very specific activities and processes (Doyle and Saunders, 1985).

In such a context, specialized human resources endowed with specific knowledge in delimited domains (Miles and Snow, 1984) were required. Following market demand, public and private 'educators' have started to build more specialized learning pathways addressed to improving people's capabilities to analyze, understand, and manage all the specific dimensions of particular processes and activities (Ulrich, 1997). According to Baird and Meshoulam (1988), the tangible evidence of this trend may be seen in the emergence of the hyper-specialized, knowledge- based society in which we all live.

The opportunities and advantages offered by specialized learning pathways and human resources have been analyzed by various research communities and in accordance with multiple viewpoints (Lepak and Snell, 1999). According to Torraco and Swanson (1995), specialized knowledge offers human resources the opportunities to solve companies' problems more quickly. Similarly, Porter (1990) outlines that the in-depth knowledge of the dimensions of social and economic phenomena is the most efficient way to support organizational strategies and plans. Alchian and Demsetz (1972) furthermore show that there is a strong correlation between the hyper-specialized knowledge of human resources and companies' economic performance. Finally, Kakabadse *et al.* (2003) underline - via a systematic literature review - the growing attention of researchers and decision makers in identifying suitable pathways to improve the specialized knowledge of human resources.

Despite the evidence and advancements in knowledge that have been offered by these contributions, emerging dynamics are showing the incapacity of traditional hyper-specialized models to offer suitable solutions in facing many social and economic challenges (Kline, 1995) that are still in search of solutions. According to Shiva (1987), models and approaches based on such knowledge are not able to support organizational processes and strategies in facing emerging challenges for two main reasons: 1] the overlapping of dimensions, pathways, and resources hinders the identification of individual variables to which specialized knowledge is to be applied, and 2] the rapidity in change of social and economic dynamics renders approaches based on studies of individual dimensions and their connection futile and untenable.

In reflecting on these considerations, some researchers have started to underline the need to devise a more holistic view of social and economic

phenomena in order to understand them (Gummesson, 1991; Giddings *et al.*, 2002). Building on the interpretative contribution offered by eminent thinkers such as Kuhn (1962), von Bertalanffy (1971), Lovelock (1972), Bohm (1980), and Capra (1996), other researchers have started to highlight the need for wider interpretative approaches (Tichy and Devanna, 1986).

Over the last few years, an increasing number of contributions, ideas, and perspectives have attempted to shift the attention from a reductionist to a holistic view (Mele *et al.*, 2010; Golinelli *et al.*, 2012; Saviano and Caputo, 2012, 2013). Furthermore, various research streams have underlined the need to frame multi- and trans-disciplinary approaches to face emerging challenges (Wagner *et al.*, 2011), and some organizations have changed their approaches and structures to build wider cross-cultural pathways (Van Der Vegt and Bunderson, 2005).

In this emerging pathway addressed to supporting 'holistic organizations', human resources are key drivers on which to 'act' to build new perspectives for the management of future organizations (Gupta and Singhal, 1993). More specifically, the ways in which human resources are educated and trained represent a potentially suitable pathway to improve the efficiency, effectiveness, and sustainability of future generations of companies (Schuler, 1992).

### 2.2 Directions from system thinking in defining a multi- and trans-disciplinary education approach

The topics of human knowledge and learning processes are some of the most debated from different viewpoints in managerial, psychological and sociological studies (Stacey, 2001). Among the contributions offered in such domains, an interesting advancement in knowledge was made by Bloom *et al.* (1956), with reference to the possible classification of cognitive levels in learning processes.

According to the authors, every learning process can be divided into the following levels, classified from the simplest to the most complex: 1) Knowledge, 2) Comprehension, 3) Application, 3) Analysis, 4) Synthesis and 4) Evaluation (see Table 1).

*Tab. 1: The levels of Bloom's taxonomy*

| Bloom's taxonomy | Description |
|---|---|
| Knowledge | Refers to the acquisition of information related to experiences lived and/or actions carried out. |
| Comprehension | Refers to the ability to understand the meaning of information acquired from the context. |
| Application | Is related to the ability to use acquired information in different contexts or situations. |
| Analysis | Concerns the ability to break down available information into their essential parts. |
| Synthesis | Refers to the capabilities to combine available information in new conceptual frameworks and mental models. |
| Evaluation | Is related to the capabilities to evaluate the usefulness of specific information and knowledge in solving different problems or in understanding different scenarios. |

Source: Adapted from Bloom *et al.* (1956)

Bloom *et al.*, moreover, identified three domains that are involved in each learning process: 1) Psychomotor, 2) Cognitive, and 3) Affective. By combining these contributions, it is possible to define a conceptual framework that is useful in investigating each kind of learning process while adopting a holistic perspective (see Figure 1).

**Marialuisa Saviano**
**Francesco Polese**
**Francesco Caputo**
**Leonard Walletzký**
The contribution of systems and service research to rethinking higher education programs: a T-shaped model

*Fig. 1: A representation of learning processes in light of Bloom's levels and domains*
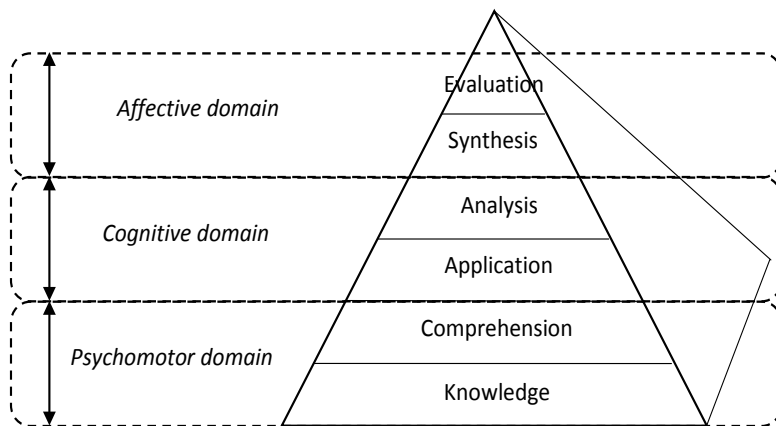


Source: Adapted from Bloom *et al.* (1956)

Reflecting upon the proposal of Bloom *et al.* (1956), it is possible to notice that education approaches based on the development of hyper-specialized knowledge primarily impact the Psychomotor domain, while they offer few contributions with reference to the management and implementation of the other two domains in higher complexity contexts. In this respect, Banathy (1991) outlines that there are five main reasons that confirm the inadequacy of hyper-specialized education models in supporting the management of complexity: 1) the incremental approach, 2) the poor integration of solutions and ideas, 3) the prevalence of a discipline based approach, 4) the reductionist view, and 5) the inability to see beyond the existing system.

In order to bridge these gaps, a potential path to define how education programs should evolve to support the improvement of human resources' cognitive and affective domains is offered by the systems thinking approach (Beer, 1985; Espejo, 1994; Checkland, 1999; Golinelli, 2010; Barile and Saviano, 2011; Barile *et al.*, 2012). As highlighted by Senge *et al.* (1994), the systems thinking approach has overcome the boundaries of the reductionist view, enabling a different way of perceiving and interpreting the world. Accordingly, Kim (1995) underlines that systems thinking highlights the relevance of the connection between the parts in understanding the whole. Recognizing the potential contributions that system thinking could offer in the domain of educational programs, a useful interpretative support is that of the Viable Systems Approach (VSA) (Saviano *et al.*, 2017a). More specifically, according to VSA directions, every system (organization, company, people, etc.) can be analyzed as an

Information Variety (Barile, 2009), which is a combination of information units, interpretation schemes, and categorical values (Barile and Saviano, 2010) (See Table 2).

*Tab. 2: VSA levels*

| VSA levels | Description |
|---|---|
| Information Units | "Information units represent the 'structural' composition of knowledge that is the amount of data owned by the viable system including all that it can perceive or can further determine by processing and transforming into information significant to the knowledge process". |
| Interpretation Schemes | Interpretative schemes represent knowledge patterns and refer to how information is organized within the viable system's whole variety. Without such logical interpretation schemes, every piece of information would appear new to the systems every time we perceive it and, consequently, the system would need to create a new interpretative model to explain and understand it every time". |
| Categorical Values | "Categorical values represent the most relevant dimension of the information variety and qualify the viable system's values and strong beliefs, defining the system's identity. Categorical values are responsible for accepting/refusing rational elaborations and determining the functioning of interpretative schemes. They act by subjectively filtering incoming information in the interaction process" |

Source: Barile and Saviano (2013): 46-47

This representation appears aligned with the domains of learning processes (psychomotor, cognitive, and affective) identified by Bloom *et al.* (1956), it also outlines potential directions for building holistic educational programs, and for supporting the identification of a potential knowledge taxonomy (see Table 3).

Notwithstanding the possible advancement pathways in knowledge suggested by our considerations, other questions are still open with reference to how a more holistic education approach could support people in facing challenges imposed by emerging complexity (Barile and Saviano, 2017). In this respect, it should be underlined that individual knowledge, competences, and capabilities are not enough to manage the various dimensions involved in social and economic dynamics (Barile and Polese, 2010; Barile *et al.*, 2012). Following this line of reasoning, we should investigate how it is possible to combine different forms of knowledge, competencies, and capabilities to face social and economic challenges (Barile *et al.* 2013; Saviano *et al.*, 2016). In this respect, recent advancements in service research seem to offer potential contribution. Accordingly, the following subsection investigates the potential contribution of service research to the emergence of a multi- and trans-disciplinary education approach.

Marialuisa Saviano
Francesco Polese
Francesco Caputo
Leonard Walletzký
The contribution of systems
and service research to
rethinking higher education
programs: a T-shaped model

*Tab. 3: Directions from vSA to manage Bloom's domains*

| Bloom's domains | vSA levels | Directions from vSA | vSA's knowledge taxonomy |
|---|---|---|---|
| Psychomotor | Information Units | The improvement of the psychomotor domain requires the acquisition of knowledge and information about the phenomenon and the actions to be managed. It requires support of information sharing and knowledge acquisition. | *Intellectual knowledge* Refers to the information set on which decisions and strategies are based (Machlup and Leeson, 1979). |
| Cognitive | Interpretation Schemes | The improvement of the cognitive domain requires the building of mental models and conceptual frameworks that are capable of supporting the links between various available knowledge. It acts on the organization of information through knowledge documentation and the building of mental maps. | *Epistemological knowledge* Acts in the case in which it is necessary to combine different kinds of information in order to build new pathways to face unknown problems (Perkins, 1993). |
| Affective | Categorical Values | The affective domain involves in-depth social and psychological dimensions. It identifies strong beliefs on which to act to build individual identity and identify aligned profiles with which to interact. | *Sensorial knowledge* Influences the ways in which individuals make sense of the external world as a consequence of their perceptions (Parr, 2010). |

Source: Authors' elaboration

## 2.3 The contribution of service research to the emergence of a multi- and trans-disciplinary education approach

The education domain is one of the most discussed service fields both in managerial and marketing studies (Metcalfe, 2005). Over the last few years, a growing number of researchers have analyzed it from different viewpoints as a consequence of the increasing relevance of the service perspective (Schneider and Bowen, 1993; Hill, 1995; Sallis, 2014; Polese *et al.*, 2016; Saviano *et al.* 2017b).

As pointed out by Ng and Forbes (2009) the education field is an a-typical service domain, given that the perceived value of education is hard to define and that there is no direct link between the cost of the service and its benefits.

Despite this, research streams based on service logic can offer interesting contributions in the definition of education programs capable of better capturing and facing challenges imposed by emerging social and economic complexity (Foropon *et al.*, 2013). From this perspective, Lusch and Vargo (2014) outline that society can be analyzed in terms of entities that are interconnected to share knowledge, competences, and capabilities to build more efficiency, effectiveness, and sustainable solutions to satisfy market needs. Accordingly, one of the most relevant challenges in the building of efficient, effective, and sustainable solutions is the definition of

pathways capable of supporting the sharing of knowledge, competences, and capabilities (Akaka *et al.*, 2012; Di Nauta *et al.*, 2015; Caputo *et al.*, 2016; Lusch *et al.*, 2016).

To achieve this aim, as underlined by Lawson (2004), a shared language capable of supporting relationships among human resources endowed with different kind of knowledge, competences, and capabilities requires defining. Moreover, the building of a shared language also requires the identification of shared norms (Lawson and Briar-Lawaon, 1997; Calabrese *et al.*, 2013; Saviano *et al.*, 2014) and conceptual frameworks (Lawrence, 2015; Evangelista *et al.*, 2016).

Considering the above, traditional hyper-specialized education programs demonstrate all their uselessness as they pivot on the building of sectorial knowledge and languages (Hefley and Murphy, 2008). At the same time, the few existing studies on the implementation of multi- and trans- disciplinary education programs show their relevant benefits in terms of learners' capabilities to better understand problems related to different topics (Wicklein and Schell, 1995), to communicate more easily and to share information with colleagues in order to find better solutions (Glushko, 2008) and more rapid problem solving techniques capable of covering the multiple dimensions of a specific problem (Coyle *et al.*, 2006). In addition to relevant advantages, these studies also point out some obstacles in building multi- and trans- disciplinary education programs related to: 1] the definition of shared learning processes (Brown, 1991), 2] the professional identity of students with knowledge based on different topics (Eylon and Linn, 1988), and 3] opportunities to apply multi- and trans- disciplinary knowledge in a society that is strictly related to the reductionist view (Ng *et al.*, 2011).

In light of such considerations and in adopting the interpretative lens offered by a service logic, a relevant issue needs to be investigated, given the emerging need for multi- and trans- disciplinary approaches, i.e. *value co-creation*. According to Vargo *et al.* (2008), value co-creation emerges as a consequence of the interaction between the different entities that share reciprocal knowledge, competences, and capabilities and define common solutions to their reciprocal satisfaction. The application of this proposition to the domain of multi- and trans-disciplinary education programs requires investigating a relevant question: *how is it possible to support interactions between people endowed with different specialized knowledge, languages and perspectives?*

To offer a potential answer to this question, which can also contribute to understanding how a person can effectively integrate knowledge deriving from different domains, the next section investigates the conceptual framework of the 'T-shaped' model in the light of systems thinking and service logic as a potential contribution to rethinking education programs.

## 3. A potential model for rethinking education programs

Among the various theoretical and empirical contributions offered to build education programs that are better able to face the challenges

imposed by emerging complex dynamics, the promising research stream on the "T-shaped" model is attracting interest among scholars from several disciplinary domains (Hansen and Von Oetinger, 2001; Enders and de Weert, 2009; Spohrer *et al.*, 2010).

Marialuisa Saviano
Francesco Polese
Francesco Caputo
Leonard Walletzký
The contribution of systems
and service research to
rethinking higher education
programs: a T-shaped model

The concept of "T-shaped people" was introduced by David Guest (1991) to describe a professional profile that is "equally comfortable with information systems, modern management techniques and the 12-tone scale" (p. 12). Building on this first contribution, an increasing number of studies have started to investigate the opportunities related to "T-shaped people" or "T-shaped professionals" as human resources capable of combining in-depth vertical knowledge in specific fields, disciplines or systems with horizontal capabilities in an attempt to shift between them (Spohrer and Maglio, 2010). Various contributions have investigated the differences between "I-shaped" profiles - built by actual education programs - and the "T-shaped" profiles required to face emerging social and economic complexity (Donofrio *et al.,* 2010). Advantages related to the opportunity for the emergence of "T-shaped" people have been analyzed from diverse viewpoints both for organizations (Coates, 2012) as well as for society (Rust *et al.*, 2010). Some contributions have also been offered with reference to the potential measure of "T-shaped" people and professionals focusing on their experience and knowledge (Glushko, 2008). Finally, updates were proposed in terms of π-shaped knowledge, which is generated by the interaction among different t-shaped profiles (Barile *et al.*, 2012). However, despite such progress in knowledge, a shared approach to its implementation and application is still missing (Fisk and Grove, 2010).

In order to bridge this gap, the paper proposes to act on education programs as a way to support the emergence and the building of T-shaped profiles. Adopting the interpretative lens offered by system thinking and service logic, it is possible to highlight that the emersion of T-shaped profiles requires a change in the kind of knowledge on which education programs should be based. In terms of the proposed Information variety model, what is missing is the capability of performing effective integration of variety when dealing with very different, variable and unpredictable problems. This approach implies shifting attention from the level of information to the levels of interpretation schemes and categorical values where knowledge is structured in deep cognitive models that significantly impact upon interaction in any co-creation context (Barile *et al.*, 2015a; Saviano, 2015). In this respect, as outlined by Nooteboom (2006), interaction among dissimilar cognitive frameworks supports the contamination of different knowledge offering the opportunity for hybridization and its application in different contexts of problem solving. From such a perspective, as also essentially outlined by Elmquist and Johansson (2011), the real contribution offered by the T-shaped model is related to the shift in focus from the definition, sharing, and use of information that is useful in supporting a problem solving approach to the decoding of interpretation schemes and categorical values that is useful in supporting a decision making perspective. More specifically, the ability of t-shaped profiles to apply specialized knowledge in different fields and

disciplines is related to their endowment of interpretation schemes and categorical values (Barile *et al.*, 2015b) that, acting in terms of Cognitive and Affective domains, resolves both conditions of problem solving (vertical bar) and the dynamics of decision making (horizontal bar), thus building opportunities to shift from a reductionist to a holistic view (see Figure 2).

*Fig. 2: A conceptual representation of the T-shaped profile*
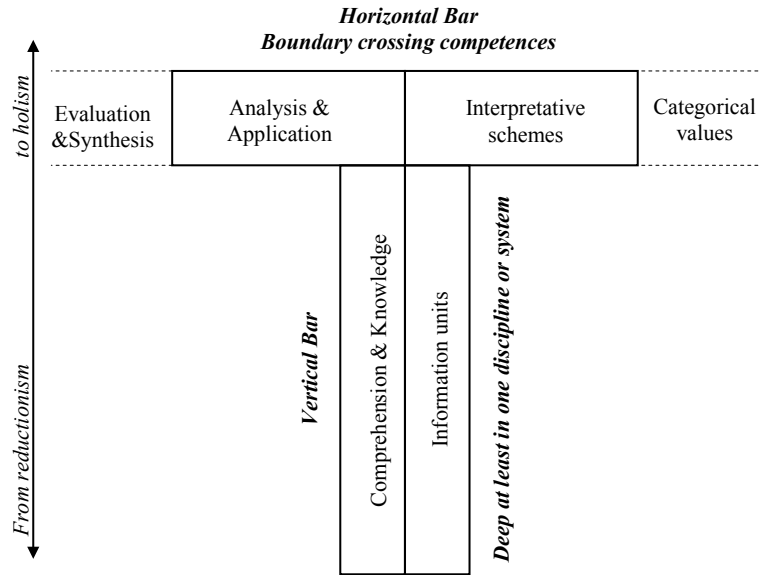


Source: Elaboration from Barile *et al.*, 2014.

Essentially, the t-shaped profile represents a new challenge in the field of education programs because it combines specialized knowledge with horizontal competences, thus opening to the possibility of a recursive multi- and trans- disciplinary approach to knowledge creation (Karjalainen and Salimäki, 2008). In this respect, each t-shaped profile becomes a piece of a complex puzzle that acquires a different structure with reference to the ways in which different profiles are dynamically composed (see Figure 3).

In summary, acting on the build of t-shaped profiles, it is possible to overcome the limits of an apparent reductionist approach in many education programs (Spohrer *et al.*, 2010). In accordance with this, the t-shaped model enables the opportunity to rethink the approach in education programs because it represents a concrete application of principles, directions, and guidelines of systems thinking and service logic in the education domain. It also supports the disclosure of the competences and knowledge required by future professional profiles to understand and manage social and economic complexity (see Figure 4).

**Marialuisa Saviano**
**Francesco Polese**
**Francesco Caputo**
**Leonard Walletzký**
The contribution of systems
and service research to
rethinking higher education
programs: a T-shaped model

*Fig. 3: A conceptual representation of interactions between T-shaped profiles*
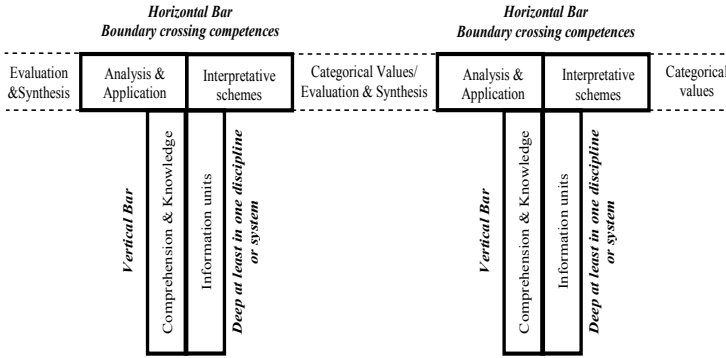


Source: Elaboration from Barile and Saviano, 2013, p. 53.

*Fig. 4: A T-shaped model for rethinking higher education programs*
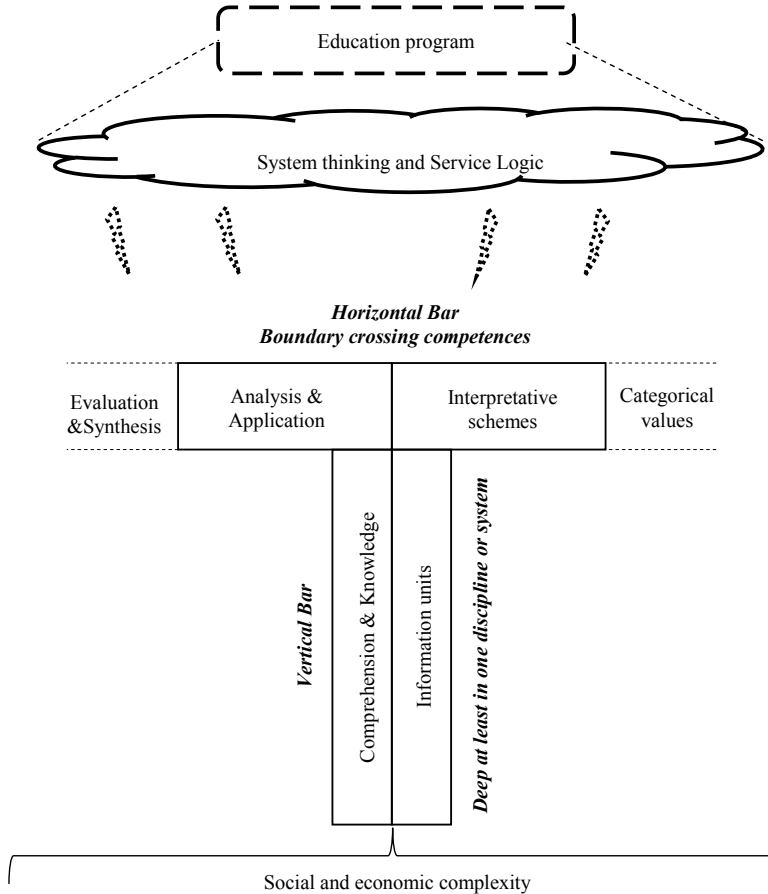


Source: Authors' elaboration.

With respect to the study on the contributions of T-shaped professional profiles, in the following section a brief discussion of the Master Degree program in SSME of the Masaryk University as an example of T-shaped based education program is presented to outline advantages and opportunities of a change in perspective in education approaches.

## 4. Insights from the Master's Degree program in SSME of the Masaryk University in Brno

The SSME (Service Science, Management and Engineering) study program was delivered for the first time at the Faculty of Computer Science of Masaryk University in 2008. It was a two-year Master's Study program, designed for graduates of IT-oriented study programs.

The demand for the new profile of graduates from the Faculty of Computer Science also came from the employers of firms in the ICT industry. They were asking not only for developers and programmers, but also for experts, capable of leading complex projects or driving portfolios of the project, communicating with customers from non-IT domains and understanding the complexity of multi- and transdisciplinary problems.

Many of the new courses were developed *ex novo*. The design of the courses was different - they were practically oriented, based on real business case studies and taught by external experts - to show students a more practical application and implementation of theoretical frameworks. They also contributed to the attractiveness of the study program for the applicants as well as for the companies, which were cooperating on internships.

Inspired by Spohrer (2006), the study program was designed on a multidisciplinary basis. The core of the first version of the curricula was focused to project management, applied management and marketing, with emphasis on communication skills. It was supported by the hypothesis that students had already learned necessary or important IT knowledge during their previous graduate studies and needed to focus on other disciplines related to their multidisciplinary orientation.

The other difference compared to most study programs in the Faculty of Computer Science was the lengthy internship. It was set at 5 months, during which students worked for the company for 4 days and reserved the 5th day for academic activities.

The study program started in 2008 and became very popular among undergraduates. The number of students grew from 12 in 2008 to 128 in 2010.

The T-shaped education program pivoted on the assumption of strong knowledge of information and communication technology, stemming from the students' undergraduate studies. However, this hypothesis remained unconfirmed for three reasons:
- IT itself is a dynamic domain and students need to study new technology and knowledge continuously;
- students forgot many of their IT skills, which had become layered over by others, taught during their SSME studies;

Marialuisa Saviano
Francesco Polese
Francesco Caputo
Leonard Walletzký
The contribution of systems
and service research to
rethinking higher education
programs: a T-shaped model

- because of the absence of Entry Tests it was possible for any graduate student to join the program, with psychology or sociology graduate students completing the SSME study program without any IT technology or skills.

Interestingly, these issues were corrected on the premise that the entire SSME study program was envisaged as a service from the start.

As Walletzky (2014) demonstrated, this situation was a dual service system, where the university produces students for companies in the first service system, while companies provide internship positions for university students, and the university is the client, because internships are a mandatory part of the study program.

Over time, thanks to the feedback reports of students and companies, the following issues were identified:

- the profile of students' knowledge did not fit the general profile of a graduate of the Faculty of Computer Science, for many students lacked basic knowledge of programming, databases or IT security;
- on the other hand, students lacked practical economic knowledge. They did not understand basic financial or taxation problems, and they knew nothing about public services and their differences.

A revision of the profile took place in 2012 and may be summed up in the following points (Walletzky, 2013):

- an entrance test was introduced in 2012;
- the T-shape structure was adjusted to ensure that IT knowledge remains the core discipline. More IT courses became mandatory;
- the knowledge at the top of the T was split into three pillars (Management and Marketing; Economics fundamentals; Soft and other skills).

Moreover, new courses were added to every group of horizontal bar courses. They were specifically designed in relation with knowledge or presented in the vertical bar.

After applying the changes, the structure was reported as satisfactory for all participating parties and has remained unchanged to date (2016).

## 5. Final remarks and future lines of research

The emerging variety in social and economic dynamics requires the identification of new managerial pathways that are able to combine different specialized knowledge to face the challenges of a vibrant, dynamic scenario.

Among the potential pathways devised to face emerging social and economic challenges, the paper focuses on the advantages offered by a change in perspective in higher education programs. The above considerations underline the implications and advantages deriving from the definition of education programs inspired by the T-shaped model in terms of competencies and capabilities of human resources to understand and manage emerging variety. More specifically, the paper underlines how, by combining specialized knowledge and trans-disciplinary competences, it is possible to train human resources to overcome the limitations of traditional interpretative frameworks based on a reductionist approach.

Building on this reflection, the paper represents a call to focus on the opportunities offered by the definition of multi- and trans- disciplinary approaches in the education field. Potential future lines of research related to the development of innovative approaches in education and management of human resources lie in this direction. Moreover, interesting implications may be gleaned in reference to opportunities to better formalize the T-shaped model in education programs, defining instruments capable of measuring vertical competences and horizontal capabilities in students in order to ensure better alignment between companies and human resources.

## References

AKAKA M.A., VARGO S.L., LUSCH R.F. (2012), "An exploration of networks in value cocreation: A service-ecosystems view", *Review of Marketing Research*, vol. 9 (Special Issue), pp. 13-50.

ALCHIAN A.A., DEMSETZ H. (1972), "Production, information costs, and economic organization", *The American Economic Review*, vol. 62, n. 5, pp. 777-795.

ALLEE V. (1997), *The knowledge evolution: Expanding organizational intelligence*, Routledge, London.

BAIRD L., MESHOULAM I. (1988), "Managing two fits of strategic human resource management", *Academy of Management Review,* vol. 13, n. 1, pp. 116-128.

BANATHY B.H. (1991), *Systems Design of Education: A Journey to Create the Future*, Englewood Cliffs, Educational Technology Publications, N.J.

BARILE S. (2009, 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., CARRUBBO L., IANDOLO F., CAPUTO F. (2013), "From 'EGO' to 'ECO' in B2B relationships", *Journal of Business Market Management*, vol. 6, n. 4, pp. 228-253.

BARILE S., FRANCO G., NOTA G., SAVIANO M. (2012), "Structure and dynamics of a "T-Shaped" knowledge: From individuals to cooperating communities of practice", *Service Science*, vol. 4, n. 2, pp. 161-180.

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., POLESE F. (2010), "Smart service systems and viable service systems: applying systems theory to service science", *Service Science*, vol. 2, n. 1-2, pp. 21-40.

BARILE S., SAVIANO M. (2010), "A new perspective of systems complexity in service science", *Impresa, Ambiente, Management*, vol. 4, n. 3, pp. 375-414.

BARILE S., SAVIANO M. (2011), "Foundations of systems thinking: the structure-system paradigm", in Various Authors, *Contributions to Theoretical and Practical Advances in Management. A Viable Systems Approach (VSA),* Avellino, International Printing, (pp. 1-24),

BARILE S., SAVIANO M. (2013), "Dynamic Capabilities and T-Shaped Knowledge: A Viable Systems Approach", in Barile S. (Ed.), *Contributions to Theoretical and Practical Advances in Management. A Viable Systems Approach (VSA),* Roma, Aracne (pp. 39-59).

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., SAVIANO M., POLESE F., CAPUTO F. (2015a), "T-Shaped People for addressing the Global Challenge of Sustainability", in Gummesson E., Mele C., Polese F. (Eds), *Service Dominant Logic, Network and Systems Theory and Service Science: Integrating three Perspectives for a New Service Agenda,* Giannini, Napoli, (pp. 1-23).

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

BARILE S., SAVIANO M., CAPUTO F. (2015c), "How Are Markets Changing? The Emergence of Consumers Market Systems. In 3rd International Symposium Advances in Business Management", in T*owards Systemic Approach*, University of Perugia, 21-23 January.

BEER S. (1985), *Diagnosing the system for organizations,* John Wiley and Sons Inc., Hoboken, New Jersey, United States.

BLOOM B.S. (Ed), ENGELHART M.D., FURST E.J., HILL W.H., KRATHWOHL D.R. (1956), *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives*, Handbook I: The Cognitive Domain, David McKay Co Inc., New York.

BOHM D. (1980), *Wholeness and the Implicate Order*, Routledge, London.

BOYATZIS R.E. (2006), "An overview of intentional change from a complexity perspective", *Journal of Management Development*, vol. 25, n. 7, pp. 607-623.

BROWN S.W. (1991), *Service quality: Multidisciplinary and multinational perspectives*, Lexington Books, London.

BURNES B. (2004), *Managing change: a strategic approach to organisational dynamics,* Pearson Education, New York.

CALABRESE M., IANDOLO F., ANTONUCCI E., CAPUTO F. (2013), "Towards a value co-creation based Healthcare System", in Gummesson E., Mele C., Polese F. (Eds), *Service Dominant logic, Network and Systems Theory and Service Science: integrating three perspectives for a new service agenda,* Napoli, Giannini (pp. 1-22).

CAPRA F. (1996), *The web of life: a new scientific understanding of living systems,* Anchor, London.

CAPUTO F., DEL GIUDICE M., EVANGELISTA F., RUSSO G. (2016), "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.

CHECKLAND P. (1999), *Systems Thinking. Rethinking management information systems: an interdisciplinary perspective,* Oxford University Press., Oxford.

COATES D. (2012), "A Network of Networks: The Case of the UK Technology Strategy Board", in MacGregor S.P., Carleton T. (Eds), *Sustaining Innovation,* Springer, New York, (pp. 125-140).

COYLE E.J., JAMIESON L.H., OAKES W.C. (2006), "Integrating engineering education and community service: Themes for the future of engineering education", *Journal of Engineering Education*, vol. 95, n. 1, pp. 7-19.

DELANDA M. (2006), *A new philosophy of society: Assemblage theory and social complexity,* AandC Black, New York.

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

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 Knowledge Economy*, pp. 1-19, DOI 10.1007/s13132-015-0333-9.

DONOFRIO N., SANCHEZ C., SPOHRER J. (2010), "Collaborative innovation and service systems", in Grasso D., Brown Burkins M. (Eds), *Holistic Engineering Education*, Springer, New York, (pp. 243-269).

DOYLE P., SAUNDERS J. (1985), "Market segmentation and positioning in specialized industrial markets", *The Journal of Marketing*, vol. 49, n. 2, pp. 24-32.

ELMQUIST L., JOHANSSON G. (2011), "An approach to foster integrative skills during the engineering studies", in *7th International CDIO Conference,* 20-23 June, 2011, Copenhagen, Denmark.

ENDERS J., DE WEERT E. (2009), "Towards a T-shaped profession: Academic work and career in the knowledge society", in Enders J., de Weert E. (Eds), *The changing face of academic life,* Palgrave Macmillan, London.(pp. 251-272).

ESPEJO R. (1994), "What is systemic thinking?", *System Dynamics Review*, vol. 10, n. 2-3, pp. 199-212.

EVANGELISTA F., CAPUTO F., RUSSO G., BUHNOVA B. (2016), "Voluntary corporate disclosure in the Era of Social Media", in *4rd International Symposium Advances in Business Management. "Towards Systemic Approach",* Mikolas Romeris University, Vilnius, Lituania, 24-26 August.

EYLON B.S., LINN M.C. (1988), "Learning and instruction: An examination of four research perspectives in science education", *Review of Educational Research,* vol. 58, n. 3, pp. 251-301.

FISK R.P., GROVE S.J. (2010), The Evolution and Future of Service. In Maglio, P.P., Kieliszewski C.A., Spohrer J.C. (Eds), *Handbook of Service Science*, Springer, New York, (pp. 643-663).

FOROPON C., SEIPLE R., KERBACHE L. (2013), "Using servqual to examine service quality in the classroom: analyses of undergraduate and executive education operations management courses", *International Journal of Business and Management,* vol. 8, n. 20, pp. 105-121.

GIDDINGS B., HOPWOOD B., O'BRIEN G. (2002), "Environment, economy and society: fitting them together into sustainable development", *Sustainable Development,* vol. 10, n. 4, pp. 187-196.

GLUSHKO R.J. (2008), "Designing a service science discipline with discipline", *IBM systems journal*, vol. 47, n. 1, pp. 15-27.

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.

GUEST D. (1991), "The hunt is on for the Renaissance Man of computing", *The Independent* (London), September 17.

GUMMESSON E. (1991), "Service quality: a holistic view", in Brown S.W. (Ed.), *Service quality: Multidisciplinary and multinational perspectives,* Lexington Books, London, (pp. 3-22).

GUPTA A.K., SINGHAL A. (1993), "Managing human resources for innovation and creativity", *Research Technology Management*, vol. 36, n. 3, pp. 41-60.

HANSEN M.T., VON OETINGER B. (2001), "Introducing T-shaped managers. Knowledge management's next generation", *Harvard Business Review*, vol. 79, n. 3, pp. 106-16.

HEFLEY B., MURPHY W. (Eds.), (2008), *Service science, management and engineering: education for the 21st century,* Science and Business Media, Springer, New York.

HILL F.M. (1995), "Managing service quality in higher education: the role of the student as primary consumer", *Quality Assurance in Education,* vol. 3, n. 3, pp. 10-21.

HOLLING C.S. (2001), "Understanding the complexity of economic, ecological, and social systems", *Ecosystems*, vol. 4, n. 5, pp. 390-405.

JACKSON S.E., SCHULER R.S. (1995), "Understanding human resource management in the context of organizations and their environments", in Poole M. (Ed.), *Human Resource Management: Critical Perspectives on Business and Management,* Taylor and Francis, London, (pp. 45-74).

KAKABADSE N.K., KAKABADSE A., KOUZMIN A. (2003), "Reviewing the knowledge management literature: towards a taxonomy", *Journal of Knowledge Management*, vol. 7, n. 4, pp. 75-91.

KARJALAINEN T.M., SALIMÄKI M. (2008, April), "Do offerings meet expectations? Educating T-shaped professionals in strategic design management", in *Proceedings from International DMI Education Conference Design Thinking: New Challenges for Designers, Managers and Organizations.*

KIM D.H. (1995), *Systems thinking tools,* Pegasus, Cambridge.

KLINE S.J. (1995), C*onceptual foundations for multidisciplinary thinking*, Stanford University Press., Redwood City.

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

LAWRENCE R.J. (2015), "Advances in transdisciplinarity: Epistemologies, methodologies and processes", *Futures*, vol. 65, n. 65, pp. 1-9.

LAWSON H.A. (2004), "The logic of collaboration in education and the human services", *Journal of Interprofessional Care,* vol. 18, n. 3, pp. 225-237.

LAWSON H., BRIAR-LAWAON K. (1997), *Connecting the dots: Integrating school reform, school-linked services, parent involvement and community schools*, Oxford, OH: The Danforth Foundation and The Institute for Educational Renewal at Miami University

LEPAK D.P., SNELL S.A. (1999), "The human resource architecture: Toward a theory of human capital allocation and development", *Academy of Management Review*, vol. 24, n. 1, pp. 31-48.

LOVELOCK J.E. (1972), "Gaia as seen through the atmosphere", A*tmospheric Environment*, vol. 6, n. 8, pp. 579-580.

LUSCH R.F., VARGO S.L. (2014), *The service-dominant logic of marketing: Dialog, debate, and directions*, Routledge, London.

LUSCH R.F., VARGO S.L., GUSTAFSSON A. (2016), "Fostering a trans-disciplinary perspectives of service ecosystems", *Journal of Business Research*, vol. 69, n. 8, pp. 2957-2963.

MACHLUP F., LEESON K. (1979), *Information through the printed word: the dissemination of scholarly, scientific, and intellectual knowledge,* Praeger Publishers Inc., London.

MALECKI E.J. (1997), "Technology and economic development: the dynamics of local, regional, and national change", *University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign's Academy for Entrepreneurial Leadership Historical Research Reference in Entrepreneurship.*

MCMILLAN E. (2008), *Complexity, management and the dynamics of change: Challenges for practice,* Routledge, London.

MELE C., PELS J., POLESE F. (2010), "A brief review of systems theories and their managerial applications", *Service Science*, vol. 2, n. 1-2, pp. 126-135.

METCALFE A. (Ed.), (2005), *Knowledge Management and Higher Education: A Critical Analysis: A Critical Analysis,* IGI Global, New York.

MILES R.E., SNOW C.C. (1984), "Designing strategic human resources systems", *Organizational dynamics*, vol. 13, n. 1, pp. 36-52.

NG I.C., FORBES J. (2009), "Education as service: The understanding of university experience through the service logic", *Journal of Marketing for Higher Education*, vol. 19, n. 1, pp. 38-64.

NG I., MAULL R., SMITH L. (2011), "Embedding the new discipline of service science", in Demirkan H., Spohrer J.C., Krishna V. (Eds), T*he science of service systems,* Springer, New York, (pp. 13-35).

NOOTEBOOM B. (2006), "Cognitive distance in and between COP's and firms: where do exploitation and exploration take place, and how are they connected?", *CentER Disussion Paper Series*, (2007-04).

PARR J. (2010), *Sensing changes: technologies, environments, and the everyday*, 1953-2003, UBC Press, London.

PERKINS D.N. (1993), "Person-plus: A distributed view of thinking and learning", in Salomon G. (Ed.), *Distributed cognitions: Psychological and educational considerations* (pp. 88-110), Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

PFEFFER J., SALANCIK G.R. (2003), *The external control of organizations: A resource dependence perspective*, Stanford University Press., Redwood City.

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".

PORTER M.E. (1990), "The competitive advantage of notions", *Harvard Business Review,* vol. 68, n. 2, pp. 73-93.

RAVALD A., GRÖNROOS C. (1996), "The value concept and relationship marketing", *European journal of marketing*, vol. 30, n. 2, pp. 19-30.

RUST R.T., MOORMAN C., BHALLA G. (2010), "Rethinking marketing", *Harvard Business Review*, vol. 88, n. 1/2, pp. 94-101.

SALLIS E. (2014), *Total quality management in education*, Routledge, London.

SAVIANO M. (2015), pp. "Multi-actor Co-creation Systems for Progressing Toward Sustainability: Criticalities and Challenges", in *5th International Conference on Sustainability Science (ICSSS),* Tokyo.

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*, EuroMed Press, Cyprus (pp. 1552-1567).

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

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),* Aracne Roma, (pp. 219-242).

SAVIANO M., CAPUTO F., FORMISANO V., WALLETZKÝ L. (2016), "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., PARIDA R., CAPUTO F., DATTA S.K. (2014), "Health care as a worldwide concern. Insights on the Italian and Indian health care systems and PPPs from a VSA perspective", *EuroMed Journal of Business*, vol. 9, n. 2, pp. 198-220.

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, n. 5, pp. 951-976, https://doi.org/10.1108/JSTP-10-2015-0228.

SAVORY A., BUTTERFIELD J. (1998), *Holistic management: a new framework for decision making,* Island Press., Washington.

SCHNEIDER B., BOWEN D.E. (1993), "The service organization: Human resources management is crucial", *Organizational Dynamics*, vol. 21, n. 4, pp. 39-52.

SCHULER R.S. (1992), "Strategic human resources management: Linking the people with the strategic needs of the business", *Organizational Dynamics,* vol. 21, n. 1, pp. 18-32.

SENGE P.M., ROBERTS C., ROSS R.B., SMITH B.J., KLEINER A. (1994), *The fifth discipline fieldbook,* Bantam Doubleday Dell, New York.

SHIVA V. (1987), "The violence of reductionist science", *Alternatives*, vol. 12, n. 2, pp. 243-260.

SPOHRER J.C. (2006), "Services Sciences, Management, and Engineering (SSME): An Emerging Multidiscipline", in P*roceedings of the Frontiers in Service Conference.*

SPOHRER J.C., MAGLIO P.P. (2010), "Toward a science of service systems", in Maglio P.P., Kieliszewski C.A., Spohrer J.C. (Eds), *Handbook of service science,* Springer, New York (pp. 157-194),

SPOHRER J., ANDERSON L., PASS N., AGER T. (2008), "Service science and SD logic", in *Proceedings of the Otago Forum*, Univeristy of Otago, pp. 214-237.

SPOHRER J., GOLINELLI G.M., PICIOCCHI P., BASSANO C. (2010), "An integrated SS-VSA analysis of changing job roles", *Service Science,* vol. 2, n. 1-2, pp. 1-20.

STACEY R.D. (2001), *Complex responsive processes in organizations: Learning and knowledge creation,* Psychology Press, London.

TICHY N.M., DEVANNA M.A. (1986), *The transformational leader,* Wiley, New York.

TORRACO R.J., SWANSON R.A. (1995), "The strategic roles of human resource development", *People and Strategy,* vol. 18, n. 4, pp. 10-16.

ULRICH D. (1997), "Measuring human resources: an overview of practice and a prescription for results", *Human Resource Management,* vol. 36, n. 3, pp. 303-320.

VAN DER VEGT G.S., BUNDERSON J.S. (2005), "Learning and performance in multidisciplinary teams: The importance of collective team identification", *Academy of Management Journal,* vol. 48, n. 3, pp. 532-547.

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.

VON BERTALANFFY L. (1971), *General System Theory,* Foundations Development Applications, Braziller, New York.

WALLETZKÝ L. (2013), "Is it possible to teach Service Science?", in Gummesson E., Mele C., Polese F. (Eds.), *Service Dominant Logic, Network and Systems Theory and Service Science: Integrating three Perspectives for a New Service Agenda*, Giannini, Napoli.

WALLETZKÝ L. (2014), "Education as service system", in *INTED2014 Proceedings,* IATED.

WAGNER C.S., ROESSNER J.D., BOBB K., KLEIN J.T., BOYACK K.W., KEYTON J., BÖRNER K. (2011), "Approaches to understanding and measuring interdisciplinary scientific research (IDR): A review of the literature", *Journal of Informetrics,* vol. 5, n. 1, pp. 14-26.

WICKLEIN R.C., SCHELL J.W. (1995), "Case studies of multidisciplinary approaches to integrating mathematics, science, and technology education", *Journal of Technological Education,* vol. 6, n. 2, doi:10.21061/jte.v6i2.a.5.

YANG J. (2010), "The knowledge management strategy and its effect on firm performance: A contingency analysis", *International Journal of Production Economics*, vol. 125, n. 2, pp. 215-223.

### Academic or professional position and contacts

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

**Polese Francesco**
Full Professor of Marketing
University of Salerno - Italy
e-mail: fpolese@unisa.it

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

**Walletzký Leonard**
Assistant Professor of Management
Masaryk University, Czech Republic
e-mail: qwalletz@fi.muni.cz

# Knowledge management: an asset for managing change?[1]

David Vallat - Caroline Bayart - Sandra Bertezene
Jacques Martin

## Abstract

*Purpose of the paper: Nowadays, organizations have the increasing need to face the challenge of managing change as their environment evolves dramatically and rapidly. This study aims at investigating to what extent knowledge management can help organizations to take up this challenge effectively. It is based on a survey of 486 establishments in the French medical and social sector around the central hypothesis that knowledge management permits a rapid adaptation to the new constraints of a constantly changing environment in order to ensure the long-time survival of the organization. The results show that this hypothesis is indeed validated. Consequently, it is of utmost importance for organizations to deploy knowledge management policies in order to ensure their continued existence.*

*Method: A structural model based on a questionnaire to test and validate the hypothesis.*

*Results: The central hypothesis that "knowledge management permits a rapid adaptation to the new constraints of a constantly changing environment in order to ensure the long-time survival of the organization" is validated.*

*Limits to research: Some factors which have not been studied in this research may also have an impact on the role of knowledge management in organizational change and will need to be the subject of further research.*

*Practical implications: Organizations need to take into account knowledge management as a key factor to manage change effectively and successfully in a fast-changing environment.*

*Originality of the paper: Although knowledge management on the one hand and change management on the other have already been extensively studied, connecting the two to show that the former can be a decisive factor in the success of the latter is an innovative approach.*

*Key words: knowledge management; organizational change*

## 1. Introduction

Taking care of elderly people is an activity undergoing huge changes in most Western countries, and it will be introduced sooner than later to "emerging economies" due to the increasing number of elderly people

---

[1]    Best paper for the 19th Toulon-Verona Conference "Excellence in Services University of Huelva in Andalucia, Spain, 5-6 September 2016.

and their increasing dependency, the introduction of innovative but costly technologies such as tele-assistance, tele-surveillance, telemedicine, robotics and various kinds of "connected objects". In addition, there is a shortage of financial and qualified human resources, along with increasing requirements of financers and the public in terms of quality of well-being and the apparition of private investors with profit-making objectives leading to the equitization of different corporate groups managing social and medical establishments.

These establishments operate now in a definitely VUCA (Volatile, Uncertain, Complex, Ambiguous - Jacobs, 2002; Vallat, 2016) environment. In this context we intend to show that a policy of knowledge management can be an asset to manage change effectively in social and medical establishments, as can be the case with a quality improvement policy (Bertezene and Martin, 2011) or a CSR policy (Bertezene *et al.*, 2014, 2015). To what extent can knowledge management be a lever for managing change? We start from the hypothesis that knowledge management permits organizations to adapt rapidly to new constraints in an ever-changing environment in order to ensure the continued existence of the organization. To answer the question and validate the hypothesis, we used data coming from a vast survey through questionnaires administered in French social and medical establishments to try and understand better their practices in terms of CSR.

## 2. The role of knowledge management in a changing environment: modeling of the research

This first part proposes the framework for the research. It presents a review of the literature (definition, objectives and role of knowledge management in managing change) which is relevant to identify the work hypotheses, construct the model for the research and choose the measurement scales.

### 2.1 A definition of knowledge management

If in the whole history of the human species "knowledge makes wealth" (Landes, 1998), the advent of the "era of communication" (Castells, 1996) has changed the playing ground. The acceleration of information exchanges due to the rapid and huge development of information and communication technologies. The fact that we live in an "hyper-connected" and VUCA world (*World Economic Forum,* 2012b) challenge the ways of producing, exchanging and using knowledge, at the level of individuals, as well as organizations and States (OECD, 2000, 2012; Wilson and Briscoe, 2004). Knowledge and its corollary learning are pillars of competitiveness in the international competition (*World Economic Forum,* 2012a). A specific feature of knowledge is that it is a non-rival good, whose consumption does not impair the consumption of others, which feeds innovation (technical progress) and develops flexibility in organizations (Volberda, 1996) and labour productivity (Powell and Snellman, 2004). In the case of social and medical organizations, knowing how to manage knowledge

effectively seems to give a competitive advantage largely documented not only by researchers (Teece, 1998; Umemoto, 2002; Senge, 2006), but also by managers (De Geus, 1988; 2002). The 2020 Foresight study carried out by *The Economist* with more than 1, 500 managers in the world, ranks knowledge management as the field of activities offering the best potential of productivity gains in the fifteen years to come (*Economist Intelligence Unit Report,* 2006).

As early as the 1990s, knowledge management became a research object with the works of Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995) on the dynamics of the learning organization, which entices to re-think deeply the strategy of organizations (Nonaka, 1994). Some authors go even further. It is generally admitted that the costs associated with the organization of the production of services (transaction costs) explain the very existence of those organizations. If those costs did not exist, it would be enough to let the market operate (Coase, 1937). Other authors consider that the existence of organizations can be rather explained by their capacity to capture knowledge and use it in a synergetic way, what the market is not capable of doing (Brown and Duguid, 1998).

A simple definition of knowledge management, as initially understood, is that it is a set of practices aiming at identifying, capturing, sharing, increasing and using meaningful knowledge present in the organization (Davenport, 1994). This definition is in-keeping with Nonaka and Takeuchi's approach (1995) centered on the idea that we need to formalize and capitalize on the informal knowledge of the members of the organization as, as indicated by Polanyi (2009), we always tend to know more than we say. This refers to tacit knowledge; for example we can recognize faces, but we cannot explain how we do it. Consequently organizations do not know well the extent of the knowledge of their employees. Conversely explicit knowledge corresponds to knowledge formalized in rules, procedures, protocols, quality manuals, care files or ERP software. Taking into account these two kinds of knowledge we can consider, following Nonaka (1994) that managing knowledge consists in organizing a constant dialogue between tacit and explicit knowledge.

In this perspective, Nonaka (1994) has constructed the SECI (*socialization, externalization, combination, internalization*) model describing four processes.
-	The first is *socialization*, indicating an informal sharing of experiences;
-	The second is *combination*, constructing new explicit knowledge from already existing explicit knowledge;
-	The third is *externalization*, transforming tacit knowledge into explicit knowledge through formalization;
-	The fourth is *internalization*, transforming explicit knowledge into tacit knowledge appropriated by members of the organization, close to *learning by doing*.

Understanding the various dynamics of composition of knowledge permits to ensure its good transmission inside the organization.

*2.2 The objectives of knowledge management*

The development of a "hyper-connected" world as mentioned above and its VUCA character amplify the necessity to process information effectively to make it useful for action (Argyris *et al.*, 1985) and by doing so, transform it into knowledge. Then the question is how to move from raw data to information and to knowledge. The answer lies in the reformulation of the question. Rather than asking "how can it be done?", it is better to ask "who does it?". Indeed the people who "do it" will shape the knowledge. The "how" depends on the "who".

Mastering the management of knowledge in order to adapt oneself to the uncertainty and complexity of the world implies to comprehend (seize together) the various elements and realize that people are not only the «first factor of competitive differentiation» (Prax, 2012, p. 6 sq.) of the organization, but that they *are* the organization.

At the level of the individual, we can distinguish between three kinds of knowledge (explicit and/or tacit) implying an increasing the degree of autonomy and adaptability:
- knowing how to apply (the rule)
- knowing how to solve a problem (which goes beyond the rule)
- knowing why (understanding the implications of the action and be able to make choices in situations where there is no simple, linear solution).

This knowledge can be explicit ("Thanks to some training, I have understood how to apply the protocol to deal with bruises") or implicit ("I know how to solve a problem because I have the experience of it"). Adapting to new, and often unexpected, circumstances, which is and will be more and more the everyday life of organizations, is made possible either by the implementation of explicit knowledge (the change has been anticipated and procedures have been prepared), or tacit knowledge (the personnel has developed a wide scope of informal competencies through the accumulation of experience and knowledge enabling them to deal with changes, particularly unexpected ones).

*2.3 The management of change through organizational learning and knowledge management*

The literature on organizational learning has enjoyed a strong development in a period that has seen the world become more complex in its economic, political, social and environmental dimensions. Several authors have then tried to give a panorama of the multiple approaches of organizational learning (Chiva and Alegre, 2005; Curado, 2006). Not all can be examined here, so our choice bears on operational approaches.

A distinction is often made between the individual and the collective (or organizational) dimension of learning. As for the individual dimension, it is considered that the organization becomes more performing as its members acquire more knowledge (Stata, 1989). Learning at an individual level would then have an impact on the transformation of the organization by making it more competitive. Such learning should then be encouraged by setting up structures and means (corporate social network, repository

of good practices for example) to permit a good circulation of knowledge. In the case of the organizational approach of learning, it is considered that the organization learns by imitating its competitors on the one hand, and by trial and error on the other. Both types of learning imitation and experimentation lead to the emergence of practices which, with time, become routines. In this way Levitt and March (1988) have shown that the organization sets up it functioning not from rational choices, but on the basis of routines which appear legitimate as long as they are not challenged. Undoubtedly, this distinction permits to reflect on the classification of the different approaches of organizational learning (Edmondson and Moingeon, 2004). However, it is not easy to distinguish what comes from individuals and what comes from the organization (if we accept, of course, that ontologically an organization can learn) in organizational learning. It could be easier to try and see the complementarities between the individual and collective dimensions of organizational learning.

**David Vallat**
**Caroline Bayart**
**Sandra Bertezene**
**Jacques Martin**
Knowledge Management: an
asset for managing change?

If the knowledge to acquire can be objective and observable, the role of the organization will be to make it emerge, then to stock it and to spread it throughout the organization. This is Nonaka's idea with his SECI model: The continuous dialogue between tacit and explicit knowledge, the confrontation between individual practices and collective procedures contribute to the building of an organizational knowledge. Organizational learning is then seen as a process which must lead in the end to a formalization or codification of the knowledge. According to Nonaka, knowledge is a "tangible entity" that can be stocked (through formalization). Learning is a collective process, the result of interactions between individuals. There are, however, limitations to this approach, especially in Western thought with the Cartesian idea that there is a tangible and objective world. Believing in an objective world bears the risk of falling into organizational traps like the *"Competency Trap"* evidenced by Levitt and March (1988). We are certain that we function according to the best organizational mode possible under the pretext that this mode has not been (globally) challenged. This 'blindness' can even lead to being persuaded that this mode of organization is the result of rational, objective choices, what Levitt and March call *"Superstitious Learning"*. These organizational traps enhance the illusion of competency and control of the environment: epistemic arrogance! (Taleb, 2010). If the enterprise is organized "scientifically", what is the place of creativity? And how can the organization cope with a changing context? It is not because we adapted at a given moment we will, mechanically, continue to adapt, even less in this present VUCA world. If there is no *one best way,* all decisions are dilemmas (Johansen, 2007), *to be or not to be*, and it seems that a choice can be more relevant, and accepted, if the decision is made collectively.

*2.4 Research hypotheses and construction of the model*

We wish to show that a policy of knowledge management is an asset to manage change effectively in social and medical establishments. We start from the hypothesis that knowledge management permits a rapid adaptation to the new constraints of a constantly changing environment in order to ensure the long-time survival of the organization. This central

hypothesis is sub-divided into 5 sub-hypotheses:
- H1: The tools and practices of communication the organization is engaged in, have a positive impact on the tools and practices of knowledge management.
- H2: The tools and practices of knowledge management have a positive impact on the organization (working conditions, quality of service).
- H3: The effects of the policies of knowledge management implemented have a positive impact on the practices of change management.
- H4: The tools and practices of communication the organization is engaged in, have a positive impact on the practices of change management.
- H5: The perceived uncertainties of the environment have a positive impact on the practices of change management.

The model is illustrated in the following Figure:

*Fig. 1: Knowledge management and change management: research model*
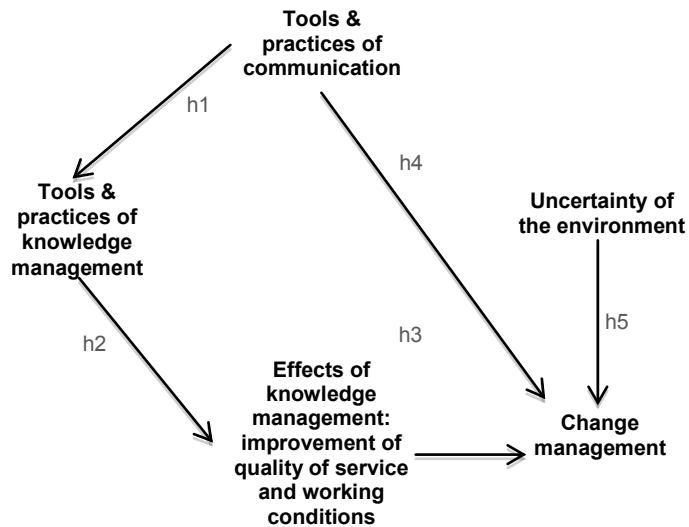


Source: the authors

*2.5 The construction of the measurement scales*

The variables used for the sub-hypotheses have been carefully selected to guarantee their operational character.

The perceived uncertainty of the environment is a frequently studied concept in management sciences as it is related to numerous practices. For example, organizations which operate in an uncertain environment need more non-financial indicators (Kaplan and Norton, 1996). In our questionnaire, we have adapted the scale of Govindarajan (1984), which breaks down this concept into seven items: demand, competitors, customers, technology, purchases, regulation and trade union actions. The use of technologies may not be considered as a determining factor in social and medical establishments as it is in industrial activities, and demand is

not a major problem as it could be in other economic sectors (large scale distribution for example). Therefore, we have discarded these two items and retained a scale with five items.

The scales aiming at measuring knowledge management and change management are constructed on the basis of the works of Levitt and March (1988), Davenport (1994), Nonaka (1994), Argyris (1993), Senge (2006) and Prax (2012). The works of Prax and the OECD (2000) report have more particularly permitted to create the scales devoted to the tools and practices of communication.

These different works define the concepts studied and describe the studies as for their implementation and the results. Within this framework we have focused our attention on how the different types of knowledge (tacit and explicit) circulate in the organization and are capitalized, on the links between the construction of knowledge and the development of competencies (training) and more generally between the management of competencies and the individual performance (productivity, quality of service) and collective performance (absenteeism, work injuries, personnel turnover, quality of service).

## 3. Collection and analysis of data

The survey was carried out on the internet. We will first present the reasons for using this medium, then we will present the sample selected and the rate of return, and we will order the data and qualify the sample. Then, we study the structure, the reliability and the quality of adjustment of the model. Finally, the results are presented, which permits to state that the research hypothesis is validated, even if further research will be needed to strengthen this result.

### 3.1 The web questionnaire

Leading a survey about CSR strategies (Bertezene *et al.* 2015) by the establishments selected requires interrogating a large sample of directors with a rather heavy questionnaire. As directors are not easily available and establishments are geographically scattered, it is not easy to carry out face-to-face interviews and not effective to do it on the phone. Over the last years, the methods used have evolved by integrating new technologies. It was then decided to resort to a web questionnaire which permits to contact a big number of establishments. The use of this medium also reduces the cost per contact and saves time for the respondent compared to a paper questionnaire.

The questionnaire contains several dozens of questions and a number of filters to avoid redundancies. The Sphinx Online software was used to carry out the survey. It offers good ergonomics ensuring a better rate of return. It also permits to guarantee the stocking and security of the data. In order to identify CSR practices and also motivations and obstacles for the managers in this field, the questionnaire is divided into several themes: actions put in place in the 'three pillars' of CSR (economic,

social, environmental); the knowledge of the management in terms of CSR and their perception of the impact of the strategies implemented; the CSR process (stakeholders, method, reporting); the ways and means of knowledge management in the establishments and departments. The items have been tested with measurement scales validated in the literature in order get a reliable evaluation of behaviours. 5 point Likert scales have been used for the respondents to express their degree of agreement (1 = totally disagree, 5 = totally agree). The characteristics of the establishments have also been taken into account. Organizations will indeed be different depending on their age, location and qualifications of the directors. Such criteria are likely to influence the will of implementing a CSR strategy. Therefore, a number of questions concern the characteristics of the organization (status, opening date, number of places, location, etc.) and the characteristics of the director (age, sex, qualifications, seniority).

*3.2 A satisfactory rate of return*

The questionnaire was administered by mail by the directors of the establishments at the end of February 2014. These people were first contacted to announce the launching of the survey and explain its objectives. After processing the e-mail addresses available, 4638 addresses were valid for the survey. After three recalls every fortnight, 537 people accessed the website to try and answer the questionnaire (a rate of 11.57%). However, not all the people who accessed the site answered all the questions because of lack of time or lack of will to answer more complex or 'strategic' questions. Finally, 486 people gave exploitable answers, i.e. a rather satisfactory rate of return of 10.47% considering the length and complexity of the survey.

*3.3 Processing of data and qualification of the sample*

The analysis of the results had to overcome a number of difficulties. First, the data needed to be ordered to be exploitable. After checking that all the questions had been satisfactorily answered, and thus making sure that there would not be a significant bias in the results of the statistical tests, the answers were codified. This task consists in giving a specific code to each possible answer. The coding was done when the questionnaire was worked out for closed-end questions but could only be done after the answers had been collected for the open-ended questions.

It was also necessary to qualify the sample on the basis of socio-demographic characteristics. As the characteristics of the respondents were not known a priori, we based on the characteristics of the organization: nature of the activity, status, location, age, number of persons taken care of, etc. Then, features of the directors were taken into account such as sex, age, level of qualifications… After, the test of equality of the means or proportions was used and results, where the level of significance is more than 5%, were retained.

**David Vallat**
**Caroline Bayart**
**Sandra Bertezene**
**Jacques Martin**
Knowledge Management: an
asset for managing change?

*3.4 Structure and reliability of the model*

The model contains two exogenous variables (they never appear as dependent variables in the equations of the structural model; in other words no arrow points to them):
- the uncertainty of the environment,
- the communication devices in the organization

We also have three endogenous variables (i.e. dependent in at least one equation of the structural model; in other words at least one arrow points to them):
- the tools of knowledge management,
- the effects of the tools of knowledge management in the organization,
- the practices of change management in the organization or department.

It must be recalled that an empirical rule imposes to have a number of observations higher than ten times the number of structural relations and ten times the number of indicators of the most complex formative variable (Chin, 1998), which is the case in this model (325 respondents, 5 structural relations and 12 indicators maximum for the formative variables).

The results concerning the homogeneity of the measurement scales are presented in the following table. The values for the Cronbach Alpha and the Jörekog rhô are all higher than 0.7 and often, even 0.8. The homogeneity of the scales is sufficient.

*Tab. 2: Homogeneity of measurement scales*

| Latent Variable | Dimensions | Cronbach Alpha | D.G. Rhô (ACP) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Communication | 5 | 0,865 | 0,903 |
| KM | 12 | 0,843 | 0,875 |
| Effect of KM: | 6 | 0,827 | 0,883 |
| Uncertainties | 5 | 0,698 | 0,811 |
| Change management | 7 | 0,834 | 0,876 |

Source: the authors

Then, if the model has been correctly specified, the manifest variables must be in strong relation with the latent variable they define. When we examine the cross-loadings, we see that the most important factorial weights of each indicator (or manifest variable directly observable thanks to the survey) are really related to the corresponding latent variable, which confirms the links between the elements constituting the model.

After the Bootstrap procedure, we make sure that the indicators (or manifest variables) contribute significantly to the formative construct (or latent, not directly observed through the study) by verifying that the value of the t-test (critical ratio) for each manifest variable is higher than 1.96. In our study, only one variable does not respect this criterion. It is "do you thing that the laws and obligations of the overseeing authority are strongly foreseeable?" of the latent variable "uncertainties of the environment". We have therefore suppressed this indicator in our analysis.

Finally, we note that the correlations between the latent variables, supposedly linked, are real and are significant as shown in the following table (highlighted values).

*Tab. 3: Correlations between the variables of the model*

|  | Communication | KM practices | Effect of KM | Uncertainties of environment | Change management |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Communication | 1,000 |  |  |  |  |
| KM Practices | **0,568** | 1,000 |  |  |  |
| Effect of KM: | 0,298 | **0,524** | 1,000 |  |  |
| Uncertainties of environment | 0,141 | 0,202 | 0,236 | 1,000 |  |
| Change management | **0,507** | 0,580 | **0,545** | 0,250 | 1,000 |

Source: the authors

### 3.5 Quality of adjustment of the model

It is then necessary to evaluate more globally the quality of adjustment of the model to the data of the survey with the Goodness of Fit (GoF). In our study, the GoF (approximation of the global variance rendered by the model) is 0.409, very close to its Bootstrap estimate (0.413). So we can conclude that:

- 41% of the variance of the data is explained by the model proposed,
- the model is stable (i.e. if we carry out the analysis again on other samples of respondents, the quality of adjustment of the model will only vary a little),
- the manifest variables are strongly linked to the latent variables they define (external GoF of 98.2%). This result confirms that the manifest variables used in the questionnaire permit to define well the latent variables of the analysis. 83.8% of the internal variance of the model is rendered by the structural relations,
- the links defined between the latent variables, illustrated with arrows in the model we present, are relevant (internal GoF of 0.838). This confirms our work hypotheses.

*Tab. 4: Quality of adjustment of the model*

|  | GoF | GoF (Bootstrap) | St. deviation | Critical Ratio (CR) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Absolute | 0,409 | 0,413 | 0,021 | 19,888 |
| External model | 0,990 | 0,982 | 0,011 | 87,370 |
| Internal model | 0,859 | 0,838 | 0,020 | 42,470 |

Source: the authors

*3.6 Presentation of the results*

David Vallat
Caroline Bayart
Sandra Bertezene
Jacques Martin
Knowledge Management: an asset for managing change?

The analysis of the structural model (importance and significance of the structural relations obtained) should permit to validate, or not, the work hypotheses. The coefficients of determination ($R^2$ with a value between 0 and 1) reflect the part of the variance of the endogenous variables explained by the model. We recall that these coefficients measure the adequacy between the model and the data observed and correspond to the different influences of the explicative (or exogenous) variables on the variables to be explained (or endogenous). In our model, the structural relations are significant since the values of the critical ratio are higher than two. These results consequently show the reliability and the validity of the variables used in the study.

The different structural relations of our model are represented in the next Figure (2). This model entails some remarks:
- The model is relevant to measure the practices of change management in the organization ($R^2$ = 44.2%), which permits to validate our main work hypothesis: knowledge management permits to adapt rapidly to the new constraints of an ever-changing environment in order to ensure the continuity of the organization. If three variables contribute to explain the implementation of practices of change management in medical and social establishments, not all have the same importance in our model. Communication tools and the advantages of a policy of knowledge management have an explanatory power which is higher (respective contributions to the explained variance of the "change management" variable are 41.7% and 48.2%) than the uncertainty of the environment (which contributes to only 10.1% of the explained variance of the "change management" variable). Then it is not the perceived threats of the environment which favor the implementation of practices of change management, but rather the competencies acquired by the organization in terms of communication tools and knowledge management.
- The uncertainty of the environment is an external factor not to be neglected as it is positively related to the practices of change management initiated.
- The moderate value of the R of the latent variables "practices of knowledge management and effect of knowledge management (respectively 33.1% and 28.4%) means that other non-observed factors contribute to explain the variance of these constructs.
  We can indeed think that the communication practices operating in the organization can, by themselves, explain the development of the tools of knowledge management (the characteristics of the managing director could also help in understanding this process). However, the percentage of variance explained is important as the structural equation contains only one explicative variable (the higher the number of explicative variables, the more the R tends to increase). Communication tools developed in the establishments seem to be a springboard for the implementation of practices of knowledge management.
- The reasoning is similar for the "effect of knowledge management"

variable, whose variance is explained for 28.4% by the single "practices of knowledge management" variable. If it is necessary to implement certain practices to get a positive impact on the organization, other factors which are not studied in this model (characteristics of the managing director, management modes, personnel motivation, support of the overseeing authority, etc.) can explain this result. In other words, it is not sufficient to initiate practices of knowledge management in the establishments, without having a favourable context for their appropriation and development.

- The implementation of communication tools in the establishments also contributes to explaining the development of practices of change management, independently from the policies of knowledge management. There is then a direct and indirect effect, linked to knowledge management, of the communication tools on the practices of change management.

*Fig. 2: Estimation of the structural model*
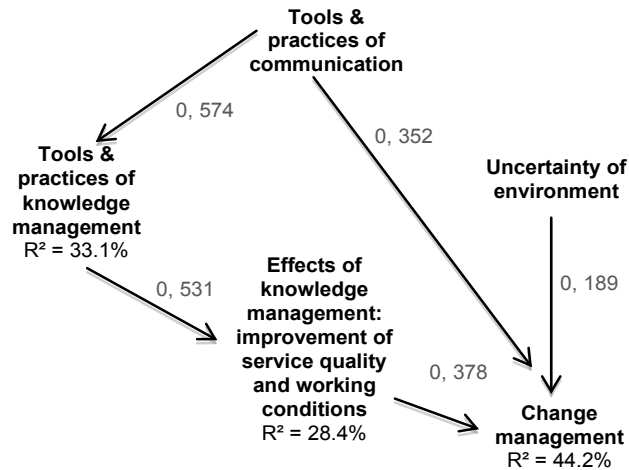


Source: the authors

*3.7 Validation of the hypothesis: knowledge management permits to adapt rapidly to the constraints of an ever-changing environment in order to ensure the continuity of the organization*

The results provided by the model permit to validate the central hypothesis (knowledge management permits to adapt rapidly to the constraints of an ever-changing environment in order to ensure the continuity of the organization), as well as the hypotheses presented previously:

H1: Tools and practices of communication positively affect the practices and tools of knowledge management.
H2: Tools and practices of knowledge management have positive effects on the organization (working conditions, quality of service).

H3: The effects of knowledge management policies have a positive effect on the practices of change management.

H4: Communication tools and practices affect positively the practices of change management.

H5: The perceived uncertainties of the environment have a positive impact on the practices of change management.

Finally this model shows that a good vertical and horizontal communication, both formal and informal, is the starting point for an implicit and explicit policy of knowledge management. This policy supposes a sharing of the information between services (care, animation, administration, etc.) and the hierarchical levels, the empowerment and training of the personnel as well as the coaching. According to the respondents, these practices improve the functioning of the organization as the motivation of the personnel increases and everybody takes on more responsibilities. Knowledge management is indeed an asset to make ideas emerge, to innovate and favour creativity for the benefit of the customer. This creativity is also encouraged by the good circulation of the information, the coordination and consultation of teams. Being aware of the volatile, uncertain, ambiguous and complex nature of the organization, which is something that can be learnt and developed, also permits to anticipate changes and favour creativity.

## 4. Analysis and discussion of the results

The results obtained will be discussed in three steps:
- The survival of an organization, just like that of an individual, depends on its capacity to learn (Edmonson and Moingeon, 2004) and organizational learning concerns as much the organization as the people who are part of it;
- consequently managing knowledge in a medical and social establishment within the framework of an organizational change requires the deployment of organizational learning (to adapt to this VUCA world) upon the condition that the latter is a collective construct.

### 4.1 Can establishments be learning organizations?

Organizations function according to schemes of institutionalized, whether formally or not, actions inherited from past practices. In the context of medical and social establishments, these «lessons from the past» can be partnership conventions with other establishments defining the role of each establishment in some responsibilities towards certain patients (Alzheimer, handicapped people), in internal rules (for the personnel, for the public), in quality procedures, care protocols, etc. and can be influenced by the technology available (in the market and the one used inside the establishment), the law (whose role is particularly important in this sector), the culture of the sector dominated by "humanist

values translating into terms of physical and moral health the respect of human dignity of any individual, the non-discrimination and equality of treatment owed to each citizen" (Molinié, 2005, p. 42), the pressure of the public for a greater transparency in practices in order to fight against ill-treatment and the fiercer competition with the rapid and massive arrival of big private groups.

Levitt and March (1988) call "routines" these experiences which are capitalized and transmitted. They are self-maintained and validated through the persistence of their use. This does not lead to creativity, not even to challenge their relevance, but can lead to organizational traps (*superstitious learning and competency traps*). These routines slowly get engrained into the minds of the members of the organization through some formal learning (learning through procedures) or informal learning (through practice). They lead to specialization, a lack of adaptability and initiative (even more in the context a Taylorist organization which encourages such behaviour). It is then at the level of the mental schemes that action should be taken to favour an organizational learning which can be a source of creativity and adaptability of professionals in the medical and social sector.

Argyris (1993) argues that the best way for an organization to control and manage the environment is to become an expert in the art of learning and adapt rapidly. It appears as strategic for the establishments to develop a competency to learn. Learning is at the heart of the work of Argyris (1993) as he aims at giving organizations means to improve by acting on the mental schemes of its members in order to make organizations more human and more effective. The model of functioning he encourages (Model II - Argyris 1993) relies on values of responsibility and transparency.

Learning takes place in actions either by detecting and correcting an error (gap between intention and result) or by acknowledging the adequacy between the intention and the result. People then need to experiment, to find solutions through trial and error (Lewin, 1951), to implement knowledge effectively (Argyris, 1993), to correct mistakes and learn from them. When the result matches the intention, then there is learning of an effective practice in given circumstances. However, as circumstances are regularly changing, organizational learning must be a never-ending process. Actions aiming at correcting errors or testing other solutions need to be evaluated, which is also learning. In addition, effective actions need to be codified and shared (a type of learning again) so that they can be reproduced. Our results clearly show that tools and practices of communication positively impact the tools and practices of knowledge management (Hypothesis 1).

In this context Argyris (1993, p. 18) more particularly advocates a mode of communication which has proven effective: dialogue. Although this of course requires that the managers of establishments are ready to devote time to this activity which is not directly productive but which *will* be in the medium and longer term. Argyris (2003, p. 20 et sq.) also makes a distinction between "applicable knowledge" and "actionable knowledge". Any knowledge is potentially applicable. This kind of knowledge permits to understand. Then the knowledge must be tested through action. The

validity of the theory is dependent on its action on the field: managers and personnel then share a common preoccupation, which is to generate actionable knowledge useful for the people that are taken care of.

### 4.2 A condition for becoming a real learning establishment: going beyond defensive routines

Argyris is interested in the way management practices, hindering organizational functioning, learning and adaptation, are worked out and maintained. "Defensive routines are thoughts and actions used to protect individuals', groups', and organizations' usual way of dealing with reality." (Argyris, 1985, p. 5). "Whenever human beings are faced with any issue that contains significant embarrassment or threat, they act in ways that bypass, as best as they can, the embarrassment or threat. In order for the bypass to work, it must be covered up […]. Organizational defensive routines are actions or policies that prevent individuals or segments of the organization from experiencing embarrassment or threat. Simultaneously, they prevent people from identifying and getting rid of the causes of the potential embarrassment or threat. Organizational defensive routines are anti-learning, overprotective, and self-sealing." (Argyris, 1990, p. 25).

Inside an establishment, based on elements which are perceived as embarrassing or threatening (e.g. the introduction of robots to deal with people affected by dementia), people will dodge problems and hide their dissatisfaction. This entails behaviours which re-enforce the embarrassing or threatening aspects creating a vicious circle of de-motivation and lack of commitment. Individual defensive routines feed collective defensive routines which in turn strengthen individual defensive routines. These routines aiming at "protecting" individuals and groups lead to a strong resistance to organizational changes. Such routines, according to Argyris, (2003, p. 68) are found in any sector of activity, no matter the size of the organization and the culture of the country. Individuals are the victims of a "clever blindness" (Argyris, 2003, p. 71). They implicitly accept values guiding their actions differently from the values they proclaim, leading to contradictions impairing the good functioning of the organization.

As organizational learning is the process by which the members of an organization collectively produce information to build knowledge that can orient decisions for action favouring the adaptation and development of the organization, which is confirmed by the validation of our Hypothesis 2, going beyond defensive routines implies a voluntary and collective action. Then organizational learning can be a major lever for organizational change as shown by Hypotheses 3 and 4.

### 4.3 Organizational learning as a collective construct

If the stake for the organization is to be able to adapt to the context, then organizational learning is the means for this adaptation. However, this learning must avoid the organizational traps mentioned above. To do so, we need to consider the nature of the knowledge on the one hand and the mode of learning on the other.

Constructivism belongs to a large epistemological field which examines the nature of knowledge (Le Moigne, 2007) and shows that all knowledge is the product of a subjective interaction between a human subject and the object studied, not only in "social sciences" but also in the "hard sciences". This approach is opposed to the positivist tradition. It breaks away from the traditional notion according to which all knowledge is a "true" representation of an independent or ontological reality. Constructivism introduces a new, more tangible, relation between knowledge and reality. Instead of saying that knowledge may represent a world beyond our experience, all knowledge will be considered as a tool within the domain of experience (Von Glasersfeld, 2004). This constructivist approach seems to be particularly adapted to a VUCA world as it advocates an organizational learning based on interactions and social relations. Knowledge is built up through collaboration.

The social dimension of learning has been underlined by the psychologist Albert Bandura (1976). Learning can be achieved through observation (the principle of the master-student relationship qualified *socialization* by Nonaka, 1994), which leads to conceive this learning as the result of interactions taking place in the workplace (Brown and Duguid, 1998). Learning is then thought of as a process aiming at elaborating contextualized knowledge (in adequacy with a specific context) and operational knowledge ("actionable" according to the term used by Argyris (1993), cf. supra). However putting people in relation with a knowledge expert (human or virtual) even using new technologies (wiki, social network, etc.) is not sufficient. Learning is not solely a means to know the world but to construct collectively, through exchanges, one's own locus. This approach implies systemic interactions between stakeholders (Spender, 1996). Organizational learning is characterized as a process combining social interactions and not as the result of a shared individual learning as in Nonaka's SECI model (1994). Sender sees the organization as a dynamic, evolving, quasi-autonomous system for the production and use of knowledge. In the same way Tsoukas (1996) advocates that the organization constantly (re)builds knowledge through a complex play of interactions between formal expectations and social practices.

To try and classify the different approaches to learning, we can start with two criteria:
- Does learning proceed from an individual or collective dimension?
- Is knowledge thought of as "objectivable", corresponding to an ontological reality, or built as learning develops?

We propose to add a third criterion borrowed from Edmondson and Moingeon (2004); that of organizational change. Somme authors stand as observers and offer tools to favour organizational learning; others adopt a committed standing (Argytis *et al.*, 1985) and aim at experimenting organizational solutions in order to improve the effectiveness of organizations. This pragmatic approach permits to override the binary learning logic of individual learning / collective learning and to understand in a systemic perspective the interrelations (including oppositions and contradictions) between the individuals, the organization and the environment.

An organization will become a learning one when the mental schemata of the individuals in it have integrated the systemic dimension of the organization. When our results show that the policies of knowledge management have a positive impact on the practices of change management (h3) as well as the perceived uncertainties of the environment (h5), we can consider (following Edmondson and Moigeon, 2004, p. 26 et sq.) that health professionals are accountable for the way the organization functions and the changes to carry out to improve its functioning.

In this light, it is possible to define organizational learning as the process thanks to which the members of an organization look for and produce data and information collectively in order to build up knowledge that can orient decisions for actions favouring the adaptation and development of the organization.

David Vallat
Caroline Bayart
Sandra Bertezene
Jacques Martin
Knowledge Management: an asset for managing change?

## 5. Conclusion

The objective of this research was to understand to what extend knowledge management could be a lever to facilitate change management. We chose the context of medical and social establishments, believing them to be a good example as they are undergoing significant and rapid changes, to try and answer this question. A survey through questionnaires was carried out by 4638 French establishments, of which 486 (10.47%) provided exploitable answers. The results of the research show that knowledge management permits to adapt rapidly to the new constraints of a constantly changing environment. However the cause-effect link is not direct: the tools and practices of communication have a positive impact on the tools and practices of knowledge management. The latter then have positive effects on the organization (working conditions, quality of service). In their turn these positive effects act favourably on the practices of change management, which are encouraged by the tools and practices of communication of the establishment and its capacity to identify correctly the uncertainties of its environment, thus creating a virtuous circle for effective change management.

The model used validates the central hypothesis: knowledge management permits to adapt rapidly to the new constraints of an ever-changing environment to ensure the continuity of the organization. However, the relatively low value of the $R^2$ of the latent variables ("practices of knowledge management" and "effects of knowledge management") means that other non-observed factors contribute to explain the variance and can explain the result. This can be an interesting point for future research. In any case, the results show in a clearly satisfactory way that the survival of an organization in a VUCA world depends on the capacity of the establishment and the professionals that compose it to learn. Consequently, managing knowledge in a medical and social establishment, and most probably in other economic sectors, for organizational change requires the deployment of organizational learning, conceived as a collective construct.

## References

ARGYRIS C. (1985), "Strategy, Change, and Defensive Routines", in Fagan J., Lee I., *Paradoxical Theory of Change,* Pitman, Biesser, Arnold, Boston.

ARGYRIS C. (1990), *Overcoming Organizational Defenses,* Upper Saddle River, Prentice-Hall, N.J.

ARGYRIS C. (1993), *Knowledge for Action: A Guide to Overcoming Barriers to Organizational Change,* John Wiley & Sons, San Francisco.

ARGYRIS C., PUTNAM R., MCLAIN SMITH D. (1985), *Action Science. Concepts, Methods and Skills for Research and Intervention,* Jossey-Bass Inc., Publishers, p. 510.

BANDURA A. (1976), *Social Learning Theory,* Englewood Cliffs, Prentice Hall, N.J.

BERTEZENE S., MARTIN J. (2011), "Quality and non-quality in the health sector", *Sinergie*, n. 85, pp. 15-31.

BERTEZENE S., VALLAT D., MARTIN J. (2014), *An overview of the main strategies and approaches of CSR,* 17th Conference "Excellence in Services", Liverpool, England.

BERTEZENE S., VALLAT D., MARTIN J. (2015), "Social responsibility in the medical and social sector: the French example", *18th Conference "Excellence in Services"*, Palermo, Italy.

BROWN J.S., DUGUID P. (1998), "Organizing Learning and Communities-of-Practice: Toward a Unified View of Working, Learning and Innovation", *Organization Science*, vol. 2, n. 1, pp. 40-57.

CASTELLS M. (1996), *The Rise of the Network Society, The Information Age: Economy, Society and Culture Vol. I.*, Blackwell, Cambridge, MA, Oxford, UK.

CHIN W.W. (1998), "The partial least squares approach to structural equation modeling", in Marcoulides G.A. (Ed.), *Modern methods for business research,* pp. 295-336, Mahwah N.J. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

CHIVA R., ALEGRE J. (2005), "Organizational Learning and Organizational Knowledge: Towards the Integration of Two Approaches", *Management Learning*, vol. 36, n. 1, pp. 47-66.

COASE R. (1937), "The Nature of the Firm", *Economica*, vol. 4, n. 16, pp. 386-405.

CURADO C. (2006), "Organizational learning and organizational design", *The Learning Organization*, vol. 13, n. 1, pp. 25-48.

DAVENPORT T.H. (1994), "Saving its Soul: Human Centered Information Management", *Harvard Business Review*, vol. 72, n. 2, pp. 119-131.

DE GEUS A. (1988) "Planning as Learning", *Harvard Business Review,* vol. 66, n. 2, pp. 70-74.

DE GEUS A. (2002), *The Living Company,* Harvard Business Review Press, p. 240.

ECONOMIST INTELLIGENCE UNIT REPORT (2006), *Foresight 2020 Economic, Industry and Corporate Trends,* The Economist, INSERT DAY p. 96.

EDMONDSON A., MOINGEON B. (2004), "From Organizational Learning to the Learning Organization", in Grey C.J., Antonacopoulou E. *Essential Readings in Management Learning*, SAGE Publications Ltd, 440 pp. 21-37.

GOVINDARJAN V. (1984), "Appropriateness of Accounting Data in Performance Evaluation: an Empirical Investigation of Environmental Uncertainty as an Intervening Variable", *Accounting, Organization and Society*, vol. 9, n. 2, p. 125-135.

David Vallat
Caroline Bayart
Sandra Bertezene
Jacques Martin
Knowledge Management: an asset for managing change?

JACOBS T.O. (2002) *Strategic Leadership: The Competitive Edge, National Defense University,* Industrial College of the Armed Force, p. 262

JOHANSEN B. (2007), *Get There Early: Sensing the Future to Compete in the Present,* Marston Gate: Read As You Want Publisher, Original Publisher: San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc., p. 364.

KAPLAN S., NORTON D. (1996), *The Balanced Scorecard: Translating Strategy Into Action*, Harvard Business School Press, Boston.

LANDES D.S. (1998), *The Wealth and Poverty of Nations: Why Some Are So Rich and Some So Poor,* W.W. Norton, New York.

LE MOIGNE J.L. (2007), *Les Épistémologies Constructivistes, collection Que sais-je?*, Presses Universitaires de France, Paris.

LEVITT B., MARCH J. (1988), "Organizational Learning", *Annual Review of Sociology,* vol. 14, pp. 319-340.

LEWIN K. (1951), *Field theory in social science,* HarperCollins, New York.

MOLINIE E. (2005), *L'hôpital public en France: bilan et perspectives,* Avis et rapports du Conseil économique et social, Paris, p. 263.

NONAKA I. (1994), "Dynamic Theory of Organizational Knowledge Creation", *Organizational Science,* vol. 5, n. 1, février, pp. 14-37.

NONAKA I., TAKEUCHI H. (1995), *The Knowledge-Creating Company*, Oxford University Press.

OECD (2000), *Société du savoir et gestion des connaissances*, OECD Publishing.

OECD (2008), *Intellectual assets and value creation: Synthesis report,* p. 35.

OECD (2012), *Connected Minds: Technology and Today's Learners*, Educational Research and Innovation, OECD Publishing.

POLANYI M. (2009), *The Tacit Dimension*, University of Chicago Press, 128 p. First edition 1966.

POWELL W.W., SNELLMAN K. (2004), "The Knowledge Economy", *Annual Review of Sociology*, vol. 30, pp. 199-220.

PRAX J.Y. (2012), *Le Manuel du Knowledge Management*, Paris: Dunod (3e édition), p. 514.

SENGE P. (2006), *The Fifth Discipline - The Art and Practice of The Learning Organization*, Random House, first edition 1990, London, p. 445.

SPENDER J.C. (1996), "Making Knowledge the Basis of a Dynamic Theory of the Firm", *Strategic Management Journal*, vol. 17, pp. 45-62.

STATA R. (1989), "Organizational Learning: The Key to Management Innovation", *Sloan Management Review*, vol. 12, n. 1, pp. 63-74.

TALEB N.N. (2010), *The Black Swan: The Impact of the Highly Improbable,* Random House, New York, p. 444.

TEECE D.T. (1998), "Capturing Value from Knowledge Assets: The New Economy, Markets for Know-how, and Intangible Assets", *California Management Review*, vol. 40, n. 3, pp. 55-79.

TSOUKAS H. (1996), "The Firm as a Distributed Knowledge System: A Constructionist Approach", *Strategic Management Journal,* vol. 17, pp. 11-25.

UMEMOTO K. (2002), "Managing Existing Knowledge Is Not Enough", in Choo and Bontis N., Chun Wei Choo (Eds.) (2002), *The Strategic Management of Intellectual Capital and Organizational Knowledge*, Oxford University Press, New York, pp. 463-476.

VALLAT D. (2016), "From Knowledge as a Commons to Organization as a Commons?", *Memorias*, vol. 14, n. 26, published online https://revistas.ucc.edu.co/index.php/me/article/view/1627

VOLBERDA H.W. (1996), "Toward the flexible form: how to remain vital in the hypercompetitive environments", *Organization Science*, vol. 7, n. 4, pp. 359-374.

VON GLASERSFELD E. (2004), "Pourquoi le constructivisme doit-il être radical?", in Jonnairt P., Masciotra D. (eds.) *Constructivisme, Choix contemporains,* Hommage à Ernst von Glasersfeld, Presses de l'Université de Québec, pp. 145-154.

WILSON R.A., BRISCOE G. (2004), "The impact of human capital on economic growth: a review" in Descy P., Tessaring M. (eds), *Impact of education and training. Third report on vocational training research in Europe: background report,* Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, 2004.

WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM (2012a), *Global Competitiveness Report,* Geneva.

**Academic or professional position and contacts**

**David Vallat**
Maître de Conférences
University of Lyon 1 - France
e-mail: david.vallat@univ-lyon1.fr

**Caroline Bayart**
Maître de Conférences
University of Lyon 1 - France
e-mail: caroline.bayart@univ-lyon1.fr

**Sandra Bertezene**
Full Professor
Conservatoire National des Arts et Métiers, Paris, France
e-mail: sandra.bertezene@cnam.fr

**Jacques Martin**
Maître de Conférences
University of Toulon - France
e-mail: martin@univ-tln.fr

**Original research papers**

# Linking social entrepreneurship and innovation through the lens of the value co-creation process[1]

Marco Pellicano - Orlando Troisi - Carmela Tuccillo
Massimiliano Vesci

## Abstract

*Purpose of the paper*: In the new Era of sustainability, a sub-discipline within the field of entrepreneurship, called social entrepreneurship (SE), emerged as a global phenomenon in the academic literature (Johnson, 2000; Certo and Miller, 2008; Yeoh, 2012). This paper aims to offer a new perspective in this field of studies with an analysis of the links between SE and innovation adopting the lens of the value co-creation process.

*Methodology*: A brief literature review has been carried out to better understand how SE has developed over time. Hence, an examination of the synergies between SE and innovation has been carried out drawing from the Service-Dominant Logic (S-D) perspective (Vargo and Lusch, 2004, 2008a; Gummesson et al., 2010) and the Network Theory (Gummesson, 2007).

*Findings*: The development of a conceptual framework is useful to demonstrate that SE, innovation (I) and social innovation (SI) are positively related to each other and a combination of the two is necessary in the process of value co-creation.

*Research limitations*: This paper presents the typical limitations of the deductive approach based on literature review. For a deeper understanding of value co-creation management, a broader theoretical, as well as empirical, research is necessary.

*Practical implications*: Hence, the main practical implication of this paper is the identification of the missing link between SE and value co-creation within the mainstream entrepreneurship discourse.

*Originality of the paper:* The study could be considered a first step in a stream of research on different aspects of social entrepreneurship which are yet unexplored.

*Key words: social entrepreneurship; innovation; social innovation; value co-creation; S-D logic and Network Theory*

## 1. Introduction

In recent times, the attention of both academics and practitioners towards social entrepreneurship grew up rapidly (Dacin *et al.*, 2010; Mair and Martì, 2006).

---

[1]    Even if this article can be considered as the result of a shared effort, the paragraphs can be attributed to the authors as follows: n. 5 to Marco Pellicano, n. 2.4 and 4 to Orlando Troisi, n. 1, 2.3 and 3 to Carmela Tuccillo, and n. 2.1 and 2.2 to Massimiliano Vesci.

However, literature on this topic neglected in particular the concept of innovation as a strategic and dynamic aspect of social entrepreneurship inside the value co-creation process (Polese *et al.*, 2017; Lusch and Nambisan, 2015; Callaway and Dobrzykowski, 2009). To fill this gap, this paper contributes to an understanding of the existing theories and practices of social entrepreneurship, innovation and social innovation in order to demonstrate that a combination of these two concepts can be useful for fostering organizational success and value. It recognizes the value co-creation as a useful path to investigate these concepts and to construct a holistic model that seeks to explain the links between SE, I and social innovation (SI).

In particular, the innovative dimension of social entrepreneurship has been discussed according to the Service-Dominant Logic perspective (S-D logic, Vargo and Lusch, 2008a, 2016; Vargo, 2008; Gummesson *et al.*, 2010) and the Network Theory (Granovetter, 1985; Castells, 1996; Gummesson, 2007).

In this paper, the S-D logic is a theoretical approach adopted to describe the increasing importance acted by innovation in the process of creating and disseminating value of social enterprises to improve economic growth in the entrepreneurship activities. The remainder of the paper is organized as follows. The next section summarizes theoretical background on social entrepreneurship (proposing it firstly as an entrepreneurial action), innovation and social innovation, and S-D Logic and Network Theory. Theoretical and managerial implications are discussed in the latter section. This paper offers a new perspective on social entrepreneurship that suggests exciting opportunities for enlightened sustainable development goals in the organizations.

## 2. Conceptual background and research questions

### 2.1 Social Entrepreneurship (SE) as an entrepreneurial activity: the social value creation

In the last decade, Social Entrepreneurship (SE) emerged as a new area of enquiry in a variety of research field such as economics, psychology, history, and marketing (Johnson, 2000; Certo and Miller, 2008; Yeoh, 2012; Shaw and De bruin, 2013; Ferguson *et al.*, 2016; Windasari *et al.*, 2017). Unfortunately, the meaning of social entrepreneurship is yet ambiguous (Mair and Martì, 2006), as revealed by the literature analysis hereafter reported. For instance, a first group of researcher described SE as a response to social and environmental problems (Alvord *et al.,* 2004; Haugh, 2005); others refers to it as a responsible practice of commercial businesses (Sagawa and Segal, 2000) and others retained it as a for-profit venture pursuing social value (Dees and Anderson, 2003). Conceptual differences arise also from the way by which SE has been defined (Mair and Martì, 2006); in fact, it is possible to find definitions for 'social entrepreneurship', 'social entrepreneur' or 'social enterprise'. More clearly, "Definitions of *social entrepreneurship* typically refer to a process or behavior; definitions

of *social entrepreneurs* focus instead on the founder of the initiative; and definitions of *social enterprises* refer to the tangible outcome of social entrepreneurship" (Mair and Martì, 2006, p. 37).

Marco Pellicano
Orlando Troisi
Carmela Tuccillo
Massimiliano Vesci
Linking social
entrepreneurship and
innovation through the lens
of the value co-creation
process

Investigations about social entrepreneurship started since the second half of Eighties (Murray and Mac Millan, 1988) arising especially (but not exclusively) from business schools and focusing on practical considerations (Dees and Anderson, 2006). Given the implicit ambiguity in the terms 'social' and 'entrepreneurship', social entrepreneurship represents an intriguing but yet not clear field of study (Mair and Martì, 2006; Peredo and McLean, 2006). Certainly, as it has been pointed out very clearly, "any definition of the term 'social entrepreneurship' must start with the word 'entrepreneurship'" (Noruzi *et al.*, 2010, p. 4). Entrepreneurship or entrepreneur activity with their conceptualizations should be the starting point for any discussion on SE.

Economic theory proposed two visions of the entrepreneur. Baumol (1993) well clarified this position: "One uses the term to refer to someone who creates and then, perhaps, organizes and operates a new business firm, whether or not there is anything innovative in those acts. The second takes the entrepreneur as the innovator-as the one who transforms inventions and ideas into economically viable entities, whether or not, in the course of doing so they create or operate a firm" (Baumol, 1993, p. 198). The first vision has sometimes been considered to play a fundamental role in developing entrepreneurship as field of study. For instance, Gartner (1989, p. 62) declared: "Entrepreneurship is the creation of new organizations". On this base, a relevant stream of research has been carried out focusing, for instance, on the determinants of a new entry into an industry (Audrestch, 1995; Kolvereid and Isaksen, 2006). The second vision gained attention especially after the seminal works of Venkataraman (1997) and Shane and Venkataraman (2000) that adopt a focus closer to the Schumpeterian view of entrepreneur, retaining that entrepreneurship "seeks to understand how opportunities to bring into existence 'future' good and services are discovered, created, and exploited, by whom, and with what consequences" (Venkataraman, 1997, p. 120). Consequently, the field of entrepreneurship deals with the recognition, discovering and exploitation of opportunities; and the reason why some individuals are able to pursue this process and others do not; and which are the consequences for the whole society of this process of exploitation (Shane and Venkataraman, 2000).

However, as said earlier, during the last twenty years the term "social" in conjunction with the concept of entrepreneurship has been adopted to qualify variously and broadly the word "entrepreneurship": on these basis scholars generated different definitions through the mix of a wide range of terms, referring sometimes to the solutions for social problems, sometimes to the innovative behavior for social objectives, and also to the creation of social value (Austin *et al.*, 2006; Fowler, 2000; Mair and Martì, 2006). In this sense, it has been remarked that social entrepreneurship consists of "a variety of activities and processes to create and sustain social value by using more entrepreneurial and innovative approaches and constrained by the external environment" (Brouard and Larivet, 2009 p. 11). Others argued that SE refers to the adoption of environmentally

responsible practices and products (Schaper, 2002; Gerlach, 2000) or to the "creation of viable socioeconomic structures, relations, institutions, organizations and practices that yield and sustain social benefits" (Fowler, 2000, p. 649). Consequently, Haugh (2007) pointed out that SE is an action for the simultaneous achievement of economic, social, and environmental goals. In this action, Dacin *et al.* (2011, p. 1204) underlined the role of social entrepreneur in "social value" generation. In similar sense, a social entrepreneur was seen as "an individual, group, network, organization, or alliance of organizations that seeks sustainable, large-scale change through pattern-breaking ideas in what or how governments, nonprofits, and businesses do to address significant social problems" (Light, 2006, p. 50; re-written in Light, 2008, p. 12).

In sum, it seems possible to agree with the idea that "social enterprises have in common the principles of pursuing business-led solutions to achieve social aims, and the reinvestment of surplus for community benefit" (Haugh, 2005, p. 5). Along this side, it has been remarked that social enterprises create profit similar to for-profit organizations but, in contrast to them, economic value is identified as a way to get social value (Fowler, 2000; Seelos and Mair, 2007). In fact, extra-profit or extra-production of social enterprise is not distributed to organization's shareholders or direct owners but is reinvested in the arrangement of actions, activities and, more generally, in the assumption of a strategic posture finalized to deal with social issues or to produce benefit for people that are not involved with the organization's management or control (Defourny, 2001).

For the reasons summarized earlier (namely, the primacy of the entrepreneurship and the profit surplus as a mean to achieve social value and to satisfy social need), it has to be remarked that, in this study, social entrepreneurship is firstly an entrepreneurial activity linked with the opportunity of recognition and exploitation, not only in the interest of the entrepreneur but also of the whole society.

### 2.2 Main components of social entrepreneurship in linking it with innovation and social innovation

Earlier considerations showed that social entrepreneurship faces with several components. Light (2006; 2008) identified them in:
- entrepreneur,
- idea,
- opportunity,
- organization.

In particular, in his idea the "entrepreneur" is not only referred to its economic behavior but focused on himself as individual entity, on his traits, his personality, his ability: the term should not be centered on "what" but on "who" (Light, 2006; 2008). Although results about this research stream (individual traits as determinant of entrepreneurial success) reported contrasting results (Misra and Kunar, 2000), in this study, based on the earlier consideration, we propose that referred to social entrepreneurship, entrepreneur's thoughts and ideas are relevant to orientate enterprise strategic behavior towards social needs.

The second and the third components, the 'idea' and the 'opportunity', represent the way to make change happens. For both entrepreneurs and social entrepreneurs, it means that it is not only necessary a good idea but also the ability to exploit the opportunities (Light, 2006; 2008).

The last component, the 'organization', means the ability in putting all the resources together to reach social and economic goals (Light, 2006; 2008). Extant literature (Tushman and O'Reilly, 1996; Ginsberg and Abrahamson, 1991; Teece *et al.*, 1997; Feldman and Pentland, 2003; Aguilera *et al.*, 2007; Schaltegger and Wagner, 2011) has more and more remarked that change is influenced by a great number of determinants inside the organization such as leadership, vision, hierarchies, etc.

Similarly Perrini and Vurro (2006, p. 65) focus on three steps to explain the overall SE process: "They are: opportunity definition; organizational launch and functioning and, financial resource collection and leveraging".

Regarding to opportunity definition, it has been described as "the cognitive process followed by entrepreneurs as they intentionally identify a solution to a specific problem or need because of diverse motivations, including financial rewards" (Dorado and Haettich, 2004, p. 6). As Shane and Venkataram (2000, p. 220) revealed in their seminal study, "although recognition of entrepreneurial opportunities is a subjective process, the opportunities themselves are objective phenomena that are not known to all parties at all times". Consequently, earning profit from an existing opportunity requires that an entrepreneur recognizes it as opportunity and decides to exploit its value. Along this side, it has been proposed more clearly by Hockerts (2006) that activism, self-help, and philanthropy represent core foundations to seek social entrepreneurial opportunities. This suggestion is absolutely in line with the vision we proposed earlier focused on entrepreneur's thoughts and ideas.

This consideration, previous statements and the discussion reported in the next section (see 2.3) remark that social entrepreneurship is intertwined with opportunity discovering, recognition and exploitation. Consequently social entrepreneurship is also a matter of innovation and social innovation. In this study we agree with the conceptualization proposed by Howaldt *et al.* (2016, p. 98) that social innovation is "a new combination and/or new configuration of social practices in certain areas of action or social contexts, prompted by certain actors or constellations of actors in an intentional targeted manner with the goal of better satisfying or answering needs and problems than it is possible on the basis of established practices […]" and "Therefore social innovation can be 'interpreted as a process of collective creation in which the members of a certain collective unit learn, invent and lay out new rules for the social game of collaboration and of conflict or, in a word, a new social practice, and in this process they acquire the necessary cognitive, rational and organizational skills' (Crozier and Friedberg, 1993, p. 19)".

The second fundamental step of SE is to transform the viable idea into a functioning organization. In this sense, it has been remarked that social entrepreneurship needs a specific business model and a viable strategy (Perrini and Vurro, 2006).

**Marco Pellicano**
**Orlando Troisi**
**Carmela Tuccillo**
**Massimiliano Vesci**
Linking social entrepreneurship and innovation through the lens of the value co-creation process

Finally, the third step means the mobilization of financial resource to concretely exploit the social entrepreneurial opportunity. Along this side Bank of England (2003) reported that the most quoted source of financing is represented by social venture capital or venture philanthropy (Perrini and Vurro, 2006). Despite the increasing academic interest in the field of social entrepreneurship, few studies have investigated the links between social entrepreneurship, innovation and social innovation through the lens of the value co-creation process (Choi and Majumdar, 2014; Sigala, 2015). Drawing from the theories of S-D Logic and Network Theory, this paper discusses the functions and contributions of innovation and of social innovation in the process of creating and disseminating value. Consequently, the next conceptual sections of this study attempt to answer the following research questions:

*RQ1. What are the possible links between SE, I and SI?*

*RQ2. What are the main outcomes of linking SE, I and SI through the lens of the value co-creation process?*

### 2.3 Innovation and social innovation as a strategic and dynamic aspect of social entrepreneurship

In the last decade, SE has gained increasing attention among scholars from entrepreneurship literature, yet few studies have investigated the synergies between social entrepreneurship and social innovation (Shaw and De Bruin, 2013). For this reason, a critical examination of the literature is essential to provide more fundamental evidences about the relations between these two concepts.

According to Schumpeterian thoughts, SE is inextricably linked with social innovation (Schumpeter, 1934; Certo and Miller, 2008; Tan *et al.*, 2005). Actually, SE consists in "the development of innovative, mission-supporting, earned income, job creating or licensing ventures undertaken by individual social entrepreneurs, non-profit organizations, or non-profits in association with for-profits" (Pomerantz, 2003, p. 25). In this optics, "it strives to achieve social value creation and this requires the display of innovativeness, pro-activeness and risk management behavior. This behavior is constrained by the desire to achieve the social mission and to maintain the sustainability of existing organization. In doing so, social entrepreneurs are responsive to and constrained by environmental dynamics. They continuously interact with a turbulent and dynamic environment that forces them to pursue sustainability, often within the context of the relative resource poverty of the organization" (Weerawardena and Mort, 2006, p. 32).

With the aim to resolve social problems and satisfy a variety of stakeholder's needs, SE involves the application of a new approach in effort to create social value (Mair and Noboa, 2003; Certo and Miller, 2008). This implies an innovative behavior of the social entrepreneur in a process of continuous adaptation and learning (Dees, 1998). A selection of the most salient definitions of SE is presented below to demonstrate the connection between SE, innovation and SI from a theoretical point of view (table 1).

*Tab. 1: Social entrepreneurship and its main components*

**Marco Pellicano**
**Orlando Troisi**
**Carmela Tuccillo**
**Massimiliano Vesci**
Linking social
entrepreneurship and
innovation through the lens
of the value co-creation
process

| Author | Definition | Components |
|---|---|---|
| Mair and Noboa, 2006, p. 122 | "SE is seen as the innovative use of resource combinations to pursue opportunities aiming at the creation of organisations and/ or practices that yield and sustain social benefits" | - innovative use of resources<br>- opportunities<br>- social benefits |
| Pomerantz, 2003, p. 25 | "Social entrepreneurship can be defined as the development of innovative, mission-supporting, earned income, job creating or licensing ventures undertaken by individual social entrepreneurs, non-profit organisations, or non-profits in association with for-profits" | - innovation |
| Sullivan Mort *et al.*, 2003, p. 76 | "Social entrepreneurship, the entrepreneurship leading to the establishment of new social enterprise, and the continued innovation in existing ones" | - innovation |
| Alvord *et al.*, 2004, p. 262 | "Social entrepreneurship that creates innovative solutions to immediate social problems and mobilizes the ideas, capacities, resources and social arrangements required for sustainable social transformations" | - innovative solutions |
| Roberts and Woods, 2005, p. 49 | "Social entrepreneurship is the construction, evaluation, and pursuit of opportunities for transformative social change carried out by visionary, passionately dedicated individuals" | - opportunities<br>- vision<br>- passionate individuals |
| Austin *et al.*, 2006, p. 2 | "We define social entrepreneurship as innovative, social value creating activity that can occur within or across the non-profit, business, or government sectors" | - innovative<br>- value creation |
| Nicholls, 2006, p. 23 | "Innovative and effective activities that focus strategically on resolving social market failures and creating new opportunities to add social value systematically by using a range of resources and organisational formats to maximise social impacts and bring about changes" | - innovative and effective activities<br>- new opportunities |
| Peredo and McLean, 2006, p. 64 | "Social entrepreneurship is exercised where some person or group: 1) aim(s) at creating social value, either exclusively or at least in some prominent way; 2) show(s) a capacity to recognise and take advantage of opportunities to create that value ('envision'); 3) employ(s) innovation, ranging from outright invention to adapting someone else's novelty, in creating and/ or distributing social value; 4) is/are willing to accept an above-average degree of risk in creating and disseminating social value; and 5) is/are unusually resourceful in being relatively undaunted by scarce assets in pursuing their social venture" | - new opportunities<br>- employ(s) innovation<br>- degree of risk<br>- social value |
| Weerawardena and Mort, 2006, p. 32 | "Social entrepreneurship strives to achieve social value creation and this requires the display of innovativeness, proactiveness and risk management behaviour. This behaviour is constrained by the desire to achieve the social mission and to maintain the sustainability of existing organisation. In doing so social entrepreneurs are responsive to and constrained by environmental dynamics. They continuously interact with a turbulent and dynamic environment that forces them to pursue sustainability, often within the context of the relative resource poverty of the organisation" | - innovativeness<br>- proactiveness<br>- risk management<br>- social mission |
| Wei-Skillern, *et al.*, 2007, p. 4 | "We define social entrepreneurship as an innovative, social value creating activity that can occur within or across the non-profit, business, or government sector" | - innovative and social value creating activity |
| Mair and Marti, 2006, p. 37 | "We view social entrepreneurship broadly, as a process involving the innovative use and combination of resources and social arrangements required for sustainable social transformations" | - innovative use<br>- combination of resources |
| Brock and Ashoka, 2008, p. 3 | "Innovative approaches to social change" or "using business concepts and tools to solve social problems" | - innovative approaches |
| Zhara *et al.*, 2008, p. 118 | "Social entrepreneurship encompasses the activities and processes undertaken to discover, define and exploit opportunities in order to enhance social wealth by creating new ventures or managing existing organisations in an innovative manner" | - innovative management |
| OECD 2010, p. 188 | "Social entrepreneurship can be defined as entrepreneurship that aims to provide innovative solutions to unsolved social problems. Therefore it often goes hand in hand with social innovation processes, aimed at improving people's lives by promoting social changes" | - innovative solutions<br>- social innovation<br>- social changes |

Source: our elaboration

As emerged from table 1, social entrepreneurship encompasses "the activities and processes undertaken to discover, define and exploit opportunities in order to enhance social wealth by creating new ventures or managing existing organizations in an innovative manner" (Zhara *et al.*, 2008, p. 118). Hence, social entrepreneurship is viewed as a process where individuals (social entrepreneurs) identify opportunities, locate resources and create value to serve a mission that sustains social values (Dees, 1998). To be clearer, according to Weerawardena and Mort (2006), SE is a multidimensional construct where the dimensions of innovation, opportunity, social change, social needs and (social) innovation are prominent components of the conceptualization.

The study of the literature also reveals some connections between the social entrepreneur and the concept of innovation and social innovation. Social entrepreneur "plays the role of change agent in the social sector by: adopting a mission to create and sustain social value (not just private value); recognizing and relentlessly pursuing new opportunities to serve that mission; engaging in a process of continuous innovation, adaptation, and learning; acting boldly without being limited by resources currently in hand; exhibiting a heightened sense of accountability to the constituencies served for the outcomes created" (Dees, 1998, p. 4). Similarly, social entrepreneur is described as a "creative individual who questions the status quo, exploits new opportunities, refuses to give up and remakes the world for the better" (Bornstein, 2004, p. 15).

Adopting another point of view, but reaching similar results, to stress the creation of innovative solutions involved in social enterprises, recent developments in SE research further emphasize the role of social entrepreneurship as a driver for fostering social innovation (Bria, 2015; Biggeri *et al.*, 2017; Tracey and Stott, 2017).

As a result, social enterprises are forced to be innovative in all their social value-creating activities to deliver public services (Dart, 2004; Fowler, 2000) and with the aim of improving efficiency and tightening control. In this context, innovativeness is considered one of three core behavioral dimensions in the framework of social entrepreneurship along with proactiveness and risk management (Weerawardena and Mort, 2006). Social enterprises have, in fact, the ability to understand social needs, and then fulfill these needs through creative activities and initiatives (Austin *et al.*, 2006, p. 2).

*2.4 Service Dominant Logic and Network Theory*

In line with the overview on the different definitions of social entrepreneurship proposed in literature, it can be noticed that the concept is strictly related with the solutions of social challenges, so the creation of social value. In particular, the S-D logic, one of the most popular service theories, redefines the notion of value creation as the joint creation of value between users, providers and all the members involved in the relational networks surrounding service provision (Vargo and Lusch, 2008a).

Despite this semantic and conceptual connection, extant research does not adequately reread social entrepreneurship through the lens of S-D

logic which seems to be particularly suitable for extending the notion of SE in order to analyze it as a driver for successful value co-creation.

Marco Pellicano
Orlando Troisi
Carmela Tuccillo
Massimiliano Vesci
Linking social entrepreneurship and innovation through the lens of the value co-creation process

The S-D logic, in fact, represents a scientific-cultural approach aimed at highlighting the benefits, in terms of value, deriving from the establishment of collaborative and constructive relationships among a plurality of actors.

Service-Dominant logic (S-D logic) gives birth from the overcoming of traditional Goods Dominant (G-D) logic paradigm (Vargo and Lusch 2004, 2008a, 2008b; Vargo 2008). The S-D logic takes shape as the result of a complex path of maturation of awareness about the increasingly important role that the service covers in the current social and economic context.

According to G-D logic, value is always internally produced by firms and can be simply considered as the tangible output of a process of economic exchange. Therefore, producers are the only actors capable of creating value and the roles of users and providers are clearly distinct. On the contrary, as mentioned before, in the S-D logic, value is always co-created through the integration of resources and competences of producers and consumers that are not distinct (Tommasetti *et al.*, 2017; Ciasullo *et al.* 2017).

In this perspective, "service" is intended as the application of skills for the exercise of actions, the adoption of choices and the assumption of behaviours capable of fostering the spread of benefits to all the entities involved in the value co-creation process.

Another difference between the two points of views is understanding value. "In G-D logic, value is generated in-use, whereas in S-D logic is created in-exchange (Vargo and Lusch, 2008b)." S-D logic focuses on the action of operant resources, whereas G-D logic focuses on the exchange of operand resources (Vargo and Lusch, 2004). In the S-D logic, all exchanges are based on service and "when goods are involved, they are tools for the delivery and application of resources" (Vargo *et al.*, 2006, p. 40). Value is always co-created with customers and users and it derives from a successful integration of operant resources (Vargo and Lusch, 2008a; Vargo and Lusch, 2004).

Thus, from S-D logic, value is co-created by the mutual effort of all stakeholders (Vargo *et al.*, 2008) according to a network view in which each member is strictly interconnected with each other and actively contributes to reshape value.

The process of value co-creation derives from an experience created in conjunction with other stakeholders (Prahalad and Ramaswamy, 2004; Vargo and Lusch, 2004, 2008a; Vargo, *et al.*, 2008). In contrast with the traditional models of value creation, which suggest that value is created by firms (Normann, 2001), today, customers are always active participants in the value co-creation process. In this dynamic view, value co-creation is mediated by networks of interconnected relationships (Chandler and Vargo, 2011). The importance of network configurations in value co-creation has recently emerged due to the growing contribution in the context through which value is derived (Akaka and Chandler, 2011; Chandler and Vargo, 2011). Networks are, in fact, an excellent means of studying relational phenomena and are considered as critical variables

in the co-creation of value (Barile *et al.*, 2016; Chandler and Vargo, 2011). In this optic, "when relationships embrace more than two people or organizations, complex patterns will emerge - networks. Therefore, what happens between the parties in a relationship is called interaction" (Gummesson, 2006, p. 342). The nature of networks in service ecosystems (Wieland *et al.*, 2012) contributes to the process of value co-creation and to the formation of social contexts that frame exchange (Chandler and Vargo, 2011).

The involvement of a large number of stakeholders in the value co-creation process stresses the relevance of cultural and social features involved in service provision. For this reason, in its recent developments, S-D logic proposes the concept of institutions (11th Foundational Premise Vargo and Lusch, 2016) to further stress how culture, symbols, social practices and social dimension as a whole redefine value.

With this in mind, to date S-D logic can be seen as a scientific proposal in continuous evolution, complemented by studies and emerging considerations in an increasingly complex social and economic scenario. Not by chance, in their last call Vargo and Lusch (2016) establish a research agenda on the analysis of the relationship between entrepreneurship and innovation in value co-creation (Lusch and Nambisan, 2015) and on the key role of value co-creation in fostering social changes (value-in-social-context, Edvardsson *et al.*, 2011)

The most recent advancements in S-D logic foster the adoption of a holistic optics for understanding the key drivers to handle innovation by emphasizing at the same time the role of social links, culture and shared meanings in value co-creation.

Therefore, S-D logic and Social entrepreneurship show two relevant common points: 1) the relevance of social dimension involved in value co-creation (institutions); 2) the potential relationship between social dimension and innovation. It can be concluded that the social nature of S-D logic perfectly allows at rereading social entrepreneurship through this theory. In addition, both frameworks aim to explore social aspects involved in the creation of value and innovation.

### 3. Linking social entrepreneurship and social innovation through the lens of the value co-creation process

This section provided an analysis of the links between SE, I and SI through the lens of the value co-creation process. According to this, value is not created by a social enterprise alone, but by applying all actors' resources such as beneficiaries, investors, institutions and all the different stakeholders involved in the value co-creation process. More specifically as discussed in section 2.4 co-creation is a process based on the collaboration between (social) firms and actors (Humphreys and Grayson, 2008). In fact, "no company alone has the resources, skills or technologies that are necessary to satisfy the requirements or solve the problems of any other and so is dependent on the skills, resources and actions of suppliers, distributors, customers and even competitors to satisfy those requirements"

(Ford *et al.*, 2002, p. 2). This means the continual need for actors to interact and exchange with others in order to access the resources they need or want (Lusch and Vargo, 2006a).

Marco Pellicano
Orlando Troisi
Carmela Tuccillo
Massimiliano Vesci
Linking social entrepreneurship and innovation through the lens of the value co-creation process

In this paper, the term co-creation refers to situations in which a combination of social entrepreneurship and social innovation produces things of value. Therefore, to better understand the links proposed in this study is prominent to discuss the constituent part of value co-creation clarifying for whom value is co-created, what kind of value is co-created, by what kind of resources and furthermore, through what kind of mechanism (Saarijärvi *et al.*, 2013).

Combining social entrepreneurship and social innovation adopting this perspective allows to focus on a new approach in which value is created to generate improvements in the lives of individuals. Social entrepreneurship generates "social value" when innovative solutions are the consequence of collaboration between social entrepreneurs and the actors involved in the value co-creation process (see fig. 1). In fact, social organizations view actors as critical assets. This framework suggests how the inclusion of various actors becomes a crucial element of the entire process that brings to innovation and competitive advantage.

*Fig. 1: Combining SE, I and SI through the lens of the value co-creation process*
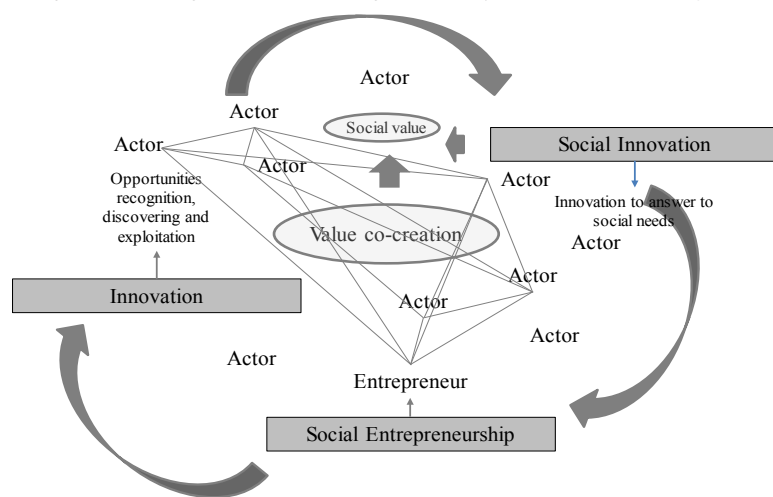


Source: our elaboration

## 4. Theoretical and managerial implications

By introducing an innovative linkage between social entrepreneurship, innovation and value co-creation, the study entails both theoretical and managerial implications.

From a theoretical point of view, the work could be considered a first step in a stream of research focused on different aspects of social entrepreneurship, which are yet unexplored. Additionally, previous studies

often do not adequately explore the managerial implications of S-D logic (De Groot *et al.*, 2010), which could considered in this way mainly as a philosophical theory (Barile and Polese, 2011). For this reason, analyzing its managerial orientation and the role of entrepreneurship in fostering value co-creation enables us to point toward significant advancements in contemporary service research.

The introduction of a managerial view on value co-creation can allow further research overcoming its mere theoretical and philosophical interpretation by better applying the concept to contemporary complex markets. So, through the identification of the drivers for successful value co-creation present understanding of value co-creation itself, whose definition is not yet clearly defined in literature (McColl- Kennedy *et al.*, 2012), can be improved. Moreover, this study can help to clarify the different kind of strategies that managers should adopt for fostering value co-creation which in turn can enhance service efficacy and effectiveness. For instance, through integrated strategies for managing social features, so relationships, and technological tools, such as ICTs platforms, managers can improve information and knowledge exchanges and foster actor's participation, so co-creation (Barile *et al.,* 2016).

From a managerial point of view, by engaging actors in product or service innovation process, social entrepreneurs can hope for a better understanding of their needs and a better acceptance of the innovation if the customer is involved in the design. A better exploration of the relationship between entrepreneurship and innovation can also lead managers to elaborate strategies for optimizing knowledge exchanges and information flows in the whole process of service provision.

In line with the literature review discussed above, social innovation comes from the collaboration of organizations with relevant stakeholders, from users and other companies to local businesses and society as a whole. Moreover, proposing the investigation of the key levers for fostering value co-creation and innovation can help managers to develop actions for stimulating actor's engagement in the long run, may be by supporting the emersion of knowledge sharing through the optimal use of technology.

In this perspective, the definition and implementation of value co-creation processes can be seen as a pulse to be able to cope with the increasingly complex business challenges and new social needs, highlighting how the studies of researchers and the actions of practitioners can no longer exhaust themselves in identifying the objectives individually pursued by single actors. The co-creative processes have to converge towards the pursuit of common or, at least, shared objectives in order to provide concrete answers to the expectations of the business world and, more in general, to society.

In this regard, the concept of social innovation can act as a stimulus for the deepening of the conditions necessary to start up and successfully keep on the processes of value co-creation. This approach leads focusing the cognitive efforts and the investments on the importance, on the one hand, and on the need, on the other, to realize a synergistic integration of resources, in order to facilitate the identification of the solutions to be found to co-create a mutual value.

Today, in order to survive and try to improve and develop over time, companies are "forced" to compare with competitors by defining increasingly complex projects, in more and more intertwined markets, in which the traditional approach to business is not more enough. In this scenario, the combined consideration of various aspects linked to value co-creation, entrepreneurship and social innovation allow to lay the foundations for creating an ecosystem in which all the actors involved benefit from the synergistic integration of the resources provided by each of them. In this way, it is possible to concretely shift the focus from an orientation to product or to customer to an orientation to value.

**Marco Pellicano**
**Orlando Troisi**
**Carmela Tuccillo**
**Massimiliano Vesci**
Linking social entrepreneurship and innovation through the lens of the value co-creation process

By exploring the relationship between value co-creation and technology decision-makers can manage the use of ICTs in business strategies through the proper harmonization of the different stakeholders' interests in order to pursue individuals and overall system's well-being. Therefore, a better use of technology can boost value co-creation and then social innovation.

Framing value co-creation according to a strategic view can address managers to include value co-creation both in corporate strategies and tactics to implement overall management of business processes. In this way, the study proposes a broadened view of social innovation through a proper valorization of S-D logic main assumptions and so by emphasizing the need to focus on actor-to-actor networks and resource integration. The development of an integrated framework combining social, technological and innovative dimensions in a S-D view can shed light on the mechanism fostering service innovation through actor's engagement and through the proper strategies and tactics for managing the use of ICTs. In this view, technology can be intended as an operant resource enhancing the opportunities for service innovation, in line with the recent call proposed in S-D logic (Vargo and Lusch, 2016). In so doing, the work provides further research with a theoretical basis for exploring how co-creation practices arise in service ecosystems and how can be reshaped through resources integration and technology acceptance. Managers can develop in this way most adequate co-creation strategies and tactics for each kind of platforms for increasing engagement and information sharing as a whole.

## 5. Conclusions, limitations and future research

By adopting an integrated view on S-D logic, the work combines "traditional" concept such as social entrepreneurship and innovation with the latest concepts proposed in service theories based on the recognition of the relevance of social dimension in the co-creation of value and so in the generation of innovative solutions.

According to this all-encompassing perspective, the work conceptually proposes and discusses: 1) the existence of a relationship between social entrepreneurship, innovation and social innovation; 2) the potential role of SE, I and SI as drivers for value co-creation.

This paper is aimed to analyze the potential influence of I and SI on the conception of social entrepreneurship adopting the lens of the value co-creation. Theory and concepts related to the field have been examined

critically. The study has found out that integrating SI and SE in the process of value co-creation allows to improve companies' performance in terms of social value, that is created when resources, inputs, processes or policies are combined to generate improvements in the lives of individuals or for society as a whole. The paper contributes to the understanding of how social innovation may be occurring in social enterprises. Thus, the article provides useful examinations and insights of SE, I and SI within the mainstream entrepreneurship discourse. It offers recommendations for future research and identifies a research agenda for developing knowledge about SE, I and SI.

The work offers an integrative framework on SE and I that is useful to demonstrate that social entrepreneurship and social innovation are positively related to each other and a combination of the two is viable to corporate success and sustainability in today's dynamic and changing environment (Polese *et al.* 2018). Hence, the main result of this paper is the identification of the missing link between social innovation, social entrepreneurship and service user.

The main limitation of the study lies in its theoretical nature. Thus, the work can be intended as a starting point for further empirical studies investigating empirically the relationship between social entrepreneurship, social innovation and value co-creation. This may involve in future, quantitative surveys, new practices and research challenges concerning social entrepreneurship in a Service dominant logic. At last, the work provides future research with a theoretical basis for realizing a case study on smart service systems in order to concretely pinpoint: 1) the real co-creation practices both from management and user's point of view; 2) how these activities are shaped based on social dimension and culture; 3) the influence of social entrepreneurship on social innovation and the potential mediating role of value co-creation.

## References

AGUILERA R.V., RUPP D.E., WILLIAMS C.A., GANAPATHI I. (2007), "Putting the S back in corporate social responsibility: A multilevel theory of social change in organizations", *Academy of Management Review,* vol. 32, n. 3, pp. 836-863.

AKAKA M.A., CHANDLER J.D. (2011), "Roles as resources: A social roles perspective of change in value networks", *Marketing Theory,* vol. 11, n. 3, pp. 243-260.

ALVORD S.H., BROWN L.D., LETTS C.W. (2004), "Social entrepreneurship and societal transformation an exploratory study", *The Journal of Applied Behavioral Science,* vol. 40, n. 3, pp. 260-282.

AUDRETSCH D.B. (1995), *Innovation and industry evolution*, Mit Press, Cambridge.

AUSTIN J., STEVENSON H., WEI-SKILLERN J. (2006), "Social and commercial entrepreneurship: Same, different, or both?", *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, vol. 30, n. 1, pp. 1-22.

BANK OF ENGLAND (2003), *The financing of social enterprise*, Bank of England, London.

BARILE S., LUSCH R., REYNOSO J., SAVIANO M., SPOHRER J. (2016), "Systems, networks, and ecosystems in service research", *Journal of Service Management*, vol. 27, n. 4, pp. 652-674.

BARILE S., POLESE F. (2011), "The viable systems approach and its potential contribution to marketing theory", in (VV.AA.) *Contributions to theoretical and practical advances in management. A Viable Systems Approach (vSa)*, International Printing, Avellino.

BAUMOL W.J. (1993), "Normal entrepreneurship theory in economics: existence and bounds", *Journal of Business Venturing*, vol. 8, pp.197-210.

BIGGERI M., TESTI E., BELLUCCI M. (2017), "Enabling Ecosystems for Social Enterprises and Social Innovation: A Capability Approach Perspective", *Journal of Human Development and Capabilities*, vol. 18, n. 2, pp. 299-306.

BORINS S. (2000), "Loose Cannons and Rule Breakers, or Enterprising Leaders? Some Evidence About Innovative Public Managers", *Public Administration Review*, vol. 60, n. 6, pp. 498-507.

BORNSTEIN D. (2004), *How to Change the World: Social Entrepreneurs and the Power of New Ideas*, Oxford University Press, New York.

BRIA F. (2015), "Growing a digital social innovation ecosystem for Europe", *Digital Social Innovation Final Report,* Available online at: https://www.nesta.org.uk/sites/default/files/dsireport.pdf

BROCK D. (2008), "Social Entrepreneurship Teaching Resources Handbook for Faculty Engaged in Teaching and Research in Social Entrepreneurship", *Ashoka's Global Academy for Social Entrepreneurship*, Ashoka, Arlington.

BROUARD F., LARIVET S. (2009), "Social Entrepreneurship: definitions and boundaries", in *ANSER-ARES 2009 Conference Association for Non-profit and Social Economy Research*, Ottawa, Canada, pp. 1-15.

CALLAWAY S.K., DOBRZYKOWSKI D.D. (2009), "Service-oriented entrepreneurship: Service-dominant logic in green design and healthcare", *Service Science,* vol. 1, n. 4, pp. 225-240.

CASE (Center for Advancement of Social Entrepreneurship) (2008), *Developing the Field of Social Entrepreneurship, report from CASE,* Duke University, Fuqua School of Business, June.

CASTELLS M. (1996), *The network society,* Blackwell, Oxford.

CERTO S.T., MILLER T. (2008), "Social entrepreneurship: Key issues and concepts", *Business Horizons,* vol. 51, n. 4, pp. 267-271.

CHANDLER J.D., VARGO S.L. (2011), "Contextualization and value-in-context: How context frames exchange", *Marketing Theory,* vol. 11, n. 1, pp. 35-49.

CHOI N., MAJUMDAR S. (2014), "Social entrepreneurship as an essentially contested concept: Opening a new avenue for systematic future research", *Journal of Business Venturing*, vol. 29, n. 3, pp. 363-376.

CIASULLO M.V., COSIMATO S., PALUMBO R., STORLAZZI A. (2017), "Value co-creation in the health service ecosystems: the enabling role of institutional arrangements", *International Business Research*, vol. 10, n. 12, pp. 222-238.

CIASULLO M.V., GAETA A., GAETA M., MONETTA G. (2016) "New modalities for enhancing cultural heritage experience. The enabling role of digital technologies", *Sinergie*, vol. 34, n. 99, pp. 119-139.

**Marco Pellicano**
**Orlando Troisi**
**Carmela Tuccillo**
**Massimiliano Vesci**
Linking social entrepreneurship and innovation through the lens of the value co-creation process

CROZIER M., FRIEDBERG E. (1993), "Die zwänge kollektiven handelns: über macht und organisation", *Hain, frankfurt am main*, Available online at: http://www. youngfoundation. org/files/images/In_and_Out_of_Sync_ Final. pdf, 27/01/2010

DACIN P.A., DACIN M.T., MATEAR M. (2010), "Social entrepreneurship: why we don't need a new theory and how we move forward from here", *The Academy of Management Perspectives*, vol. 24, n. 3, pp. 37-57.

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", *Non-profit Management and Leadership,* vol. 14, n. 4, pp. 411-424.

DE GROOT R.S., ALKEMADE R., BRAAT L., HEIN L., WILLEMEN L. (2010), "Challenges in integrating the concept of ecosystem services and values in landscape planning, management and decision making", *Ecological Complexity,* vol. 7, n. 3, pp. 260-272.

DEES G.J. (1998), "The Meaning of Social Entrepreneurship", Available online at: http://www.partnerships.org.au/Library/the_meaning_of_social_ entrepreneurship.htm

DEES G.J. (2003), "New definitions of Social Entrepreneurship: free eye exams and wheelchairdrivers", Available online at: http://knowledge.wharton.upenn. edu/article.cfm?articleid=897

DEES J.G., ANDERSON B.B (2003), "For-profit social ventures", *International Journal of Entrepreneurship Education,* vol. 2, pp. 1-26.

DEES J.G., ANDERSON B.B. (2006), "Framing a theory of social entrepreneurship: Building on two schools of practice and thought, in Research on Social Entrepreneurship: Understanding and Contributing to an Emerging Field", *ARNOVA Occasional Paper Series*, vol. 1, n. 3, pp. 39-66.

DEFOURNY J. (2001), "Introduction: From Third Sector to Social Enterprise" in Emergence of Social Enterprise", in Borzaga C., Defourny J. (eds.) *The emergence of social enterprise,* Routledge, London.

DORADO S., HAETTICH H. (2004), "Social entrepreneurial ventures: Worth a careful look?", *Working Paper. UMASS* - College of Management, Boston.

EDVARDSSON B., TRONVOLL B. GRUBER (2011), "Expanding understanding of service exchange and value co-creation: a social construction approach", *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science,* vol. 39, pp. 327-339.

FELDMAN M.S., PENTLAND B.T. (2003), "Reconceptualizing Organizational Routines As A Source Of Flexibility And Change", *Administrative Science Quarterly,* vol. 48, n. 1, pp. 94-118.

FERGUSON R., SCHATTKE K., PAULIN M. (2016), "The social context for value co-creations in an entrepreneurial network: influence of interpersonal attraction, relational norms and partner trustworthiness", *International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behavior & Research,* vol. 22, n. 2, pp. 199-214.

FORD D., GADDE L.E., HÅKANSSON H., SNEHOTA I. (2002), *Managing networks, in 18th IMP Conference*, Perth, Australia, pp. 11-13.

FOWLER A. (2000), "NGDOs as a moment in history: beyond aid to social entrepreneurship or civic innovation?", *Third world quarterly,* vol. 21, n. 4, pp. 637-654.

GALASKIEWICZ J. (1985), "Interorganizational Relations," *Annuals of Review in Sociology,* vol. 11, n. 1, pp. 281-304.

GARTNER W.B. (1989), "'Who is an Entrepreneur?' is the Wrong Question", *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice,* vol. 13, pp. 47-68.

GINSBERG A., ABRAHAMSON E. (1991), "Champions of change and strategic shifts - the role of internal and external change advocates", *Journal of Management Studies,* vol. 28, n. 2, pp. 173-190.

GRANOVETTER M. (1985), "The strength of weak ties: A network theory revisited", *Sociological Theory*, vol. 1, n. 1, pp. 201-233.

GUCLU A., DEES J.G., BATTLE ANDERSON B. (2002), "The process of social entrepreneurship: Creating opportunities worthy of serious pursuit", *Paper. Fuqua School of Business, Center for the Advancement of Social Entrepreneurship.*

GUMMESSON E. (2006), "Many-to-many marketing as grand theory" in Lusch R.F. and. Vargo S.L (eds), *The Service–Dominant Logic of Marketing: Dialog, Debate, and Directions,* Sharpe, Armonk, NY, pp. 339–353.

GUMMESSON E. (2007), "Case study research and network theory: birds of a feather", *Qualitative Research in Organizations and Management: An International Journal*, vol. 2, n. 3, pp. 226-248.

GUMMESSON E., LUSCH R.F., VARGO S.L. (2010), "Transitioning from service management to service-dominant logic: observations and recommendations", *International Journal of Quality and Service Sciences,* vol. 2, n. 1, pp. 8-22.

HAUGH H. (2005), "A research agenda for social entrepreneurship", *Social Enterprise Journal,* vol. 1, n. 1, pp. 1-12.

HAUGH H. (2007), "New Strategies for a Sustainable Society: The Growing Contribution of Social Entrepreneurship", *Business Ethics Quarterly*, vol. 17, n. 4, pp. 743-749.

HOCKERTS K. (2006), "Bootstrapping Social Change, Towards an Evolutionary Theory of Social Entrepreneurship", *Academy of Management Annual Meeting*, August 11-16, Atlanta, Georgia, USA.

HOWALDT J., KALETKA C., SCHRÖDER A. (2016), "Social entrepreneurs. Important actors within an ecosystem of social innovation", *European Public Social and Social Innovation Review*, vol. 1, n. 2, pp. 95-110.

HUMPHREYS A., GRAYSON K. (2008), "The intersecting roles of consumer and producer: A critical perspective on co-production, co-creation and presumption", *Sociology Compass*, vol. 2, n. 3, pp. 963-980.

JOHNSON S. (2000), "Literature review on social entrepreneurship", *Canadian Centre for Social Entrepreneurship,* vol. 16, n. 23, pp. 1-17.

KOLVEREID L., ISAKSEN E. (2006), "New business start-up and subsequent entry into self-employment", *Journal of Business Venturing*, vol. 21, n. 6, pp. 866-885.

KONG E. (2010), "Innovation processes in social enterprises: an IC perspective", *Journal of Intellectual Capital,* vol. 11, n. 2, pp. 158-178.

LA BARRE AND FISHMAN (2011), Who's Fast Leaders 2002, Fast Company.

LIGHT P.C. (2006), "Reshaping social entrepreneurship", *Stanford Social Innovation Review*, vol. 4, n. 3, pp. 47-51.

LIGHT P. (2008), *The Search for Social Entrepreneurship,* Brookings Institution Press, Washington, DC.

LUSCH R.F., NAMBISAN S. (2015), "Service innovation: A service-dominant logic perspective", *Mis Quarterly,* vol. 39, n. 1, pp. 155-176.

LUSCH R.F., VARGO S.L. (2006a), "Service-dominant logic as a foundation for a general theory", in Vargo S.L., Lusch R.F. (ed.), *The service-dominant logic of marketing: dialog, debate, and directions,* M.E. Sharpe, Armonk, pp. 406-420.

MAIR J., GANLY K. (2010), "Social Entrepreneurs: Innovating towards Sustainability", in Assadourian E. (ed.) *State of the World 2010, Transforming Cultures: From Consumerism to Sustainability,* Worldwatch Institute, Washington, DC, p. 304.

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

MAIR J., NABOA E. (2003) *Social Entrepreneurship: How Intentions to Create a Social Enterpris Get Formed, Working Paper,* IESE Business School, Universidad de Navarra, n. 521.

MCCOLL-KENNEDY J.R., VARGO S.L., DAGGER S.T., SWEENEY C.J., VAN KASTEREN Y. (2012), "Health care customer value co-creation practice styles", *Journal of Service Research,* vol. 15, n. 4, pp. 370-389.

MCLEOD H.R. (1997), "Cross over", *Inc.*, vol. 19, pp. 100-105.

MISRA S., KUMAR E.S. (2000), "Resourcefulness: A proximal conceptualisation of entrepreneurial behaviour", *The Journal of Entrepreneurship,* vol. 41, n. 2, pp. 135-154.

MURRAY L.B., MACMILAN I.C. (1988), "Entrepreneurship: Past Research and Future Challenges", *Journal of Management*, vol. 14, n. 2, pp. 139-16l.

NICHOLLS A., CHO A.H. (2006), "Social Entrepreneurship: The Structuration of a Field", in Nicholls A. (eds.), *Social Entrepreneurship. New Models of Sustainable Change*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, pp. 99-118.

NORMANN R. (2001), *Reframing business: When the map changes the landscape,* Wiley, New York.

NORUZI M.R., WESTOVER J.H, RAHIMI G.R. (2010), "An Exploration of Social Entrepreneurship in the Entrepreneurship Era", *Asian Social Science,* vol. 6, n. 6, pp. 3-10.

OECD (2010), "Improving Social Inclusion at Local Level through the Social Economy", *Report for Korea, report by the OECD LEED Programme,* OECD, Paris.

PEREDO A.M., MCLEAN M. (2006), "Social Entrepreneurship: A Critical Review of the Concept", *Journal of World Business,* vol. 41, pp. 56-65.

PERRINI F., VURRO C. (2006), "Social Entrepreneurship: Innovation and Social Change Across Teory and Practice",, in Mair J., Robinson J., Hockerts K. (ed.) *Social Entrepreneurship*, Palgrave Macmillan, London, pp. 57-87.

POLESE F., MELE C., GUMMESSON E. (2017), "Value co-creation as a complex adaptive process", *Journal of Service Theory and Practice*, vol. 27, n. 5, pp. 926–929. Available online at: doi: 10.1108/JSTP-07-2017-0111.

POLESE F., BOTTI A., GRIMALDI M., MONDA A., VESCI M. (2018), "Social Innovation in Smart Tourism Ecosystems: How Technology and Institutions Shape Sustainable Value Co-Creation", *Sustainability*, vol. 10, 140.

POMERANTZ M. (2003), "The Business of Social Entrepreneurship in a Down Economics", *Business*, vol. 25, n.3, pp. 25-30.

PRABHU G.N. (1999), "Social entrepreneurial leadership", *Career Development International*, vol. 4, n. 3, pp. 140-145.

Marco Pellicano
Orlando Troisi
Carmela Tuccillo
Massimiliano Vesci
Linking social
entrepreneurship and
innovation through the lens
of the value co-creation
process

PRAHALAD C.K., RAMASWAMY V. (2004), "Co-creation experiences: The next practice in value creation", *Journal of Interactive Marketing,* vol. 18, n. 3, pp. 5-14.

ROBERTS D., WOODS C. (2005), "Changing the world on a shoestring: The concept of social entrepreneurship", *University of Auckland Business Review*, vol. 7, n. 1, pp. 45-51.

SAARIJÄRVI H., KANNAN P.K., KUUSELA H. (2013), "Value co-creation: theoretical approaches and practical implications", *European Business Review,* vol. 25, n. 1, pp. 6-19.

SAGAWA S., SEGAL E. (2000), "Common interest, common good: Creating value through business and social sector partnership", *California Management Review*, vol. 42, n. 2, pp. 105-122.

SCHALTEGGER S., WAGNER M. (2011), "Sustainable Entrepreneurship and Sustainability Innovation: Categories and Interactions", *Business Strategy and the Environment*, vol. 20, n. 4, pp. 222-237.

SCHAPER M. (2002), "The essence of ecopreneurship", *Greener Management International,* vol. 38, pp. 26-30.

SCHUMPETER J.A. (1934), "The Theory of Economic Development: An Inquiry into Profits, Capital, Credit, Interest, and the Business Cycle", Transaction Publishers.

SEELOS C., MAIR J. (2007), "Profitable business models and market creation in the context of deep poverty: a strategic view", *The Academy of Management Perspectives,* vol. 21, n. 4, pp. 49-63.

SHANE S., VENKATARAMAN S. (2000), "The Promise of Entrepreneurship as a Field of Research", *Academy of Management Revue*, vol. 25, n. 1, pp. 217-226.

SHAW E., DE BRUIN A. (2013) "Reconsidering capitalism: the promise of social innovation and social entrepreneurship?", *International Small Business Journal,* vol. 31, n. 7, pp. 737-746.

SIGALA M. (2015), "Social Entrepreneurship and Social Value Co-creation: the case of Mageires (a social restaurant)", in Brookes M and Altinay L., *Entrepreneurship in Hospitality and Tourism. A Global Perspective,* Goodfellow Publishers Limited, Wolvercote, Oxford.

SULLIVAN MORT G., WEERAWARDENA J., CARNEGIE K. (2003), "Social entrepreneurship: Towards conceptualization", *International Journal of Non-Profit and Voluntary Sector Marketing,* vol. 8, n. 1, pp. 76-88.

TAN W.L., WILLIAMS J., TAN T.M. (2005), "Defining the "social" in "social entrepreneurship": Altruism and entrepreneurship", *International Entrepreneurship Management Journal,* vol. 1, n. 3, pp. 353-365.

TEECE D.J., PISANO G., SHUEN A. (1997), "Dynamic Capabilities and Strategic Management", *Strategic Management Journal,* vol. 18, n. 7, pp. 509-533.

THOMPSON J., DOHERTY B. (2006), "The diverse world of social enterprise: A collection of social enterprise stories", *International Journal of Social Economics,* vol. 33, n. 5/6, pp. 361-375, Available online at: doi: 10.1108/03068290610660643

TOMMASETTI A., TROISI O., VESCI M. (2017), "Measuring customer value co-creation behavior: Developing a conceptual model based on service-dominant logic", *Journal of Service Theory and Practice*, vol. 27, n. 5, pp. 930-950.

TRACEY P., STOTT N. (2017), "Social innovation: a window on alternative ways of organizing and innovating", *Innovation*, vol. 19, n.1, pp. 51-60.

TUSHMAN M.L., O'REILLY C.A. (1996), "Ambidextrous Organizations: Managing Evolutionary And Revolutionary Change", *California Management Review*, vol. 3, n. 4, pp. 8-29.

VARGO S.L. (2008), "Customer Integration and Value Creation: Paradigmatic Traps and Perspectives", *Journal of Service Research*, vol. 11, n. 2, pp. 211-215.

VARGO S.L., LUSCH R.F. (2004), "Evolving to a new dominant logic for marketing", *Journal of Marketing*, vol. 68, n. 1, pp. 1-17.

VARGO S.L., LUSCH R.F. (2008a), "Service-dominant logic: continuing the evolution", *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, vol. 36, n. 1, pp. 1-10.

VARGO S.L., LUSCH R.F. (2008b), "From goods to service(s): Divergences and convergences of logics", *Industrial Marketing Management*, vol. 37, n. 3, pp. 254-259.

VARGO S.L., LUSCH R.F., MORGAN F.W. (2006), "Historical perspectives on service-dominant logic", in Lusch R. F., Vargo S.L. (ed.), *The service-dominant logic of marketing: dialog, debate, and directions*, M.E. Sharpe, Armonk, pp. 29-42.

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.

VARGO S.L., LUSCH, R.F. (2016), "Institutions and axioms: an extension and update of service-dominant logic", *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, vol. 44, n. 1, pp. 5-23.

VENKATARAMAN S. (1997), "The distinctive domain of entrepreneurship research", in Katz J., Brockhaus R. (ed.), *Advances in entrepreneurship, firm emergence, and growth*, vol. 3, JAI Press, Greenwich (CT), pp. 119-138.

WADDOCK S., POST E. (1991), "Social entrepreneurs and catalytic change", *Public Administration Review*, vol. 51, n. 5, pp. 393-401.

WEERAWARDENA J., MORT G.S. (2006), "Investigating social entrepreneurship: A multidimensional model", *Journal of World Business*, vol. 41, n. 1, pp. 21-35.

WEERAWARDENA J., SULLIVAN MORT G. (2001), "Learning, innovation and competitive advantage in not-for-profit aged care marketing: A conceptual model and research propositions", *Journal of Nonprofit and Public Sector Marketing*, vol. 9, n. 3, pp. 53-73.

WEI-SKILLERN J., AUSTIN J.E., LEONARD H.B., STEVENSON H.H (2007), *Entrepreneurship in the Social Sector*, Sage Publications, Los Angeles.

WIELAND H., POLESE F., VARGO S.L., LUSCH R.F. (2012), "Toward a service (eco) systems perspective on value creation", *International Journal of Service Science, Management, Engineering and Technology*, vol. 3, n. 3, pp. 12-24.

WINDASARI N., LIN F., CHEN H (2017), "The Role of Social Capital on Cocreating Value for Social Enterprises: The Service Dominant Logic Perspective", in *Proceedings of the 50th Hawaii International Conference on System Sciences.*

YEOH P. (2012), "Social entrepreneurship: Social enterprise governance", *Business Law Review*, vol. 33, n. 10, pp. 232-244.

ZAHRA S.A., RAWHOUSER H.N., BHAWE N., NEUBAUM D.O., HAYTON J.C. (2008), "Globalization of social entrepreneurship opportunities", *Strategic Entrepreneurship Journal*, vol. 2, pp. 117–131. Available online at: http://dx.doi.org/10.1002/(ISSN)1932-443X

## Academic or professional position and contacts

**Marco Pellicano**
Full Professor of Management
University of Salerno - Italy
e-mail: pellicano@unisa.it

**Orlando Troisi**
Researcher of Management
University of Salerno - Italy
e-mail: otroisi@unisa.it

**Carmela Tuccillo**
Phd in Management
University of Salerno - Italy
e-mail: ctuccillo@unisa.it

**Massimiliano Vesci**
Associate Professor of Management
University of Salerno - Italy
e-mail: mvesci@unisa.it

# Il perimetro di industrie culturali, creative e turismo: specializzazioni e implicazioni di policy in Italia[1]

Maria Della Lucia - Giovanna Segre

## Abstract

*Obiettivo del paper*: *Il contributo propone una perimetrazione ampia e specifica per l'Italia di industrie culturali e creative e turismo e una misura della specializzazione dei sistemi locali italiani in queste industrie. Lo scopo è supportare processi decisionali efficaci in ambiti che hanno un ruolo crescente per uno sviluppo sostenibile e innovativo.*

*Metodologia*: *Il perimetro di industrie culturali e creative e turismo è identificato combinando criteri da output culturale e input creativo. La specializzazione in tali industrie è calcolata a livello inter-comunale mediante misure che si rifanno, e adattano, metodi usati negli studi sui distretti industriali.*

*Risultati*: *Lo studio perviene a una fotografia dell'economia della cultura e del turismo per macro-aree e regioni italiane in termini di imprese e addetti. Inoltre, misura e mappa la specializzazione dei sistemi locali dell'intero territorio nazionale in patrimonio storico e artistico, cultura materiale, media e nuovi media, turismo. I sistemi locali sono diversificati in queste industrie ma cultura materiale e turismo prevalgono sia per numero di sistemi specializzati che per livello di specializzazione.*

*Limiti della ricerca*: *Lo studio è esplorativo e quantitativo. La base dati si riferisce a industria e servizi del settore privato. Sono esclusi settore pubblico e no profit.*

*Implicazioni pratiche*: *La sostenibilità e l'innovazione dei modelli locali di sviluppo richiede di andare oltre le politiche turistiche e il marketing turistico del patrimonio culturale e mettere in atto un ventaglio di azioni che promuovano lo sviluppo di complementarietà e connessioni nuove tra settori e policy.*

*Originalità del paper*: *La perimetrazione di industrie culturali e creative e turismo è risultato di un approccio interdisciplinare e la misura della specializzazione italiana in queste industrie è svolta a un dettaglio territoriale fine.*

*Parole chiave: industrie culturali e creative; turismo; criteri di perimetrazione; Sistemi Locali del Lavoro; indici di specializzazione; mappatura territoriale; policy*

*Purpose of the paper*: *This contribution provides a country specific and yet wide-ranging classification of the Italian culture and creative industries (including tourism), and measures the extent to which Italian local systems have specialized in these industries. The aim is to support effective decision making in domains which have a strategic role in sustainable place development and innovation.*

---

*Methodology*: *A combination of approaches, based on cultural output and creative input, is used to identify the culture and creative, and tourism, industries. The specialization in the above industries at the inter-municipal level is calculated by extending, and adapting, well-established quantitative methodologies used in studies on industrial districts.*

*Results*: *The study provides a picture of the economy of culture and tourism in Italian macro-regions and regions in terms of companies and workers. In addition, it measures and maps the specialization of local systems in cultural heritage, material culture, media and new media, tourism throughout the national territory. Local systems have diversified in these industries, but material culture and tourism predominate, both in terms of the number of specialized systems and levels of specialization.*

*Research limitations*: *Exploratory and quantitative analysis. The data source focuses on industry and private services. Public and no-profit sectors are excluded.*

*Practical implications:* *To foster sustainable place development and innovation, policy making should go beyond narrow tourism policies and the tourist marketing of cultural heritage and develop interactions and synergies between sectors and sector-specific policies.*

*Originality of the paper*: *Interdisciplinary approach to the definition of the culture and creative industries and tourism; the specialization in these industries is calculated at a local level of analysis.*

*Key words: cultural and creative industries; tourism; cultural output and creative input-based criteria; Local Labour Systems; specialization indexes; territorial mapping; policy.*

## 1. Introduzione

Era il 2006 quando KEA European Affairs (KEA, 2006) pubblicava per conto della Commissione Europea il primo tentativo ufficiale di definire i confini e quantificare la rilevanza delle industrie culturali e creative nei paesi dell'Unione Europea. Le consistenze economiche così evidenziate - oltre 654 miliardi di Euro di fatturato, pari al 2,6% del PIL nel 2003 (UE a 15 paesi) e 5,8 milioni di occupati nel 2004, circa il 3,1% dell'occupazione totale (UE a 25 paesi) - hanno aperto la strada a uno sguardo nuovo sul ruolo strategico di questi settori per lo sviluppo delle economie del XXI secolo. Lo dimostra la messe di studi e ricerche internazionali e nazionali pubblicate dal 2006 ad oggi. Questi contributi, diversi per scopo, approccio e contesto geografico, ripropongono uno schema analogo; dichiaratamente, o sullo sfondo, hanno obiettivi o implicazioni di policy. Prima definiscono il perimetro del sistema della produzione culturale e creativa e poi introducono metriche che ne misurano la significatività, tipicamente economica. Il quadro delineato è, ad oggi, ancora frammentato. Per ragioni di diversa natura, il perimetro è in parte incerto e si è progressivamente ampliato per comprendere settori che possiedono elementi culturali e creativi anche distanti o diversi da quelli tradizionalmente definiti come culturali. Ciò perché il perimetro influisce sul peso che questi settori hanno nel sistema economico, misurato con le stesse metriche - valore aggiunto e occupati (KEA, 2006) - con cui si valutano gli altri settori. Questa frammentazione

non permette confronti omogenei di queste industrie - longitudinali e tra paesi e aree diverse di uno stesso paese - ed è poco funzionale a definire e valutare l'impatto di politiche di settore. A queste difficoltà contribuisce anche l'assenza di banche dati specifiche, aggiornate e complete; la scala territoriale più fine rimane il livello di analisi più penalizzato.

Questo contributo è incentrato sulla perimetrazione delle industrie culturali e creative in quanto tema di ricerca che ha forti implicazioni di policy. Nella prima parte, si presenta un'analisi critica degli studi finora condotti a livello internazionale e nazionale italiano sugli approcci alla, e i risultati della, perimetrazione di tali industrie. Questa analisi rileva che la perimetrazione non è riconducibile tanto a criteri espliciti di perimetrazione, ma è dettata più da ragione di misurazione e comparazione delle industrie culturali e creative con altri settori. Pertanto, nella seconda parte del paper, si propone un metodo che supera le principali criticità rinvenute in questa rassegna. Tale metodo si interroga su, e adotta, un approccio ragionato alla perimetrazione delle industrie culturali e creative; ottiene un perimetro ampio e specifico per il contesto italiano che include il turismo per le interazioni che tale settore ha con le industrie culturali e creative; misura la specializzazione nelle industrie culturali e creative e nel turismo al livello territoriale che gli studi sullo sviluppo locale ritengono più significativo per analisi socio-economiche, indipendentemente dal settore che traina lo sviluppo. La mappatura delle specializzazioni italiane che risulta da tale analisi consente indicazioni preliminari di policy intese a promuovere interconnessioni, sinergie e processi di innovazione tra i settori oggetto dello studio.

## 2. Il dibattito scientifico sul perimetro delle industrie culturali e creative

Nelle economie post-industriali, la combinazione di economia della conoscenza (Scott, 2010), dell'esperienza (Pine e Gilmore, 1999) e digitale (Rifkin, 2011; Zuboff e Maxmin, 2002) ha comportato la naturale estensione dell'industria culturale ai settori creativi. La prima esperienza rappresentativa di individuazione dei confini di tali industrie è stata realizzata a livello nazionale dalla Creative Industry Task Force del Department of Culture, Media and Sport del Regno Unito (DCMS, 1998). A livello europeo, il primo studio è stato condotto a partire dal 1997 dal Leadership Group Culture (LEG-Culture) (EUROSTAT, 2000) basandosi sui risultati a cui l'UNESCO (1986) era pervenuto già un decennio prima. Le riflessioni sviluppate in questi primi lavori sono state sistematizzate dalla KEA (2006). L'industria culturale e creativa che ha identificato è più complessa, articolata in componenti, settori e sotto-settori che hanno esternalità positive trasversalmente all'economia (KEA, 2012; Della Lucia, 2014). L'offerta del *Core Culturale* e delle *Industrie Culturali* è costituita da prodotti e servizi culturali - rispettivamente non riproducibili e riproducibili, diffusi ed esportati su larga scala - e fruiti per scopi culturali, di intrattenimento ed edutainment. La produzione delle *Industrie Creative*, invece, è costituita da beni non culturali che possiedono una serialità

artigianale risultato del patrimonio immateriale di cultura e conoscenza sedimentato nei contesti locali (Tamma, 2010) o detenuto dalla classe creativa (Florida, 2002). I beni e i servizi delle *Industrie Connesse* sono prodotti digitali non culturali che hanno numerose interazioni con i settori culturali e creativi e con il turismo (European Commission, 2010).

Questi studi pioneristici hanno aperto la strada a una messe di contributi internazionali sulla perimetrazione; una rassegna completa e aggiornata è presentata da Orlandi e Santagati (2014). Oltre ad affinare i confini delle industrie culturali e creative, tali studi ne hanno quantificato gli effetti su molteplici dimensioni dello sviluppo economico, in particolare PIL (Gordon e Beilby-Orrin, 2007), occupazione (Power e Nielsén, 2010), esportazioni (UNCTAD, 2008) e innovazione (NESTA, 2009; Smart Specialisation Platform, 2012). Lo scopo era comparare le performance di queste industrie in diversi paesi e rispetto ad altri settori (UNESCO, 2009; ESSnet-Culture, 2012) e sviluppare policy e programmi che ne supportassero la crescita (OECD, 2005; CSES, 2010; European Commission, 2010; Sacco, 2011, 2012).

Il diffondersi della consapevolezza del ruolo di queste industrie ha portato anche gli studi nazionali e regionali ad approfondire il tema. Le specificità dell'industria culturale e creativa italiana sono state qualificate seguendo approcci diversi (Bodo e Spada, 2004; Lazzeretti *et al.*, 2008; Santagata, 2009; Istituto Guglielmo Tagliacarne, 2009; Valentino, 2014; Orlandi e Santagati, 2014; Symbola e Unioncamere, 2016). Il primo rapporto sull'economia della cultura in Italia di Bodo e Spada (2004) ha utilizzato dati di spesa pubblica e privata per quantificare settori e produzioni tipicamente culturali (beni culturali, spettacolo dal vivo, audiovisivi, editoria). Il rapporto dell'Istituto Guglielmo Tagliacarne (2009), invece, ha proposto una quantificazione del valore aggiunto e dell'occupazione di ben cinque settori. Oltre ai beni culturali, essi includono industria culturale, architettura ed edilizia di riqualificazione, enogastronomia e produzioni tipiche, produzioni industriali e artigianali. Sviluppando questo orientamento, Santagata (2009) ha proposto un modello più articolato che combina i tradizionali elementi meritori dei modelli welfaristici con riflessioni sulla cultura come generatore di valore economico. Ne risulta un modello che include patrimonio e settori industriali, culturali e non, articolandoli in tre pilastri - patrimonio culturale, cultura materiale, media e nuovi media. La ricerca di Fondazione Symbola e Unioncamere ha proposto una perimetrazione settoriale in linea con il modello di Santagata che ha aggiornato annualmente dal 2011 in poi. Secondo l'edizione più recente (Symbola e Unioncamere, 2016), le imprese del sistema produttivo culturale sono quasi 413 mila, ovvero il 6,7% delle aziende italiane, e occupano 1,5 milioni di persone, oltre il 6% del totale degli occupati. Questo sistema privato genera, insieme a istituzioni pubbliche e no profit, circa 90 miliardi di euro di valore aggiunto ma ne crea complessivamente 250 miliardi, il 17% della ricchezza nazionale, attraverso settori collegati tra cui, per dimensione, spicca il turismo. Questi numeri sono indicativi non solo della rilevanza economica che le industrie culturali e creative rivestono in Italia, ma anche di come la connessione con altri settori rappresenti un importante volano di sviluppo.

## 3. Criteri di perimetrazione delle industrie culturali e creative

**Maria Della Lucia**
**Giovanna Segre**
Il perimetro di industrie
culturali, creative e
turismo: specializzazioni
e implicazioni di policy
in Italia

Nonostante la messe di studi, l'identificazione delle industrie culturali e creative rimane un problema ancora in parte aperto. La selezione dei settori del perimetro a partire dalla classificazione standard delle attività economiche nazionali, europee o internazionali (ATECO, NACE, ISIC) imporrebbe la scelta dei criteri di omogeneità più pertinenti per riclassificare attività anche molto eterogenee tra loro. Sebbene queste attività siano accomunate dal forte legame che hanno con la cultura, la creatività, la produzione di significati simbolici, valore estetico e innovazione (Della Lucia, 2014), questi elementi possono essere diversamente rintracciati. Essi sono presenti nei prodotti e nei servizi fruiti e/o venduti sul mercato (es. patrimonio culturale, musica e cinema); nelle risorse umane che partecipano alla loro produzione e/o promozione (es. la classe creativa); nell'impresa/organizzazione (es. conoscenze tacite sedimentate nel contesto sociale/territoriale che si riflettono nella cultura aziendale e manageriale). Gli stessi elementi possono essere un input delle fasi creative (es. progettazione, design, comunicazione, branding) di processi, cluster o settori il cui output può non essere necessariamente culturale (es. moda o design). Tali elementi possono anche riguardare industrie che beneficiano di forti sinergie con la produzione culturale e creativa (es. turismo culturale e creativo) (Tamma, 2010).

In linea di principio gli elementi comuni delle industrie culturali e creative possono diventare altrettanti criteri di perimetrazione (Orlandi e Santagati, 2014). Le quattro classi identificate da Wyszomirsky (2004, p. 27) - "*the product/service supplied, the producing organization, the central production process and the occupational workforce groups*" - e la loro declinazione testimoniano la molteplicità di criteri applicabili, singolarmente o in combinazione (WIPO, 2003; OECD, 2005). Esemplificativa è la classificazione operata dall'UNESCO (2009) che identifica sette categorie di prodotti e servizi culturali e le connette a turismo e sport, e attività ricreative. Ciò in linea con gli autori che annoverano il turismo tra le industrie culturali e creative stesse (Bagwell, 2009) e/o lo ritengono un importante volano per il loro sviluppo (Andersson e Thomsen, 2008). Ben dieci sono invece le categorie di prodotti e servizi culturali e creativi individuate nel rapporto ESSnet-Culture (2012) e variegati sono i processi che le interessano - creazione, produzione/pubblicazione, distribuzione/commercio, conservazione, educazione.

Nonostante la molteplicità, *output culturale* e *input culturale e creativo* rimangono, di fatto, i criteri più immediatamente applicabili e applicati con successo. Tuttavia, il loro utilizzo nella perimetrazione non è sempre esplicitato. Il modello dei "cerchi concentrici" di Throsby (2008) è stato ripreso e rielaborato da molti studi - KEA (2006) per esempio - per classificare le attività culturali e creative sulla base del livello decrescente di valore culturale dei prodotti (*approccio da output*). Tale modello pone al centro le *core creative arts* (letteratura, musica, spettacolo, arti visive), seguite dalle altre *core creative industries* (film, musei, gallerie, biblioteche, fotografia), le *wider cultural industries* (servizi al patrimonio culturale, editoria, Tv e radio, industria musicale, video-games) e le *related industries* (pubblicità, architettura, design, moda). I cerchi più esterni corrispondono,

di fatto, ad attività in cui cultura e creatività entrano a vario titolo tra i fattori per produrre prodotti e servizi non necessariamente culturali (*approccio da input*). Di fatto, il modello inglese (DCMS, 1998, 2001) - come abbiamo detto, pioniere delle classificazioni in questo ambito - usa proprio il criterio da input per perimetrare i settori creativi che definisce attività che originano dalla creatività, dalle capacità, dal talento individuali e dallo sfruttamento della proprietà intellettuale. La combinazione di approcci da output e input sottesa in questi studi è in buona parte sovrapponibile con le scelte fatte dagli studi di taglio economico-politico in tema di arte e cultura inaugurati dagli economisti americani Baumol e Bowen (1966). Se concordano unanimemente nell'includere nel campo di indagine settori che hanno un output tipicamente culturale (patrimonio, arti visive e spettacolo dal vivo), essi si spingono a ricomprendere anche settori che incorporano la cultura in maniera più indiretta, in analogia all'approccio da input. Tali scelte, tuttavia, sono dettate da una logica welfaristica legata alla meritorietà dei beni culturali e ai fallimenti di mercato ad essi collegati.

Stante i criteri di classificazione, l'efficacia della perimetrazione non può prescindere dal considerare la rapida evoluzione delle attività che rientrano nelle industrie culturali e creative - spesso neo nascenti, a imprenditorialità giovanile e di piccole o piccolissime dimensioni di impresa. Questa evoluzione è complicata dagli effetti che fattori *country* e/o *place specific* hanno sulla natura stessa di queste industrie e sulle interdipendenze - settoriali e non - che esse hanno con altre industrie trasversalmente all'economia. L'affermarsi e il diffondersi di tali interdipendenze e processi di cross-fertilization prospettano una progressiva "culturalizzazione" dell'economia (Orlandi e Santagati, 2014) e, insieme ad essa, lo spostamento del dibattito sulla perimetrazione verso nuove frontiere.

## 4. Il caso di studio e il metodo della ricerca

L'Italia è un Paese in cui lo studio di industrie culturali e creative e turismo rappresenta un presupposto per comprendere e promuovere percorsi di sviluppo sostenibili e innovativi su scala nazionale e territoriale (Sacco e Segre, 2009; Della Lucia, 2013; 2014). Se la protezione, la promozione e lo sviluppo del patrimonio culturale italiano è di per sé un fattore cruciale di crescita e coesione sociale, è la presenza e/o la creazione di sinergie e interazioni, trasversalmente all'economia, il moltiplicatore di processi pervasivi di sviluppo a base culturale (Sacco, 2010). Rientrano a pieno titolo, e sono ampiamente riconosciute come tali, le connessioni tra cultura e turismo, culturale e creativo (Richards, 2014). Le connessioni tra made-in-Italy - moda, design, arredamento, enogastronomia, etc. - e cultura e turismo, invece, sono ancora sottovalutate (Sacco, 2012; Della Lucia, 2013; 2015). Ciò, nonostante i settori del made-in-Italy trovino nel territorio un giacimento di conoscenze tacite, senso e saper fare che si riflettono nel sensemaking di prodotti e servizi (Paiola e Di Maria, 2009; Paiola e Sebastiani, 2009; Tamma, 2010; Bettiol *et al.*, 2012), nell'innovazione di processi produttivi e comportamenti organizzativi (Vicari *et al.*, 2005; Franch, 2010) e nel branding dei territori oltre che di imprese e cluster produttivi (Papadopoulos, 2002; Cattaneo *et al.*, 2006).

In Italia, gli studi di Santagata (2009) e Symbola e Unioncamere (2011) sono stati fondamentali per aprire il dibattito sulla cultura come capitale tangibile e intangibile (Throsby, 2001), dinamico e propulsivo. Sebbene abbiano classificato i settori che, direttamente o indirettamente, partecipano allo sviluppo culture-led, manca in questi studi una riflessione sui criteri di perimetrazione e l'utilizzo di misure che vadano oltre la quantificazione di imprese, fatturato e occupati. Questo contributo supera questi limiti proponendo una perimetrazione ragionata di industrie culturali e creative per il contesto italiano e una misura della specializzazione in questi settori a un livello territoriale fine.

La perimetrazione integra il modello italiano dell'economia della cultura (Santagata, 2009) articolato in tre pilastri - patrimonio culturale, cultura materiale, media e nuovi media - con l'industria del turismo. Questa scelta sottende una logica di classificazione ampia. Il modello dei tre pilastri è costruito secondo approcci da output culturale e input culturale e creativo - come il modello dei cerchi concentrici di Throsby (2008) e di KEA (2006) - e rispecchia le specificità del contesto italiano. L'integrazione del modello con il turismo esprime una logica da filiera produttiva - il patrimonio culturale e/o le industrie culturali sono oggetto dell'industria turistica (es. turismo culturale, enogastronomico, cineturismo) - e processi di cross-fertilization tra settori - la cultura incorporata nelle industrie creative del made-in-Italy è strumento di marketing turistico e territoriale.

Il risultato dell'integrazione del modello di Santagata (2009) con il turismo è un perimetro ampio e specifico per il contesto italiano. Le quattro industrie che lo compongono - patrimonio culturale, cultura materiale, media e nuovi media, turismo - corrispondono a 15 settori della classificazione ATECO 2007 a 2 cifre e a 152 settori a 5 cifre[2], il massimo grado di dettaglio a cui arrivano i dati ufficiali sull'occupazione nelle imprese in questi settori a livello comunale (Tabella 1).

*Tab. 1: Composizione delle industrie culturali e creative e del turismo*

| Industrie | Settori |
|---|---|
| Patrimonio culturale | 1. Musei e patrimonio storico<br>2. Architettura<br>3. Spettacolo<br>4. Arte contemporanea e fotografia |
| Cultura materiale | 5. Moda<br>6. Gusto e enogastronomia<br>7. Design industriale e artigianato artistico |
| Media e nuovi media | 8. Cinema e audiovisivo<br>9. TV e Radio<br>10. Editoria<br>11. Software<br>12. Pubblicità e comunicazione |
| Turismo | 13. Alloggio<br>14. Agenzie di viaggio e Tour Operator<br>15. Sport e attività ricreative |
| Totale | 152 Settori (5 cifre, ATECO 2007) |

Fonte: Adattamento da Santagata (2009)

---

2    Su richiesta, le autrici sono disponibili a fornire la tabella completa con la specifica delle corrispondenze tra industrie, settori e codici ATECO a 5 cifre considerati in questo lavoro.

Il livello inter-comunale di analisi a cui è valutata la specializzazione in questi settori si rifà ad approcci e metodi quantitativi consolidati negli studi sui distretti industriali (Sforzi e Lorenzini, 2002, adeguandoli a industrie culturali e creative e turismo. Si è tenuto conto, inoltre, delle varianti introdotte nella loro precedente applicazione allo sviluppo trainato dal turismo (Boix e Capone; Della Lucia *et al.*, 2007) e dalle industrie culturali e creative (Lazzeretti *et al.*, 2008), considerati separatamente. Le unità geografiche sono pertanto i Sistemi Locali del Lavoro (SLL), aggregazioni di comuni limitrofi accorpati sulla base degli spostamenti giornalieri casa/lavoro della popolazione residente, rilevati e riaggiornati dall'Istat in occasione dei Censimenti generali della popolazione e delle abitazioni. La letteratura distrettuale ritiene che questi luoghi siano appropriati per indagare i fenomeni connessi allo sviluppo locale perché approssimano lo spazio in cui si svolge buona parte delle relazioni sociali ed economiche delle persone che lì risiedono.

I SLL cui si è fatto riferimento sono i 611 sistemi identificati in occasione dell'ultimo censimento (2011) e pubblicati a dicembre 2014. La specializzazione di questi sistemi nelle industrie culturali e creative e nel turismo è stata calcolata mediante indici ($LQ_{ij}$) che misurano il numero relativo di addetti in ciascuna delle quattro industrie prese in considerazione rispetto alla media nazionale. La normalizzazione della percentuale di addetti a ciascuna industria rispetto alla corrispondente percentuale calcolata a livello nazionale consente la comparabilità del livello di specializzazione dei SLL su tutto il territorio italiano.

$$LQ_{ij} = (E_{ij} / E_j) / (E_i / E) > 1$$

i = industria i-esima (patrimonio culturale, cultura materiale, media e nuovi media, turismo)
j = SLL j-esimo
$E_{ij}$ = Numero totale di occupati nell'industria i-esima del SLL j-esimo
$E_j$ = Numero totale di occupati del SLL j-esimo
$E_i$ = Numero totale di occupati nell'industria i-esima
E = Numero di occupati totali in Italia

Il SLL è specializzato in una industria quando l'indice è superiore a uno; ogni industria ha un diverso range di specializzazione definito dal livello massimo dell'indice. Per ogni indice/industria, l'intensità della specializzazione è stata classificata su una scala a cinque quintili. Fonte dei dati sugli addetti alle industrie culturali creative e turismo è il registro statistico delle unità locali delle imprese dell'Istat (Asia-unità locali) per l'anno 2012, ad oggi il più aggiornato a disposizione. Le unità locali rilevate in tale banca dati sono imprese private che esercitano attività nei settori dell'industria e dei servizi; sono pertanto esclusi l'agricoltura, tra i settori privati, e il settore pubblico e no profit. Il registro dispone di una disaggregazione settoriale fino alla quinta cifra dei codici ATECO 2007 a dettaglio comunale. Le unità locali e gli addetti alle imprese dei settori di riferimento, localizzati nei comuni italiani, sono stati riaggregati tenendo conto della composizione comunale dei SLL.

## 5. L'economia italiana della cultura e del turismo

Maria Della Lucia
Giovanna Segre
Il perimetro di industrie culturali, creative e turismo: specializzazioni e implicazioni di policy in Italia

Le industrie culturali e creative e il turismo danno un contributo significativo all'imprenditorialità e all'occupazione nazionale. Nel 2012 vi operavano complessivamente oltre 900 mila imprese impiegando quasi 3 milioni di addetti (Tabella 2). Questi valori, che sono più che doppi rispetto a quelli pubblicati da Symbola e Unioncamere (2013), dipendono dall'inclusione nel perimetro del turismo e dei settori della moda e del gusto. La cultura materiale è l'industria preponderante dell'economia della cultura e del turismo; essa concentra il 50% delle unità locali (oltre 450 mila imprese) e il 60% degli addetti (quasi 1.800 mila occupati). Al suo interno, il settore del gusto ha un ruolo di spicco: le oltre 300 mila unità che vi operano con più di 1.100 mila addetti costituiscono il 64% della cultura materiale e il 39% del totale delle industrie analizzate. Moda e design, i settori di punta del made-in-Italy, seguono a distanza; la moda con 57 mila imprese e 419 mila addetti e il design con 71 mila imprese e 222 mila addetti. La seconda industria è il patrimonio culturale; le imprese e gli addetti sono rispettivamente la metà e un quarto di quelli della cultura materiale - oltre 250 mila unità (30% del totale) con circa 365 mila lavoratori (12% del totale). Lo spettacolo da solo rappresenta il 36% delle imprese e il 38% degli addetti di questa industria. Le imprese di media e dei nuovi media hanno ancora un ruolo marginale: sono infatti poco più di 125 mila unità (14% del totale) ma impiegano più addetti del patrimonio culturale, ossia quasi 490 mila lavoratori (16% del totale). Il turismo, così come definito in questo studio, è l'industria meno significativa: poco più di 73 mila imprese (8%) e 320 mila lavoratori (11%). Le differenze nel numero di imprese e addetti alle industrie dell'economia della cultura e del turismo si riflettono sulle dimensioni delle imprese. Le imprese del patrimonio culturale sono mediamente micro-unità (1,5 addetti), arrivano a 4 addetti nei settori della cultura materiale e dei media e nuovi media - 3,1 nel design, 3,6 nel gusto e 7,4 nella moda - e superano i 4 addetti nel turismo.

*Tab. 2: Unità locali e addetti nell'economia della cultura e del turismo*

| Industrie | Unità Locali | Addetti | Dimensioni medie | UL (%) | A (%) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Patrimonio culturale | 250.600 | 364.984 | 1,5 | 27,8 | 12,3 |
| Cultura materiale | 451.194 | 1.790.183 | 4,0 | 50,1 | 60,4 |
| Media e nuovi media | 125.375 | 486.739 | 3,9 | 13,9 | 16,4 |
| Industrie Culturali e creative | 827.169 | 2.641.906 | 3,2 | 91,8 | 89,2 |
| Turismo | 73.560 | 320.606 | 4,4 | 8,2 | 10,8 |
| Totale | 900.729 | 2.962.511 | 3,3 | 100,0 | 100,0 |

Fonte: Nostre elaborazioni

In termini relativi, le imprese dell'economia della cultura (17%) e del turismo (2%) costituiscono il 19% del sistema italiano dell'industria e del terziario. Tale quota è molto più significativa dell'industria (7%), un po' più consistente dell'edilizia (17%), ma meno rilevante di commercio e trasporti (29%) e altri servizi (33%) (Figura 1.a). L'occupazione nei due comparti

è composta in proporzioni analoghe: gli addetti alle industrie culturali e creative sono il 16% del totale, al turismo il 2% (Figura 1.b). Tale quota rimane di gran lunga superiore a quella dell'edilizia, comparabile a quella dell'industria (19%) ma inferiore agli altri comparti (27%).

*Fig. 1(a,b). L'economia della cultura e del turismo sul totale dell'economia*

1.a Unità locali



1.b Addetti
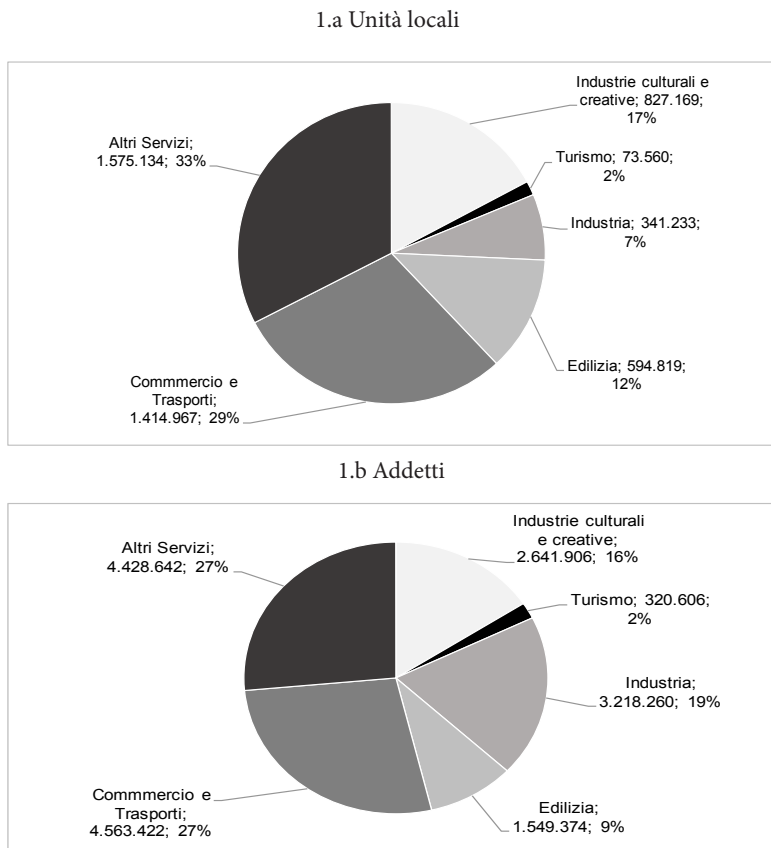


Fonte: Nostre elaborazioni

A livello territoriale, i SLL italiani[3] mostrano una economia diversificata nelle industrie culturali e creative e nel turismo (Tabella 3). I sistemi sono cioè tendenzialmente specializzati in più industrie contemporaneamente, sebbene con livelli di specializzazione differenti, mentre la monocultura produttiva è meno evidente. La cultura materiale si conferma l'industria di specializzazione prevalente con ben 388 sistemi specializzati pari al 64% del totale. Ciò è coerente con il ruolo che il made-in-Italy gioca nello sviluppo italiano, intercettato per buona parte dai settori pienamente produttivi della cultura materiale. Il secondo gruppo più numeroso sono i sistemi specializzati nel turismo (251 sistemi pari al 41% del totale), in linea con la vocazione di destinazioni di molti territori italiani. Nonostante la ricchezza

---

[3]    D'ora in poi si farà riferimento ai SLL come sistemi locali italiani.

e il valore della dotazione culturale italiana, i sistemi specializzati nel patrimonio culturale sono solo 140, il 23% del totale. L'industria dei media e dei nuovi media, in cui le nuove tecnologie hanno un ruolo trainante, risulta complessivamente la più debole con 39 sistemi specializzati, il 6% del totale.

**Maria Della Lucia**
**Giovanna Segre**
Il perimetro di industrie
culturali, creative e
turismo: specializzazioni
e implicazioni di policy
in Italia

Il numero contenuto di sistemi specializzati nel patrimonio culturale va commentato in tre direzioni. La prima è che l'analisi non considera settore pubblico e no profit che in Italia rappresentano un asse importante dell'offerta nei settori del patrimonio culturale, eccezion fatta per l'architettura. Tuttavia, se è ragionevole assumere che l'occupazione nel settore privato del patrimonio sia direttamente proporzionale a quella nel pubblico e no profit, è garantita la robustezza e la comparabilità dei sistemi locali italiani specializzati in questa industria. La seconda osservazione è che il numero di sistemi specializzati nel patrimonio culturale è particolarmente penalizzato quando comparato con quello dei sistemi specializzati nella cultura materiale perché, a differenza del patrimonio culturale, questa industria è composta tipicamente da sole imprese private, made-in-Italy in primis. Infine, in molti sistemi, il rapporto tra dotazione culturale e percorsi di sviluppo trova manifestazione attraverso il turismo culturale e delle produzioni tipiche. La numerosità di sistemi a specializzazione turistica, pertanto, riflette in qualche misura anche una forma di imprenditorialità connessa alla valorizzazione del patrimonio culturale.

*Tab. 3: La specializzazione italiana nei SLL per area geografica*

| Macro-aree | SLL | | SLL specializzati | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Totale | | Patrimonio culturale | | Cultura materiale | | Media e nuovi media | | Turismo | |
| | n. | % | n. | % | n. | % | n. | % | n. | % |
| Nord-Ovest | 106 | 17% | 14 | 13% | 57 | 54% | 8 | 8% | 32 | 30% |
| Nord-Est | 119 | 19% | 21 | 18% | 78 | 66% | 12 | 10% | 50 | 42% |
| Centro | 105 | 17% | 20 | 19% | 84 | 80% | 12 | 11% | 56 | 53% |
| Isole | 110 | 18% | 35 | 32% | 73 | 66% | 4 | 4% | 47 | 43% |
| Sud | 171 | 28% | 50 | 29% | 96 | 56% | 3 | 2% | 66 | 39% |
| Italia | 611 | 100% | 140 | 23% | 388 | 64% | 39 | 6% | 251 | 41% |

Fonte: Nostre elaborazioni

In sintesi, una immagine per macro-aree geografiche dello sviluppo italiano nelle industrie culturali e creative e nel turismo mostra economie diversificate - nel Centro e Nord-Est in particolare - con un ruolo trainante di cultura materiale e turismo; Centro e Nord sono anche le aree in cui si concentrano maggiormente le industrie dei media e nuovi media. Nelle Isole e nel Sud, invece, si localizzano maggiormente i sistemi specializzati nel patrimonio culturale. Nel Sud, inoltre, il binomio patrimonio culturale e turismo è prevalente rispetto ad altre industrie dell'economia della cultura.

## 6. La specializzazione dei sistemi locali italiani nelle industrie culturali e creative e nel turismo

La specializzazione dei sistemi locali italiani per regione e l'intensità della specializzazione offrono una immagine più dettagliata dello sviluppo italiano nell'economia della cultura e del turismo. La Figura 2 presenta la percentuale di sistemi locali regionali specializzati in ogni industria, calcolata sul numero totale di sistemi per regione; le regioni sono rappresentate in senso orario da Nord-Ovest a Sud e Isole.

*Fig. 2: Sistemi locali regionali specializzati nell'economia della cultura e del turismo*
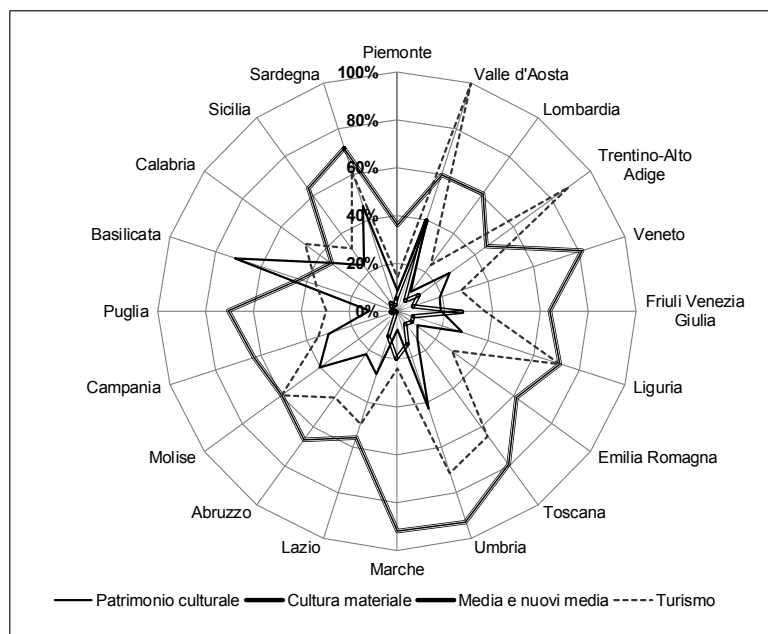


Fonte: Nostre elaborazioni

Come per le macro-aree, l'analisi regionale delle specializzazioni conferma che i sistemi economici del Centro e del Nord sono più diversificati di quanto non lo siano quelli di Sud e Isole. Se si fissano come soglie discriminanti le percentuali di sistemi locali specializzati in ciascuna industria a livello nazionale, sono Valle d'Aosta, Trentino, Liguria, Toscana, Umbria e Sardegna a mostrare un modello di specializzazione che coinvolge almeno tre delle industrie analizzate; quattro nel caso di Liguria e Umbria. Tuttavia, è il tipo di industria di specializzazione a caratterizzare le vocazioni regionali. Nel turismo sono specializzati tutti i sistemi della Valle d'Aosta, quasi tutti i sistemi del Trentino (88%) e una spiccata maggioranza dei sistemi di Liguria e Umbria (rispettivamente il 71%), Sardegna (62%) e Molise (60%). Quasi tutti i sistemi di Umbria (93%), Marche (92%) e Veneto (81%) mostrano una forte vocazione per le attività della cultura
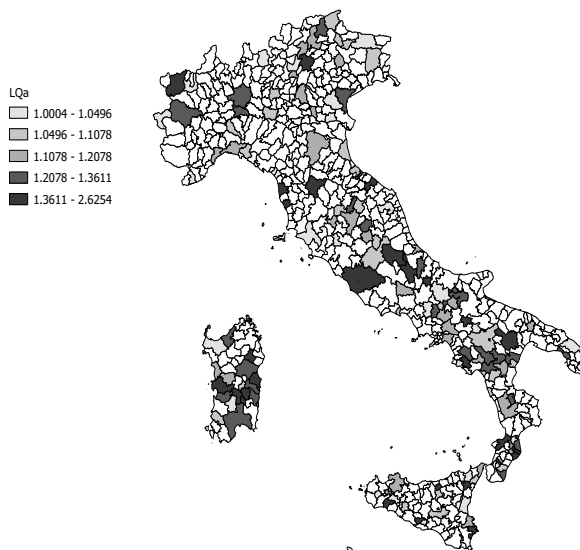
materiale. Una quota consistente dei sistemi di Sardegna (46%), Umbria (43%) e Molise (40%) predilige attività connesse ai settori del patrimonio culturale che spicca come monocultura produttiva in Basilicata (71%). La specializzazione dei sistemi in media e nuovi media raggiunge quote di rilievo solo in Valle d'Aosta (40%), Friuli Venezia Giulia e Marche (rispettivamente il 27% e il 20%).

Oltre che al numero di sistemi specializzati (a livello nazionale e regionale), la vocazione produttiva è strettamente connessa al livello di specializzazione (Figura 3). I sistemi specializzati nella cultura materiale, che come anticipato sono il gruppo più numeroso (64% del totale), hanno un indice di specializzazione massimo che arriva a quasi cinque volte l'unità (Figura 3.b). I sistemi delle regioni del Centro-Nord vocate a questi settori - Umbria, Toscana e Veneto in particolare - hanno gli indici di specializzazione più elevati, inclusi rispettivamente nel terzo, quarto e quinto quintile. Livelli di specializzazione molto elevati si osservano anche nei sistemi della costa nord e occidentale della Sardegna, in Abruzzo, Piemonte e Puglia.
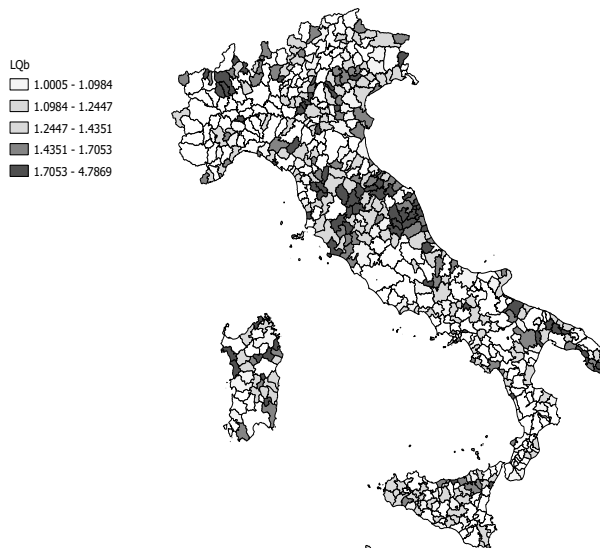
I sistemi specializzati nel turismo, che sono il secondo gruppo più numeroso (41%), mostrano i livelli di specializzazione massimi più elevati, fino a 23 volte l'unità (Figura 3.d). Tutti i sistemi delle regioni che hanno una spiccata vocazione turistica - Valle d'Aosta e Trentino in particolare - hanno indici che rientrano nel quarto quintile (da 3 a 6 volte l'unità) e nel quinto (da 6 a 23 volte l'unità). Un grado di specializzazione molto consistente è evidente anche in Liguria, lungo la costa orientale della Sardegna e il litorale della Toscana, ma anche in molte aree toscane interne grazie alla combinazione di paesaggio culturale e tradizione enogastronomica. La specializzazione turistica lascia invece ai margini regioni quali Lombardia, Marche e Piemonte. I sistemi specializzati nei settori del patrimonio culturale (23%) e in media e nuovi media (6%), che sono i sistemi numericamente meno consistenti, hanno anche i livelli massimi di specializzazione meno elevati - in entrambi i casi arrivano fino a 2,6 volte l'unità (Figura 3.a e 3.c). Come per le altre industrie in esame, la specializzazione più forte si osserva nelle regioni vocate a questi settori - Sardegna, Basilicata e Molise per il patrimonio culturale; tuttavia la specializzazione è forte anche in altri sistemi e mostra una distribuzione geografica diversificata (Figura 3.a). Esemplificativo è il sistema laziale che comprende la città di Roma. Per i settori di media e nuovi media, invece, i livelli massimi di specializzazione sembrano svincolati dalle regioni che mostrano una vocazione in questi settori e tendono invece a coincidere con medio-grandi sistemi urbani del Centro-Nord (Torino, Milano, Bologna, Firenze, Roma) (Figura 3.c).

*Fig. 3(a,b,c,d): Livelli di specializzazione dei sistemi locali italiani nell'economia della cultura e del turismo*

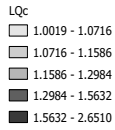### 3.a Patrimonio culturale



LQa
- 1.0004 - 1.0496
- 1.0496 - 1.1078
- 1.1078 - 1.2078
- 1.2078 - 1.3611
- 1.3611 - 2.6254

### 3.b Cultura Materiale



LQb
- 1.0005 - 1.0984
- 1.0984 - 1.2447
- 1.2447 - 1.4351
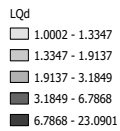- 1.4351 - 1.7053
- 1.7053 - 4.7869

*3.c Media e nuovi media*

**Maria Della Lucia**
**Giovanna Segre**
Il perimetro di industrie
culturali, creative e
turismo: specializzazioni
e implicazioni di policy
in Italia

LQc
- 1.0019 - 1.0716
- 1.0716 - 1.1586
- 1.1586 - 1.2984
- 1.2984 - 1.5632
- 1.5632 - 2.6510

*3.d Turismo*

LQd
- 1.0002 - 1.3347
- 1.3347 - 1.9137
- 1.9137 - 3.1849
- 3.1849 - 6.7868
- 6.7868 - 23.0901

Fonte: Nostre elaborazioni

## 7. Conclusioni

Le industrie culturali e creative, di per sé o in connessione con il turismo, rappresentano un tema di grande attualità negli studi di sviluppo locale e management e di forte interesse per i decision-maker. In letteratura,

oltre che nella gestione dei territori, il focus sul tema si è progressivamente trasformato. Dall'identificazione di tali industrie strumentale a misurarne il contributo allo sviluppo economico si è passati a riflessioni incentrate sul loro contributo alla sostenibilità e all'innovazione dei modelli di sviluppo. I processi di cross-fertilization tra industrie culturali e creative, e tra esse ed altri settori - turismo in particolare - sono il motore di questa transizione verso la progressiva "culturalizzazione" del tessuto produttivo. In questa evoluzione, la perimetrazione assume più significati. Primo, essa è funzionale a identificare i settori ibridati dalla, e con, la cultura mediante criteri espliciti che definiscano in maniera sistematica e sistemica i nuovi perimetri. Secondo, in continuità con il passato, la perimetrazione è il presupposto per misurare le performance economiche che la "culturalizzazione" produce, nonostante i suoi effetti siano sociali oltre che economici. Terzo, la perimetrazione definisce un ventaglio, pur parziale e in evoluzione, di ambiti e direzioni di intervento pubblico e privato per promuove connessioni nuove tra settori, in primis dell'economia della cultura e del turismo.

Questo contributo si colloca in questa transizione tentando di fare sintesi tra le riflessioni teoriche finora prodotte sul tema e fornendo riscontri empirici utili a processi decisionali più efficaci. La sua originalità sta nel combinare domini teorici e metodologici a cavallo tra economia della cultura, sviluppo locale e distretti industriali per arrivare a più risultati. Primo, una perimetrazione ragionata di industrie culturali e creative e turismo, ampia (output culturale e input creativo) e specifica per il contesto italiano. Secondo, una misura della specializzazione in queste industrie dei sistemi locali dell'intero territorio nazionale, le aree dove concretamente si svolgono le dinamiche socio-economiche delle imprese. Terzo, una mappatura del tipo e del livello di specializzazione di questi sistemi utile a politiche di settore.

La fotografia dell'economia della cultura e del turismo a cui lo studio perviene mostra che essa rappresenta una quota importante del numero di imprese e dell'occupazione nazionali, significativa tanto o più del resto dell'industria e dell'edilizia. I sistemi locali italiani sono diversificati in queste industrie, ma cultura materiale e turismo prevalgono sia per numero di sistemi specializzati che per livelli di specializzazione - nel turismo significativamente più alti che nella cultura materiale. Ciò è in linea con l'importanza che il made-in-Italy ha avuto, e ancora ha, nello sviluppo italiano e la vocazione turistica - o monocultura - di molte aree. La ricchezza del patrimonio culturale italiano, invece, non si riflette adeguatamente nella specializzazione in questi settori di imprese e territori. Come già osservato, questo risultato sconta sia l'esclusione di settore pubblico e no profit dall'analisi dell'offerta culturale, che la valorizzazione del patrimonio culturale tramite l'imprenditorialità turistica, segmenti entrambi molto rilevanti in Italia. L'industria dei media, tradizionali e nuovi, tende a concentrarsi nei medio-grandi sistemi urbani con livelli di specializzazione analoghi a quelli del patrimonio culturale.

Questi riscontri empirici si prestano ad alcune riflessioni manageriali preliminari. A parità di altre condizioni, quanto più un territorio mostra di possedere una concentrazione di imprese specializzate e diversificate

nei settori culturali e creativi e nel turismo, tanto più è probabile che, naturalmente, si verifichino interazioni tra questi settori foriere di processi di cross-ferlization alla base di uno sviluppo sostenibile e innovativo. Ciò quantomento per ragioni di agglomerazione spaziale e affinità/complementarietà produttiva. Inoltre, è più probabile che le azioni pubbliche e di meta-management intese a promuovere queste interazioni siano più efficaci proprio perché il tessuto produttivo presenta già una massa critica di imprese diversificate in questi settori. Uno sviluppo pervasivo a base culturale, pertanto, richiede ai decision-maker di mettere in atto un ventaglio di azioni che vadano oltre le politiche turistiche e il marketing turistico del patrimonio culturale e investano sempre più lo sviluppo di complementarietà e connessioni nuove tra settori e policy. Gli ambiti di intervento sono molteplici. Primo, azioni rivolte allo sviluppo di connessioni innovative tra turismo, patrimonio culturale e industrie culturali, per superare la tendenza alla monovocazione turistica di molti territori. Esemplificativi sono eventi/festival culturali e/o cluster/distretti culturali, ormai strumenti consolidati di marketing territoriale oltre che turistico. Secondo, azioni rivolte allo sviluppo di collaborazioni tra cultura materiale e turismo. Strategie di promozione/sviluppo di marchi di qualità e di denominazione di origine sotto il cappello del brand territoriale, insieme alla rivisitazione innovativa ed emozionale del made-in-Italy mediante progetti turistico-culturali, possono sostenere il (ri)posizionamento di questi settori tra le industrie creative con risvolti positivi di immagine, brand e attrazione turistica. Infine, azioni rivolte alla connessione tra nuovi media, industrie culturali e turismo. Esemplificativi sono le piattaforme e le applicazioni per la produzione, l'offerta e la distribuzione su larga scala di prodotti culturali e turistici e l'uso delle nuove tecnologie per innovare la gestione del rapporto con il mercato, compresa la co-creazione di senso, prodotti ed esperienze.

Lo sviluppo di queste riflessioni rimanda a ulteriori ricerche che amplino le evidenze empiriche di questo lavoro, per sua natura ancora esplorativo e quantitativo. Le possibili direttrici future riguardano: l'aggiornamento e l'integrazione della base dati per sviluppare misure più efficaci della significatività dell'economia della cultura e del turismo e della specializzazione dei sistemi locali nel patrimonio culturale; l'indagine dei processi di cross-fertilization presenti o in atto tra industrie culturali, creative e turismo; la verifica dell'eventuale correlazione tra concentrazione di imprese specializzate/diversificate in questi settori e la propensione a sviluppare processi di cross-ferlization; l'utilizzo di domini di analisi diversi dalla perimetrazione settoriale (professioni, innovazione, consumi) per mappare la culturalizzazione dell'economia e della società.

## Bibliografia

ANDERSSON L., THOMSEN B.S. (2008), "Performative experiments and cultural replanning - Recapturing the spectacle of the city", *Nordic Journal of Architectural Research*, vol. 20, n. 1, pp. 39-51.

BAGWELL S. (2009), "Creative cluster and city growth", *Creative Industries Journal*, vol. 1, n. 1, pp. 31-46.

BAUMOL W.J., BOWEN W.G. (1968), *Performing Arts: The Economic Dilemma*, The MIT Press, Cambridge.

BETTIOL M., DI MARIA E., FINOTTO V. (2012), "Marketing in SMEs: the role of entrepreneurial sensemaking", *International Entrepreneurship and Management Journal*, vol. 8, n. 2, pp. 223-243.

BOIX R., CAPONE F. (2004), *Sources of Competiveness in Tourist Local Systems*, Universitat Autonoma de Barcellona, Barcellona.

BODO C., SPADA C. (2004) (eds.), *Rapporto sull'economia della Cultura in Italia 1990- 2000*, Il Mulino, Bologna.

CATTANEO E., GUERINI C., USLENGHI A. (2006), *Effetto country. Origini e mercati internazionali. Conta davvero l'origine geografica nella promozione internazionale dell'offerta italiana?*, EGEA, Milano.

CSES (2010), *Study on the Contribution of Culture to Local and Regional Development - Evidence from the Structural Funds,* European Commission, Brussels.

DCMS (1998), *Creative industries mapping document*, Creative Task Force, London. http://www.culture.gov.uk/reference_library/publications/4740.aspx.

DCMS (2001), *Creative industries mapping document*, Creative Industries Task Force, London.

DELLA LUCIA M. (2013), *Cultura e sviluppo locale nell'economia della conoscenza. Politiche e strumenti di sviluppo urbano*, Cedam, Padova.

DELLA LUCIA M. (2014), "La multidimensionalità dello sviluppo locale culture-led. Laboratori territoriali di sperimentazione", *Mercati e Competitività*, n. 4, pp. 85-107.

DELLA LUCIA M. (2015), "Natura e pervasività dei percorsi di culture-led regeneration in Italia. Implicazioni di place marketing", *XII convegno annuale della SIM, Il marketing a servizio delle città. Beni culturali e rivitalizzazione urbana,* Dipartimento di Management, Torino, 22-23 Ottobre, 2015.

DELLA LUCIA M., FRANCH M., MARTINI U. (2007), "L'identificazione dei sistemi turistici locali mediante il modello del distretto industriale. Il caso delle Dolomiti e del lago di Garda", in Sciarelli S. (ed.), *Il management dei sistemi turistici locali. Strategie e strumenti per la governance,* Giappichelli, Torino, pp. 193-219.

ESSNET-CULTURE (2012), *European Statistical System Network on Culture.* Final Report, ESSnet-Culture and Eurostat, Luxembourg.

EUROPEAN COMMISSION (2010), *European Competitiveness Report 2010*, Directorate General Enterprise and Industry, Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, Luxembourg.

EUROPEAN COMMISSION (2010), *Green Paper on Unlocking the potential of cultural and creative industries*, European Commission, Brussels.

EUROSTAT (2000), *Cultural Statistics in the UE- Final report of the LEG*, Eurostat Working paper n°3/2000/E/N°1.

FLORIDA R. (2002), *The Rise of the Creative Class*, Basic Books, New York.

FLORIDA R. (2005), *The Flight of the Creative Class: The new global competition for talent,* Harper Collins, London.

FRANCH M. (2010), "Le frontiere manageriali per la valorizzazione della cultura e dell'arte", *Sinergie*, n. 82, pp. 95-107.

GORDON J.C., BEILBY-ORRIN H., *International Measurement of the Economic and Social Importance of Culture*, Statistics Directorate Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, Paris.

ISTITUTO GUGLIELMO TAGLIACARNE (2009), *Il sistema economico integrato dei beni culturali,* Mibac e Unioncamere, Roma.

KEA (2006), *The economy of Culture in Europe*, Directorate-General for Education and Culture, Brussels.

KEA (2012), *Measuring economic impact of CCIs policies. How to justify investment in cultural and creative assets*, European Commission, Brussels.

LAZZERETTI L., BOIX B., CAPONE F. (2008), "Do Creative Industries Cluster? Mapping Creative Local Production Systems in Italy and Spain", *Industry and Innovation*, vol. 5, n. 5, pp. 549-567.

NESTA (2009), *Soft Innovation: Towards a more complete picture of innovative change. National Endowment for Science*, Technology and the Arts, UK.

OECD (2005), *Culture and Local Development*, OECD, Paris.

ORLANDI A., SANTAGATI N. (2014), "Le industrie culturali e creative: una mappatura quantitativa", in AA. VV., *Rapporto Economico e Sociale 2014: L'Umbria nella lunga crisi*, Agenzia Umbria Ricerche, Perugia.

PAIOLA M., DI MARIA E. (2009), "From Hi-Tech to Hi-Sense innovation: new experiences in value creation through meanings and relations", in Andreani J.C., Collesei U. (eds.), *Atti dell'VIII Congresso Internazionale Marketing Trends,* ESCP EAP, Parigi, 16-17 Gennaio 2009.

PAIOLA M., SEBASTIANI R. (2009), *Soft Innovation. La risposta delle imprese alle sfide della crisi,* Milano, Franco Angeli.

PAPADOPOULOS N.G. (2002), *Does "country-of-origin" matter? Some findings from a cross-cultural study of consumer views about foreign products*, Marketing Science Institute, Cambridge.

PINE B.J., GILMORE J.H. (1999), *The Experience Economy*, Harvard Business School Press, Boston.

POWER D., NIELSÉN T. (2010), *Priority Sector Report: Creative and Cultural Industries*, Europe Innova Initiative, European Commission, Brussels.

RICHARDS G. (2014), "Creativity and tourism in the city", *Current Issue in Tourism*, vol. 17, n. 2, pp. 119-144.

RIFKIN G. (2011), *The Third Industrial Revolution. How Lateral Power Is Transforming Energy, the Economy, and the World*, Palgrave MacMillan, New York.

SACCO P.L. (2010), "Cultura e sviluppo locale: il distretto culturale evoluto", *Sinergie*, n. 82, pp. 115-119.

SACCO P.L. (2011), *Culture 3.0: A new perspective for the EU 2014-2020 structural funds programming,* European Expert Network on Culture Brussels.

SACCO P.L. (2012), *Culture and the Structural Funds in Italy,* Expert Network on Culture, Brussels.

SACCO P.L., SEGRE G. (2009), "Creativity, cultural investment and local development: a new theoretical framework for endogenous growth", in Fratesi U., Senn L. (eds.), *Growth and Innovation of Competitive Regions. The Role of Internal and External Connections,* Springer-Verlag, Berlin, pp. 281-294.

SANTAGATA W. (Ed.) (2009), *Libro bianco sulla creatività. Per un modello italiano di sviluppo*, Bocconi University Editor, Milano.

SCOTT A.J. (2000), *The Cultural Economy of Cities*, Sage Publications, London.

SFORZI F., LORENZINI F. (2002), "I distretti industriali", in Ministero delle attività produttive e IPI-Istituto per la promozione industriale, *L'esperienza Italiana dei Distretti industriali, IPI-Istituto per la Promozione Industriale*, Roma, pp. 20-33.

SMART SPECIALIZATION PLATFORM (2012), *Guide to Research and Innovation Strategies for Smart Specialisation (RIS 3)*, European Commission, Brussels.

SYMBOLA - UNIONCAMERE (2011), *Io sono cultura. L'Italia della qualità e della bellezza sfida la crisi,* Symbola Fondazione per le qualità italiane, Roma.

SYMBOLA - UNIONCAMERE (2013), *Io sono cultura. L'Italia della qualità e della bellezza sfida la crisi,* Symbola Fondazione per le qualità italiane, Roma.

SYMBOLA - UNIONCAMERE (2016), *Io sono cultura. L'Italia della qualità e della bellezza sfida la crisi,* Symbola Fondazione per le qualità italiane, Roma.

TAMMA M. (2010), "Prodotti culturali e territori: l'immateriale che "vive" nella materialità", *Sinergie*, n. 82, pp. 27-46.

THROSBY D. (2001), *Economics and Culture,* Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

THROSBY D. (2008), "The concentric circles model of the cultural industries", *Cultural Trends*, vol. 17, n. 3, pp. 147-164.

UNESCO (1986), *Framework for cultural statistics*, UNESCO, Paris.

UNESCO (2009), *Framework for Cultural Statistics*, UNESCO, Paris.

UNCTAD (2008), *Creative economy report: The challenge of assessing the creative economy towards informed policymaking*, United Nations.

VALENTINO P.A. (2014), *L'arte di produrre Arte. Imprese italiane del design a lavoro,* Marsilio Editori, Venezia.

VICARI S., CILLO P., VERONA G. (2005), "Capacità creativa e innovazione", *Sinergie*, n. 67, pp. 123-147.

WIPO (2003), *Guide on Surveying the Economic Contribution of the Copyright Industries,* WIPO, Geneva.

WYSZOMIRSKY M. (2004), "Defining and developing creative sector initiatives", *Proceedings of the Workshop Creative Industries: A Measure for Urban Development?,* Vienna, Austria, 20 March, pp. 25-57.

ZUBOFF S., MAXMIN J. (2002), *The Support Economy - Why Corporations are Failing Individuals and the Next Episode of Capitalism*, Penguin, New York.

**Academic or professional position and contacts**

**Maria Della Lucia**
Associate Professor of Management
University of Trento - Italy
e-mail: maria.dellalucia@unitn.it

**Giovanna Segre**
Associate Professor of Economic Policy
University of Torino - Italy
e-mail: giovanna.segre@unito.it

# Turismo crocieristico e percezioni della popolazione residente: i risultati di un'analisi cluster[1]

Giacomo Del Chiappa - Giuseppe Melis - Marcello Atzeni

## Abstract

*Obiettivo del paper:* Questo studio segmenta i residenti della città di Cagliari in base alle percezioni che essi hanno rispetto agli impatti generati dal turismo crocieristico e, nel contempo, verifica l'esistenza di differenze significative tra i gruppi in base alle caratteristiche socio-demografiche degli intervistati.

*Metodologia:* Lo studio applica una factor-cluster analysis ad un campione stratificato di 1.034 residenti intervistati face-to-face.

*Risultati:* L'analisi evidenzia l'esistenza di cinque diversi segmenti di residenti: "indifferenti", "critici", "cauti", "sostenitori e "amanti della cultura". I cluster differiscono in maniera significativa solo in base ad alcune delle variabili socio-demografiche considerate (livello di istruzione, la distanza del luogo di residenza dai siti turistici della città e il tipo di occupazione).

*Limiti della ricerca:* Lo studio risente della specificità del contesto geografico analizzato e, quindi, dell'impossibilità di generalizzare i risultati. Inoltre, esso non considera il ruolo che altri fattori intrinseci, e/o altre variabili psicografiche, potrebbero avere nel discriminare le percezioni dei residenti.

*Implicazioni pratiche:* Lo studio fornisce utili informazioni a policy makers e destination marketers interessati ad implementare politiche di marketing interno finalizzate ad aumentare l'efficacia dei messaggi di comunicazione veicolati ai residenti per far percepire loro un bilancio costi/benefici maggiormente positivo e avere un maggior supporto nei progetti di ulteriore sviluppo del turismo crocieristico.

*Originalità del paper:* Gli studi che analizzano le percezioni dei residenti rispetto al turismo crocieristico, sono ancora pochi; ancora meno numerosi sono quelli che riguardano l'area del Mediterraneo e, in particolare, il contesto italiano. Inoltre, risultano assenti studi sul tema realizzati utilizzando campioni areali.

Parole chiave: turismo crocieristico; community-based tourism; caratteristiche socio-demografiche; Mediterraneo; Sardegna.

*Purpose of the paper:* This study profiles a sample of residents in Cagliari based on their perceptions toward the impacts of cruise activity, and investigates whether significant differences among clusters exist based on socio-demographic characteristics of respondents.

---

*Methodology*: This study applies a factor-cluster analysis approach to profile a stratified sample (district of residence, age and gender) of 1,034 residents in the city of Cagliari.

*Findings*: Five clusters of residents were identified, namely: "indifferents", "critics", "cautious", "supporters" and "cultural lovers". Findings show that there are significant differences between the five clusters, based solely on level of education, occupation and geographical proximity to tourist areas.

*Research limitations*: This study is highly site specific, thus rendering the findings hardly generalizable. Further, it does not investigate the role that other intrinsic factors and psychographic variables may exert in discriminating residents' perceptions.

*Pratical implications*: This study provides useful information for destination marketers and policymakers attempting to plan and implement internal marketing strategies aimed at increasing the effectiveness of the messages they deliver with the aim of highlighting the beneficial balance between positive and negative impacts of cruise tourism in the city.

*Originality of the paper*: Recently academic literature has started to devote attention to analyse residents' perceptions toward cruise development. Despite this, little attention has been devoted to cruise tourism destinations in the Mediterranean area, and even less in Italy. Further, to the best of our knowledge none of existing studies have been carried out considering an area sample.

Key words: cruise tourism; community-based tourism; socio-demographic characteristics; Mediterranean area; Sardinia

## 1. Introduzione

Il comparto delle crociere ha vissuto negli ultimi decenni un periodo di sviluppo crescente e rappresenta una parte importante del turismo internazionale in tutto il mondo (Brida e Zapata, 2010; Penco, 2013; Di Cesare e Tamma, 2004). Se nel mondo tra il 2005 e il 2015 la domanda di crociere è cresciuta del 62% (CLIA, 2017), in Europa il numero di persone che ha scelto una vacanza in crociera è più che raddoppiato negli ultimi dieci anni, raggiungendo oltre 5,6 milioni di passeggeri (European Cruise Council, 2014). Di rilievo è anche il contributo economico che il turismo crocieristico genera per le destinazioni ospitanti (Dwyer e Forsyth, 1996; Dwyer e Forsyth, 1998). Sempre secondo il rapporto CLIA (2016), l'attività crocieristica ha registrato un valore della produzione pari a € 40.95 miliardi nel 2015, di cui € 16.89 miliardi di spesa diretta generata dalle compagnie di crociera. In termini occupazionali, sempre nel 2015, il rapporto in questione evidenzia un dato superiore ai 360.000 posti di lavoro in Europa, più di 10.000 rispetto all'anno precedente, generando oltre € 11 miliardi in termini di retribuzione dei dipendenti.

Fino a pochi anni fa gli studi scientifici sul turismo da crociera erano di numero assai limitato (Wild e Dearing, 2000), ma sono poi incrementati in maniera assai significativa grazie al contributo proveniente da vari ambiti delle scienze sociali (come il management e il marketing, la sociologia, la psicologia e l'economia). Tuttavia, esiste l'opportunità/necessità di approfondire ulteriormente tale ambito di ricerca (Papathanassis e

Beckman, 2011) sia con riferimento ad aspetti concettuali che metodologici (Wilkinson, 1999; Papathanassis e Beckmann, 2011).

**Giacomo Del Chiappa**
**Giuseppe Melis**
**Marcello Atzeni**
Turismo crocieristico e
percezioni della popolazione
residente: i risultati di
un'analisi cluster

La rilevanza dei residenti, quali attori chiave dei processi di sviluppo locale, è stata sottolineata in letteratura da tempo (Vernon *et al.*, 2005). Anche il dibattito che a livello internazionale si è sviluppato nel corso del tempo in seno alle principali organizzazioni del turismo, ha posto l'accento sulla rilevanza di considerare adeguatamente i bisogni, le aspettative e le percezioni delle comunità interessata dal fenomeno del turismo (Fredline e Faulkner, 2000). In questo senso, le percezioni e le opinioni dei residenti rappresentano un elemento determinante nel processo di pianificazione degli investimenti in qualsiasi tipo di turismo (Dyer *et al.*, 2007; Gursoy e Rutherford, 2004). La necessità di soffermarsi a comprendere le percezioni dei residenti non è così scontata nella letteratura sul turismo crocieristico: Papathanassis e Beckmann (2011), nella loro ricerca, hanno evidenziato come questi studi considerassero solo cinque ambiti di ricerca (passeggeri, personale di crociera, destinazioni, operatori di crociera e navi da crociera), ignorando totalmente la comunità ospitante o considerandola solo implicitamente. Tutto questo può spiegare il motivo per cui recenti studi sono stati dedicati alle percezioni e agli atteggiamenti dei residenti nei confronti dello sviluppo del turismo da crociera (ad esempio Brida *et al.*, 2011; Brida *et al.*, 2012a,b; Hritz e Cecil, 2008; Gatewood e Cameron, 2009; Diedrich, 2010; Del Chiappa e Abbate, 2013), contribuendo così allo sviluppo di questo dominio di conoscenza.

Anche sul piano geografico, gli studi sugli effetti del turismo da crociera sulle comunità ospitanti si sono concentrati principalmente sul Mar dei Caraibi, con destinazioni come la Florida (ad esempio Hritz e Cecil, 2008), il Belize (ad esempio Diedrich, 2010) o le isole tropicali (ad esempio Gatewood e Cameron, 2009). In misura minore, negli ultimi dieci anni, qualche ricerca ha riguardato anche alcune destinazioni del Mediterraneo con interessanti lavori sugli atteggiamenti dei residenti verso il turismo da crociera nelle destinazioni croate (ad esempio Marušić *et al.*, 2008) o italiane (es. Brida *et al.*, 2012a, b; Pulina *et al.*, 2013) con particolare riferimento alle isole (Sicilia e Sardegna). Le ricerche in questione, tuttavia, lasciano spazio per ulteriori approfondimenti sia con riferimento alle destinazioni "*home port*" (Del Chiappa *et al.*, 2016), sia con riferimento a destinazioni ora di passaggio ("*port-of-call*") che tentano di diventare *home port*. Questo, per esempio, è il caso della città di Cagliari, il cui traffico crocieristico è enormemente cresciuto (dal 2004 al 2016 l'incremento è stato del 281% per le "toccate" e del 440% per i passeggeri). Il presente studio, pertanto, ha come obiettivo quello di approfondire il dibattito scientifico su questo filone di ricerca mediante l'applicazione di una analisi *cluster* su un campione stratificato di 1034 residenti nella città di Cagliari, anche allo scopo di verificare se esistano differenze statisticamente significative tra i *cluster* in base alle caratteristiche socio-demografiche dei rispondenti.

## 2. La letteratura di riferimento

### 2.1 Gli studi in tema di relazioni tra comunità ospitanti e sviluppo del turismo

Lo studio della relazione che si instaura tra processi di sviluppo turistico e impatto sulla comunità della destinazione ospitante ha rappresentato un argomento importante fin dall'inizio degli anni '70 e i primi anni '80 (Pizam, 1978; Rothman, 1978; Belisle e Hoy, 1980; Brougham e Butler, 1981; Murphy, 1983). Nei primi anni, per spiegare questa relazione, vennero proposti e testati modelli di analisi di tipo classico (es: Doxey, 1976; Butler, 1980; Weaver, 2012), applicando successivamente metodologie più sofisticate quali i modelli causali (ad esempio Dyer *et al.*, 2007; Chen e Chen, 2010; Rivera *et al.*, 2015; Gursoy *et al.*, 2002) e di segmentazione (ad esempio Aguiló e Roselló, 2005; Brida *et al.*, 2010; Sinclair-Maragh *et al.*, 2014).

In generale, gli studi finora svolti hanno cercato di individuare un modello generale per la comprensione e la modellizzazione di queste relazioni con risultati molto contrastanti (Rutina, 2010; Vargas-Sánchez *et al.*, 2011; Del Chiappa *et al.*, 2016). Nonostante ciò, esiste un sostanziale accordo sui fattori che influenzano gli atteggiamenti dei residenti nei confronti del fenomeno turistico e che vengono classificati in intrinseci ed estrinseci (Faulkner e Tideswell, 1997). I primi si riferiscono alle caratteristiche della comunità ospitante, mentre quelli estrinseci riguardano le caratteristiche del luogo. Ad esempio, tra i fattori estrinseci si considerano il grado di sviluppo economico dell'area (Johnson *et al.*, 1994), le attività turistiche (Gursoy e Rutherford, 2004), il livello di stagionalità del turismo (Fredline e Faulkner, 2000) o la natura dei visitatori (Nyaupane *et al.*, 2006). Tra quelli intrinseci che spiegano gli atteggiamenti personali della comunità di accoglienza, invece, i risultati delle ricerche sono in contrasto. Se si considerano, per esempio, le caratteristiche demografiche, quali età, sesso e livello di istruzione, in alcuni casi si rileva come tali variabili siano capaci di moderare le percezioni e gli atteggiamenti dei residenti rispetto al turismo crocieristico (es: Del Chiappa e Abbate, 2013). Allo stesso tempo, altri studi sembrerebbero negare tale effetto di moderazione (es: Vareiro *et al.*, 2012). Se si considerano i fattori psicografici, invece, gli studi hanno dimostrato che questi hanno un impatto sugli atteggiamenti dei residenti: tra questi, per esempio, l'atteggiamento generale rispetto all'ambiente (c.d. *pro-environmentalism*), il livello di altruismo esistente nella comunità o, infine, il senso di attaccamento alla comunità locale di appartenenza che il residente sviluppa nel corso del tempo (Besculides *et al.*, 2002).

### 2.2 L'importanza di studiare l'atteggiamento dei residenti verso lo sviluppo del turismo da crociera e la scelta del caso di studio

Per quanto riguarda la relazione tra turismo da crociera e comunità ospitante, gli studi sono ancora agli inizi ed i risultati raggiunti ancora divergenti (vedi tabella 1). In questo senso, per quanto riguarda la distinzione tra fattori intrinseci ed estrinseci (Faulkner e Tideswell, 1997), ci si è soffermati principalmente sull'effetto moderatore svolto dai primi.

Ad esempio, Del Chiappa e Abbate (2013) hanno dimostrato che nella città di Messina i residenti che sono maggiormente inclini a supportare un ulteriore sviluppo del turismo da crociera sono coloro che hanno un reddito in qualche modo collegato allo sviluppo dell'attività crocieristica, appartenenti ad una fascia di età media, con livelli di istruzione medio-alti, che vivono in città da meno di cinque anni e perlopiù in prossimità delle aree turistiche e che, infine, interagiscono frequentemente con i turisti. Risultati simili sono stati trovati da Brida *et al.* (2012a) nel loro studio sulle percezioni e gli atteggiamenti verso questa forma di turismo nella città di Olbia. Gli stessi autori, in un altro studio comparativo, hanno dimostrato che le percezioni e gli atteggiamenti dei residenti a Messina e Olbia sono molto simili, nonostante tali destinazioni si trovino in fasi differenti del rispettivo ciclo di vita (Brida *et al.*, 2012b). Un altro aspetto interessante che è stato indagato in anni assai recenti riguarda le preferenze dei residenti nei confronti di forme di turismo alternative a quello crocieristico. A tale proposito, Diedrich (2010) ha approfondito questi aspetti in sei distinte comunità del Belize e ha dimostrato che la comunità locale preferirebbe attrarre tipi di turismi caratterizzati da una permanenza media di soggiorno maggiore rispetto a quella dei crocieristi. Nel loro studio, Key West *et al.*, (2008) hanno riscontrato come la comunità locale fosse scettica rispetto al fenomeno del turismo da crociera, soprattutto a motivo delle esternalità negative che questo comporta in termini di sovraffollamento delle aree pubbliche. Altre ricerche hanno evidenziato come la maggior parte delle comunità locali preferirebbe lo sviluppo del turismo storico-culturale, mentre un numero più ridotto di residenti sarebbe interessato a favorire la crescita del turismo da crociera (Gatewood e Cameron, 2009). A risultati analoghi pervengono anche Del Chiappa e Abbate (2013) nel loro studio realizzato a Messina, un contesto nel quale la preferenza della comunità locale sembra esprimersi per lo sviluppo del turismo storico-culturale, seguito dal turismo balneare, dal turismo da crociera e, in ultimo, dal turismo sportivo.

L'analisi congiunta dei risultati delle diverse ricerche permette di sottolineare che le percezioni e l'atteggiamento dei residenti rispetto al turismo da crociera non dipende tanto dalla zona geografica (polare, artica, ecc.), dal tipo di destinazione (isola, città, ecc.) o dalla specifica fase del ciclo di vita della destinazione in cui si trova lo sviluppo di questa specifica forma di turismo. Al contrario, si rilevano differenze legate alle singole persone e ai loro tratti psico-sociali, piuttosto che ai luoghi nei quali esse vivono. Ciò rappresenta un campo di approfondimento piuttosto interessante che merita di essere sviluppato attraverso processi di segmentazione, finalizzati ad individuare similarità ed eterogeneità negli atteggiamenti dei residenti. In tal senso, per quanto è nella conoscenza degli autori di questo lavoro, sono ancora pochi gli studi sviluppati in questa direzione (Davis, Allen e Cosenza, 1988; Fredline e Faulkner, 2000; Vareiro *et al.*, 2013).

*Tab. 1: Gli studi sulle percezioni dei residenti rispetto al turismo crocieristico: una comparazione*

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Variabili socio demografiche indagate* | - | Età, genere, livello di istruzione, reddito, stato civile, residenza(*), distanza abitazione-porto, contatto con i turisti nella vita quotidiana | - | Età, genere, livello di istruzione, reddito, occupazione |
| Cluster individuati | - | Cauti ambivalenti; Completamente positivi | - | Oppositori, Neutrali, Supporters, Lavoratori del turismo |
| Fattori esplorati | Risorse correnti, potenziali, demografia, demografia passeggeri, struttura economica, cambiamenti nell'utilizzo del territorio, relazioni tra domanda e offerta turistica | Orientamento al turismo, heritage optimism, impatti ambientali, impatti economici, impatti sociali, caratteristiche dei turisti | Impatti ambientali, impatti sociali, impatti sul welfare, impatti sulla qualità della vita | Impatti economici, impatti socioculturali, supporto allo sviluppo del turismo crocieristico |
| Metodologia | Case Study – Interviste in profondità | Analisi fattoriale + analisi correlazioni + analisi dei cluster | T-test | Analisi delle corrispondenze + Cluster Analysis |
| Autori | Hritz e Cecil, 2008 | Gatewood e Cameron, 2009 | Diedrich, 2010 | Brida, Riano e Zapata Aguirre, 2011 |
| Occupazione(*), distanza abitazione-porto(*), dipendenza del reddito dall'attività di turismo da crociera(*), precedenti esperienze come crocierista(*) | Occupazione(*) | Età(*), genere(*), livello di istruzione(*), occupazione(*), distanza abitazione-porto(*), anni di residenza(*), dipendenza del reddito dall'attività di turismo da crociera (*), contatto con i turisti nella vita quotidiana(*), precedenti esperienze come crocierista(*) | Età(*), genere, livello di istruzione, occupazione, distanza abitazione-porto(*), distanza abitazione-zone turistiche(*), anni di residenza, dipendenza del reddito dall'attività di turismo da crociera | *Significativo allo 0,05 |
| - | - | - | Supporter cauti, Ottimisti, Pessimisti | |
| Impatti economici, impatti sul welfare, impatti socio-culturali, crowding-out effect, impatti ambientali | Impatti economici, impatti sul welfare, impatti socio-culturali, crowding-out effect, impatti ambientali | Impatti economici, impatti sul welfare, impatti socio-culturali, crowding-out effect, impatti ambientali | Impatti economici, impatti sul welfare, impatti socio-culturali, crowding-out effect, impatti ambientali | |
| Analisi Fattoriale + ANOVA + MANOVA | Analisi Fattoriale + ANOVA + MANOVA | T-test e Anova | Analisi fattoriale, analisi fattoriale confermativa, latent segmentation | |
| Brida, Del Chiappa, Meleddu e Pulina, 2012a | Brida, Del Chiappa, Meleddu e Pulina, 2012b | Del Chiappa e Abate, 2013 | Del Chiappa, Lorenzo-Romero e Gallarza, 2016 | |

Fonte: Nostra elaborazione

Tra i lavori che hanno classificato gli atteggiamenti dei residenti verso lo sviluppo del turismo da crociera, particolarmente interessante è il contributo

di Brida *et al.* (2011) focalizzato sul caso della città colombiana di Cartagena delle Indie, nel quale gli autori hanno considerato congiuntamente sia gli impatti economici che quelli socio-culturali. Nel complesso, lo studio ha rivelato che i residenti sono consci degli impatti positivi che possono generarsi soprattutto in termini economici e, anche se in misura inferiore, in termini socio-culturali. In particolare, gli autori individuano quattro diversi *cluster*: "*opponents*", "*neutrals*", "*supporters*" e "*tourism workers*". Il primo segmento è composto principalmente da residenti donne, in età avanzata, in possesso di un titolo di studio elevato (laurea o master), che vivono non lontano dai luoghi visitati dai crocieristi e il cui lavoro non dipende dallo svolgimento di attività turistiche. I "*neutrals*" sono perlopiù uomini, di età inferiore a 45 anni che lavorano in ambiti diversi da quello riconducibile al comparto crocieristico. I "*supporters*" sono in prevalenza impegnati in attività non collegate al settore crocieristico. Infine, i "*tourism workers*" sono caratterizzati da residenti che lavorano nel settore del turismo e che interagiscono frequentemente con i turisti nella loro vita quotidiana.

Nel complesso, appare evidente che lo studio del turismo da crociera nella prospettiva delle comunità ospitante costituisce un'area da approfondire e in continua evoluzione. La scelta di effettuare uno studio nella città di Cagliari trova interessanti motivazioni, sia nella dinamica dei flussi degli ultimi anni cresciuti significativamente, sia per numero di navi che per tipologia delle stesse e per numero di passeggeri, sia nel fatto che attualmente il porto di Cagliari si sta accreditando anche come porto di partenza e di arrivo (*home port*), e non solo come porto di passaggio (port of call) come accadeva nel passato. In questo senso, lo studio intende colmare una sostanziale lacuna conoscitiva derivante dall'esiguo numero di lavori che nella letteratura sono stati realizzati in destinazioni home-port, specialmente operanti nel bacino del Mediterraneo. Non va inoltre trascurato il fatto che dal 2013 la gestione del traffico crocieristico è passata dall'Autorità Portuale della città alla società Cagliari Cruise Port (CCP), circostanza che sta permettendo di ottenere importanti risultati grazie alle sinergie con altre società di gestione del traffico crocieristico operanti in diverse città italiane e del Mediterraneo.

### 3. Metodologia

Considerando il numero complessivo di residenti nella città di Cagliari (dati ISTAT 2014), l'analisi è stata condotta su un campione rappresentativo di 1.034 residenti (livello di confidenza al 99%) e stratificato in base a età (18-35 anni, 36-55 anni, 56 anni e oltre), genere e quartiere di residenza. La stratificazione del campione è stata possibile grazie alla collaborazione dell'ufficio anagrafe del Comune di Cagliari che ha fornito al gruppo di ricerca i dati sulla composizione percentuale della popolazione totale della città in base alle variabili considerate (età, genere e quartiere di residenza). Una volta costruiti gli strati del campione, i dati sono stati raccolti da un gruppo di 10 rilevatori adeguatamente formato da uno dei membri del gruppo di ricerca. Nello specifico, gli intervistatori hanno provveduto alle

**Giacomo Del Chiappa**
**Giuseppe Melis**
**Marcello Atzeni**
Turismo crocieristico e percezioni della popolazione residente: i risultati di un'analisi cluster

rilevazioni dei dati recandosi nei diversi quartieri indicati nel campione stratificato e intervistando in ognuno di essi, intercettando i potenziali rispondenti nei luoghi a maggiore frequentazione (es: mercati, piazze, uscite da chiese, bar, circoli, ecc.), un numero di individui che corrispondesse a quelli necessari per completare gli strati definiti in base alle variabili età e genere. Per essere certi che le persone intercettate fossero effettivamente rispondenti al profilo di volta in volta necessario, gli intervistati hanno preventivamente chiesto ad ognuno di loro informazioni su età e quartiere di residenza; così facendo, solo gli individui che avevano un profilo in linea con quello necessario potevano procedere con la compilazione del questionario.

Il questionario è stato costruito sulla base della letteratura esistente (Brida *et al.*, 2012b; Del Chiappa e Abbate, 2013) ed è suddiviso in due parti. Nella prima, i rispondenti sono stati invitati a fornire alcune informazioni socio-demografiche. Nella seconda, i partecipanti allo studio hanno espresso il loro grado di accordo rispetto ad una lista di 26 affermazioni utilizzate per analizzare come i residenti percepiscono gli impatti (positivi e negativi) che il turismo crocieristico genera a livello economico, socio-culturale e ambientale nella città; a tale scopo è stata utilizzata una scala Likert a 5 punti (1 = completamente in disaccordo, 5 = completamente d'accordo). I questionari sono stati somministrati *face-to-face* da cinque intervistatori, specificamente formati, nel periodo aprile-giugno 2014. L'elaborazione dei dati è stata condotta utilizzando il software SPSS.

### 4. Caratteristiche del campione intervistato

La tabella 2 descrive le caratteristiche del campione intervistato. Nel complesso i rispondenti sono risultati perlopiù di sesso femminile (54,2%), di età compresa tra 36 e 56 anni (42,3%) o al di sotto dei 35 anni (31.6%), con un livello di istruzione medio-alto (diploma: 42,6% - laurea: 29,1%) e occupati in qualità di impiegati amministrativi (25,3%). La maggior parte degli intervistati risiede in prossimità delle aree turistiche (36,5% meno di 2 km; 35,2% tra 3 e 5 km) e del porto (30,7% meno di 2 km; 43,7% tra 3 e 5 km), e il 54,2% di essi vive nella città di Cagliari da più di 31 anni. La maggior parte dei residenti ha dichiarato di non avere un reddito dipendente dall'attività crocieristica né a titolo individuale (96,4%) né tra i propri familiari e parenti (89,1%). Infine, dichiarano di avere una limitata frequenza di contatto con i crocieristici.

Nel complesso, i rispondenti mostrano un atteggiamento positivo nei confronti dello sviluppo del turismo da crociera nella Città, come dimostra il livello di accordo medio che essi esprimono con riferimento agli item utilizzati per misurare gli impatti positivi del turismo crocieristico (Tabella 5). Ad esempio, si ritiene che questa forma di turismo possa incrementare le opportunità di lavoro (M=3,76; SD=1,092), favorire la conoscenza di altre culture e comunità (M=3,78; SD= 1,031), valorizzare le tradizioni locali e l'autenticità dei luoghi coinvolti (M=3,81; SD=1,002). Allo stesso tempo, però, i residenti assumono una posizione neutra rispetto alla capacità che lo stesso ha di incrementare la qualità della vita, il reddito

medio disponibile, di migliorare la protezione dell'ambiente e la qualità delle infrastrutture. I residenti non associano particolari impatti negativi allo sviluppo del turismo crocieristico ma, al contempo, ritengono che la maggior parte dei benifici positivi avvantaggino imprenditori "esterni" al territorio (M=3,21; SD=1,14) generando i cosidetti *crowding out effects*.

*Tab. 2: Il campione intervistato*

| Genere | % | Distanza residenza- aree turistiche (Km) | % |
|---|---|---|---|
| Uomo | 45,84 | Distanza residenza- aree turistiche (Km) | % |
| Donna | 54,16 | < 2 | 36,50 |
| Età | % | 3- 5 | 35,24 |
| Giovani (18-25) | 31,62 | 6-10 | 21,36 |
| Adulti (36-56) | 42,26 | 11-20 | 4,66 |
| Senior (>56) | 26,11 | >21 | 2,23 |
| Educazione | % | Distanza residenza-porto (Km) | % |
| Nessuna | 0,78 | <2 | 30,69 |
| Scuola elementare | 4,46 | 3-5 | 43,66 |
| Scuola media | 14,34 | 6-10 | 22,75 |
| Diploma | 42,64 | 11-20 | 2,42 |
| Laurea Triennale | 29,07 | >21 | 0,48 |
| Laurea specialistica | 8,72 | Quanto entra in contatto con i turisti? | % |
| Occupazione | % | Per niente | 36,42 |
| Impiegato | 25,34 | Poco | 48,98 |
| Manager | 4,39 | Abbastanza | 10,52 |
| Freelance | 12,57 | Molto | 1,95 |
| Pensionato | 17,74 | Moltissimo | 1,27 |
| Disoccupato | 6,14 | Non lo so | 0,39 |
| Studente | 18,42 | Non risponde | 0,49 |
| Altro | 15,40 | Familiari coinvolti in attività che traggono vantaggio dalla presenza dei corcieristi nella zona? | % |
| Anni di residenza | % | Sì | 10,85 |
| <5 | 7,17 | No | 89,15 |
| 6-10 | 6,69 | È mai entrato in contatto con i crocieristi? | % |
| 11-20 | 10,17 | Sì | 32,33 |
| 21-30 | 21,80 | No | 67,67 |
| > 31 | 54,17 | Ha mai fatto una crociera? | % |
| Il suo reddito è collegato al turismo da crociera? | % | Sì | 16,03 |
| Sì | 3,62 | No | 83,97 |
| No | 96,38 | | |

Fonte: Elaborazione da nostri dati campionari

## 5. I risultati dell'analisi cluster

Al fine di individuare l'esistenza o meno di differenti percezioni con riguardo allo sviluppo del turismo crocieristico, è stata applicata un'analisi

*cluster* ai dati rilevati. Nello specifico, è stato utilizzato un approccio a step successivi, applicando dapprima una tecnica di tipo gerarchico (Ward's method e distanza di Manhattan) con lo scopo di valutare differenti combinazioni di *cluster* (Hair et al, 2014). Tra le differenti soluzioni, la suddivisione in 5 *cluster* è risultata la più idonea ad interpretare i dati. Successivamente, è stato utilizzato un approccio non-gerarchico (k-means method). La tabella 3 mostra le distanze tra i centroidi dei *cluster*, evidenziando importanti differenze tra i gruppi, confermate inoltre da un ANOVA test (sig > 0,001).

*Tab. 3: Distanze tra i centri finali dei cluster*

| Cluster | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
|---------|------|------|------|------|
| 2 | 7,72 | | | |
| 3 | 5,36 | 3,65 | | |
| 4 | 5,15 | 4,17 | 4,32 | |
| 5 | 9,57 | 4,04 | 6,71 | 4,76 |

Fonte: Elaborazione da nostri dati campionari

Per poter meglio descrivere i gruppi individuati è stata applicata un'analisi fattoriale (Tabella 4), (metodo delle componenti principali e rotazione Varimax). Sulla base del criterio di Kaiser sono stati estratti 7 fattori che nel complesso riassumono il 60,21% della varianza totale. L'indice KMO (Kaiser-Myer-Olkin = 0,907) e il test di sfericità di Bartlett (chi-square = 14029,11; p-value <0,0001), confermano l'appropriatezza dell'analisi (Hair *et al.*, 2014).

Il primo fattore, "*valorizzazione della cultura e dell'identità*" (25,42% della varianza totale) comprende gli item usati per misurare i benefici derivanti dalla valorizzazione della cultura e delle tradizioni locali. Il secondo fattore, "*valorizzazione e sviluppo delle infrastrutture e dei servizi*" (13,60% della varianza totale) riassume variabili collegate allo sviluppo delle infrastrutture, dei servizi e della protezione e valorizzazione degli *asset* ambientali e storici. Il terzo fattore, "*impatti ambientali negativi*" (5,40% della varianza totale) descrive gli impatti negativi sull'ambiente e sull'ecosistema. Il quarto fattore, "*impatti socio-culturali negativi*" (4,75% della varianza totale), racchiude item correlati con gli impatti negativi dello sviluppo del turismo da crociera sulla vita della comunità. Il quinto fattore, "*impatti economici positivi*" (3,91% della varianza totale) descrive item relativi agli effetti positivi sul benessere economico della comunità. Il sesto fattore, "*rivitalizzazione della città e supporto allo sviluppo del turismo crocieristico*" (3,82% della varianza totale) risulta composto da item che descrivono l'importanza di realizzare iniziative che aumentino la capacità di attrarre un maggior numero di turisti. L'ultimo fattore, denominato "*crowding out effects*" (*3,28% della varianza totale*) comprende item che si riferiscono alla possibilità che il turismo da crociera possa spostare l'attenzione da altri progetti, e/o alla possibilità che i benefici derivanti dallo sviluppo di questo tipo di turismo finiscano perlopiù per avvantaggiare investitori e aziende non locali.

**Giacomo Del Chiappa**
**Giuseppe Melis**
**Marcello Atzeni**
Turismo crocieristico e
percezioni della popolazione
residente: i risultati di
un'analisi cluster

| | Loadings | Eigenvalue | % variance explained | % variance cumulated | Chronbach Alpha |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *F1-Valorizzazione della cultura e dell'identità* | | 8,13 | 25,42 | 25,42 | 0,84 |
| I1-Aumenta la conoscenza di altre culture/comunità | 0,72 | | | | |
| I2-Rafforzamento nell'offerta di attività culturali | 0,74 | | | | |
| I3-Valorizzazione delle tradizioni/autenticità locali | 0,69 | | | | |
| I4-Migliora la qualità dei servizi ristorativi, ricettivi e commerciali della zona | 0,70 | | | | |
| I5-Migliora la vita sociale e culturale per la comunità locale | 0,66 | | | | |
| *F2-Valorizzazione e sviluppo delle infrastrutture e dei servizi* | | 4,35 | 13,60 | 39,02 | 0,87 |
| I6-Migliora la tutela dell'ambiente | 0,60 | | | | |
| I7-Migliorano le infrastrutture (strade, rete idriche, telefoniche, ecc.) | 0,73 | | | | |
| I8-Migliora la qualità dei servizi pubblici erogati | 0,74 | | | | |
| I9-Migliora la conservazione e valorizzazione del patrimonio storico | 0,66 | | | | |
| I10-Migliora il decoro urbano e rurale | 0,71 | | | | |
| *F3- Impatti ambientali negativi* | | 1,72 | 5,40 | 44,43 | 0,82 |
| I11-Provoca un'alterazione dell'ecosistema (erosione spiagge, danni a flora e fauna) | 0,81 | | | | |
| I12-Aumento dell'inquinamento ambientale e marino | 0,82 | | | | |
| I13-Provoca sovraffollamento degli spazi pubblici e delle attività legate al tempo libero | 0,68 | | | | |
| I14-Provoca un'eccessiva produzione di rifiuti | 0,80 | | | | |
| *F4- Impatti socio-culturali negativi* | | 1,52 | 4,75 | 49,18 | 0,62 |
| I15-La presenza del turismo mi spinge a cambiare il mio normale stile di vita | 0,72 | | | | |
| I16-Aumentano il traffico e gli incidenti stradali | 0,54 | | | | |
| I17-La presenza dei turisti interferisce con il normale svolgimento della mia vita quotidiana | 0,64 | | | | |
| *F5-Impatti economici positivi* | | 1,25 | 3,91 | 53,09 | 0,78 |
| I18-Aumento degli investimenti pubblici e potenziamento delle infrastrutture pubbliche | 0,67 | | | | |
| I19-Aumento degli investimenti e potenziamento delle infrastrutture private | 0,65 | | | | |
| I20-Aumentano le opportunità di lavoro | 0,64 | | | | |
| *F6-Rivitalizzazione della città e supporto al turismo crocieristico* | | 1,22 | 3,82 | 56,92 | 0,64 |
| I21-Ritengo che sarebbe utile rivitalizzare attività commerciali e servizi nel centro storico per accogliere un maggior numero di turisti | 0,75 | | | | |
| I22-Ritengo che sarebbe utile rivitalizzare attività commerciali e servizi fuori dal centro storico per accogliere un maggior numero di turisti | 0,81 | | | | |
| I23-Le Istituzioni dovrebbero dare incentivi economici (sussidi, riduzioni fiscali…) per attrarre più turisti | 0,65 | | | | |
| *F7-Crowding out effects* | | 1,05 | 3,28 | 60,21 | 0,55 |
| I24-Aumenta il costo della vita per la comunità locale | 0,55 | | | | |
| I25-I benefici generati dall'attività turistica finiscono nelle mani di persone e imprese esterne alla comunità locale. | 0,77 | | | | |
| I26-L'attenzione allo sviluppo turistico distoglie risorse da altri progetti rilevanti | 0,62 | | | | |
| Goodness of fit: Chi-square = 14029,11 - d.f. = 496; Sig = 0,000 - KMO= 0,907 | | | | | |

Fonte: Elaborazione da nostri dati campionari

La tabella 5 riporta, per ciascun *cluster*, i punteggi medi ottenuti dalle risposte dei residenti, ordinati seguendo la struttura fattoriale.

Tab. 5: Analisi dei cluster - valori medi

|  | CL1 | CL2 | CL3 | CL4 | CL5 | TOT |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| F1 |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| I1 | 2,5 | 4,26 | 3,31 | 3,73 | 4,48 | 3,78 |
| I2 | 2,11 | 3,92 | 3,07 | 3,5 | 4,41 | 3,53 |
| I3 | 2,53 | 4,18 | 3,24 | 3,83 | 4,59 | 3,81 |
| I4 | 2,39 | 4,07 | 3,29 | 3,72 | 4,58 | 3,73 |
| I5 | 1,91 | 3,87 | 2,9 | 3,21 | 4,33 | 3,36 |
| F2 |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| I6 | 1,59 | 3,16 | 2,66 | 2,75 | 4,03 | 2,91 |
| I7 | 1,52 | 3,36 | 2,77 | 2,66 | 4,2 | 2,97 |
| I8 | 1,67 | 3,53 | 2,83 | 2,91 | 4,17 | 3,11 |
| I9 | 1,98 | 3,93 | 3,20 | 3,59 | 4,44 | 3,56 |
| I10 | 1,83 | 3,67 | 3,06 | 3,20 | 4,23 | 3,3 |
| F3 |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| I11 | 1,99 | 3,01 | 2,92 | 1,64 | 1,59 | 2,20 |
| I12 | 2,32 | 3,46 | 3,17 | 1,98 | 1,82 | 2,54 |
| I13 | 1,94 | 2,83 | 2,86 | 1,74 | 1,83 | 2,21 |
| I14 | 2,14 | 3,3 | 3,3 | 1,91 | 1,92 | 2,49 |
| F4 |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| I15 | 1,24 | 2,05 | 1,96 | 1,39 | 2,56 | 1,81 |
| I16 | 1,59 | 2,43 | 2,76 | 1,43 | 1,85 | 1,96 |
| I17 | 1,36 | 1,96 | 2,15 | 1,26 | 1,49 | 1,61 |
| F5 |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| I18 | 1,99 | 3,76 | 2,96 | 3,21 | 4,31 | 3,35 |
| I19 | 2,2 | 3,65 | 2,95 | 3,25 | 4,13 | 3,33 |
| I20 | 2,23 | 4,18 | 3,38 | 3,75 | 4,56 | 3,76 |
| F6 |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| I21 | 4,27 | 4,43 | 3,43 | 4,52 | 4,69 | 4,34 |
| I22 | 3,96 | 4,07 | 3,34 | 3,99 | 4,44 | 3,99 |
| I23 | 3,28 | 3,94 | 2,63 | 3,51 | 4,46 | 3,63 |
| F7 |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| I24 | 2,13 | 2,96 | 3,12 | 2,11 | 3,14 | 2,64 |
| I25 | 3,17 | 3,55 | 3,45 | 2,97 | 2,99 | 3,21 |
| I26 | 2,17 | 2,89 | 3,25 | 2,01 | 2,24 | 2,46 |

Fonte: Elaborazione da nostri dati campionari

Gli "indifferenti" rappresentano il *cluster* meno numeroso (N=127). Questo segmento è composto principalmente da donne (57,5%), di età adulta (45,7%), in possesso di diploma (45,7%) o di laurea (28,3%), impiegate (29,1%) o studentesse (21,3%) che vivono da più di 21 anni nella città di Cagliari (52,0%) e che non hanno un reddito (personale o di familiari) collegato con lo sviluppo dell'attività crocieristica in città. I residenti appartenenti a questo gruppo vivono perlopiù in prossimità delle zone turistiche ma, nonostante ciò, dichiarano di entrare poco (47,6%) o per niente (35,7%) in contatto con i turisti nella loro quotidianità; solo il 29,9% dichiara di aver avuto contatti con i crocieristi. Nel complesso, le persone in questo *cluster* mostrano valori della media medio-bassi su buona

parte degli item utilizzati, dimostrando, per tale via, una posizione tutto sommato neutra rispetto agli impatti generati dal fenomeno crocieristico. Allo stesso tempo, però, sono favorevoli a tutti quegli interventi che possono in qualche modo aumentare l'attrattività della città per questo tipo di turismo.

Giacomo Del Chiappa
Giuseppe Melis
Marcello Atzeni
Turismo crocieristico e percezioni della popolazione residente: i risultati di un'analisi cluster

Gli "amanti della cultura" (N=263) ("*cultural lovers*"), sono perlopiù donne (52,5%), di età adulta (43,7%), impiegati (27,5%) o pensionati (20,2%), in possesso di un diploma (42,9%) o di una laurea (23,8%), che risiede a Cagliari da più di 31 anni (48,5%) in zone piuttosto lontane dal porto o dalle aree turistiche. Il 9,1% delle persone dichiara di avere familiari coinvolti in attività lavorative collegate con lo sviluppo del turismo crocieristico. Nel complesso, i membri di questo segmento riconoscono allo sviluppo del turismo da crociera la capacità di favorire lo scambio culturale con persone di altri paesi e la promozione dell'identità e della cultura locale [es: "Aumenta la conoscenza di altre culture/comunità" (M= 4,26; SD= 0,98), "Rafforzamento nell'offerta di attività culturali" (M=3,92; SD=1,09) "Valorizzazione delle tradizioni/autenticità locali" (M=4,18; SD=1,05)]. Questo spiega il motivo per cui queste persone sono favorevoli a supportare la realizzazione di tutti quegli interventi pubblici e privati che, attraverso la rivitalizzazione della città, possono anche attrarre un maggior numero di navi da crociera/crocieristi. Tuttavia, al contempo, i "*cultural lovers*" sono preoccupati per gli impatti ambientali negativi che lo sviluppo del turismo crocieristico può generare nella città in termini di, ad esempio, aumento dei rifiuti (M=3,30; SD=1,19) e dell'inquinamento ambientale e marino (M=3,46; SD=1,2). Inoltre, risulta piuttosto presente l'idea che chi si appropria maggiormente dei benefici dello sviluppo del turismo crocieristico siano soprattutto imprenditori provenienti d'oltre mare (M= 3,55; SD=1,17).

Il *cluster* dei "critici" (N=143) risulta bilanciato rispetto alla variabile di genere (49,7% maschi, 50,3% femmine) e all'età. Nel complesso, i membri di questo segmento sono in prevalenza studenti (25,9%) o impiegati (23,1%), in possesso di diploma (42,7%) o laurea (32,9%). Una buona percentuale di essi vive a Cagliari da un periodo compreso tra i 21 e i 30 anni (24,6%), in prossimità del porto e delle aree turistiche, ma nonostante ciò solamente il 23,9% di essi dichiara di aver interagito con i crocieristi. I residenti di questo *cluster* non considerano il turismo crocieristico come capace di favorire lo sviluppo economico, ambientale e socio-culturale della città. In particolare, essi sono preoccupati per gli effetti negativi che potrebbe generare a livello economico e sociale [es: "I benefici generati dall'attività turistica finiscono nelle mani di persone e imprese esterne alla comunità locale" (M= 3,45; SD= 1,10); "Provoca un'eccessiva produzione di rifiuti" (M=3,3; SD=1,19)]. Se da un lato i "critici" sono favorevoli a realizzare ogni attività che possa rivitalizzare la Città, dall'altro sono fortemente contrari agli interventi pubblici (sotto forma di incentivi) volti ad attrarre un maggior numero di navi da crociera (M=2,63; SD=1,14).

Il *cluster* dei "cauti" risulta quello più numeroso (N=329) ed è composto perlopiù da donne (54,7%), di età adulta (43,0%), studenti (18,8%) o impiegati (23,5%), che vivono da più di 31 anni nella città di Cagliari (57,4%) in prossimità del porto e delle aree turistiche. Questo *cluster* ha la

percentuale più alta di laureati (35,0%) e di persone in possesso di master (11,2%) rispetto agli altri gruppi individuati dall'analisi. I rispondenti dichiarano che i loro redditi non dipendono dal turismo da crociera e solo il 23,9% afferma di aver avuto precedenti contatti con i crocieristi. I "cauti" riconoscono nello sviluppo del turismo da crociera alcuni impatti positivi legati alla valorizzazione dell'identità e della cultura locale, al miglioramento del welfare e alla rivitalizzazione della città, ma, allo stesso tempo, si mostrano cauti nell'esprimere opinioni con riguardo agli effetti che tale comparto potrebbe avere sul miglioramento delle infrastrutture e dei servizi. Al contrario, non paiono preoccupati per i possibili impatti negativi sull'ambiente ["Provoca un'alterazione dell'ecosistema" (M= 1,64; SD= 1,02)] e sulla vita quotidiana dei cittadini ["La presenza dei turisti interferisce con il normale svolgimento della mia vita quotidiana" (M= 1,26; SD= 0,48)].

Il gruppo dei "sostenitori" (N=172) è composto in prevalenza da donne (56,4%), impiegati (24,7%), pensionati (22,9%) o freelance (15,9), in possesso di diploma (48,8%) ed è, inoltre, il segmento con la più alta percentuale di persone in età avanzata (33,7%) e di pensionati (22,9%). Una buona percentuale di essi vive a Cagliari da più di 21 anni (62,8%) vicino alle aree turistiche. I redditi del 6,7% delle persone di questo gruppo sono collegati direttamente al turismo da crociera e il 15,7% ha dichiarato di avere familiari coinvolti in attività che beneficiano dello sviluppo del turismo crocieristico. Infine, il 42,4% dei "sostenitori" dichiara di aver interagito con crocieristi più di quanto accada in ogni altro *cluster*. Nel complesso queste persone considerano lo sviluppo del turismo crocieristico come una grande opportunità per il territorio, sia da un punto di vista culturale ("Valorizzazione delle tradizioni/autenticità locali": M=4,58; SD=1,12), sia da un punto di vista economico [es: "Aumentano le opportunità di lavoro": M= 4,56; SD=0,84), mentre, al contrario, sembra ridotto il timore che questa forma di turismo possa generare impatti negativi (ambientali, sociali ed economici). Non stupisce, pertanto, che queste persone siano molto favorevoli alla possibilità che le Istituzioni realizzino attività e investimenti che aumentino la capacità di attrazione della città su questo segmento di turismo ("Ritengo che sarebbe utile rivitalizzare attività commerciali e servizi nel centro storico per accogliere un maggior numero di turisti": M= 4,69; SD= 0,54), finanche a prevedere appositivi incentivi quali sussidi e incentivi fiscali (M= 4,46; SD= 1,32).

Una volta individuati i *cluster*, si è fatto ricorso all'uso di una serie di test del Chi-quadro per verificare se i segmenti di residenti individuati differissero significativamente o no in base alle caratteristiche sociodemografiche dei rispondenti (genere, età, titolo di studio, etc.) (Hair *et al.*, 2014). I risultati evidenziano l'esistenza di differenze significative tra i *cluster* solo sulla base del livello di istruzione ($X_2$=70,635, p=0,000), del tipo di occupazione ($X_2$= 42,825, p=0,01), della prossimità geografica alle aree turistiche ($X_2$ = 32,681, p=0,008) e dello specifico quartiere di appartenenza ($X_2$= 166,190, p=0,003).

## 6. Conclusioni

**Giacomo Del Chiappa**
**Giuseppe Melis**
**Marcello Atzeni**
Turismo crocieristico e
percezioni della popolazione
residente: i risultati di
un'analisi cluster

La letteratura nazionale e internazionale finalizzata all'analisi delle percezioni e degli atteggiamenti che i residenti hanno rispetto allo sviluppo del turismo da crociera, ha finora focalizzato la sua attenzione prevalentemente su destinazioni *port-of-call* collocate in aree caraibiche, artiche e/o polari. Al contrario, sono ancora davvero poco numerosi gli studi che sono stati sviluppati considerando destinazioni di tipo *home-port* che siano contestualizzate nel bacino del Mediterraneo; ancora meno sono quelli che hanno applicato il metodo della *factor-cluster analysis* allo scopo, da un lato, di profilare i residenti in base alle loro percezioni e ai loro atteggiamenti e, dall'altro, di verificare se tra i *cluster* esistessero differenze significative in base alle caratteristiche socio-demografiche dei residenti. Il presente studio ha inteso contribuire a colmare questo gap presentando e discutendo i risultati di uno studio che si pone proprio l'obiettivo di applicare una *factor-cluster analysis* ad un campione rappresentativo e stratificato di residenti che vivono in una destinazione (Cagliari) che opera come *home port* nel cuore del bacino del Mediterraneo. Per questa via, il presente lavoro offre un significativo contributo sia dal punto di vista teorico che metodologico.

Più nello specifico, da un punto di vista teorico, l'analisi ha messo in evidenza l'esistenza di cinque *cluster* ("indifferenti", "critici" "cauti" "sostenitori e "amanti della cultura"), con una netta maggioranza della popolazione che manifesta una posizione tutto sommato non molto positiva rispetto allo sviluppo di questa forma di turismo e agli impatti che esso può generare ("indifferenti": N=127; "critici": N=143; "cauti": N=329). Questo risulta in linea con i precedenti studi condotti sia in destinazioni *port-of-call* e home-port il che denota, contrariamente a quanto si potrebbe pensare, che i residenti non sembrano essere in grado di percepire i maggiori vantaggi che, almeno a livello economico, le destinazioni home-port sembrano produrre rispetto a quelle *port-of-call* (Brida e Zapata, 2010). Inoltre, a conferma di alcuni studi esistenti (es: Brida *et al.*, 2012b), una parte davvero significativa ritiene che lo sviluppo del turismo da crociera tende a produrre benefici che finiscono perlopiù per avvantaggiare imprese non locali. Nel complesso, l'analisi ha anche messo in evidenza che i segmenti individuati differiscono tra loro in maniera significativa solo in base a livello di istruzione, tipo di occupazione, prossimità geografica alle aree turistiche e quartiere di residenza. Al contrario, a differenza di quanto rilevato in altri studi (es: Ballantine e Eagles, 1994; Belisle e Hoy, 1980), nessuna differenza è stata rilevata rispetto alle altre variabili socio-demografiche considerate (genere, età, prossimità geografica al porto, numero di anni di residenza nella città). Questo fornisce ulteriore conferma al fatto che questo tipo di studi risente in maniera significativa dello specifico contesto geografico in cui sono realizzati (Williams e Lawson, 2001) e che, quindi, non possono essere facilmente generalizzati al di fuori di questi specifici contesti.

I risultati di questo studio, oltre a contribuire allo sviluppo del dibattito scientifico sul tema del *community-based tourism* in ambito crocieristico, fornisce utili suggerimenti a *policy makers, destination*

*marketers,* compagnie di crociera, autorità portuale e ogni altro tipo di operatori turistici interessati allo sviluppo di questa forma di turismo. In primo luogo, i risultati dello studio suggeriscono di realizzare attività di marketing interno con l'obiettivo di aumentare la quantità e l'efficacia dei messaggi che vengono indirizzati alla comunità locale, in modo da renderla maggiormente consapevole del bilancio costi-benefici che il turismo da crociera genera nella città. In maniera simile, l'autorità portuale potrebbe aumentare l'uso delle attività di comunicazione interna allo scopo di rendere i residenti maggiormente consapevoli delle attività e degli investimenti che vengono effettuati per cercare di ridurre il più possibile gli impatti negativi dell'attività crocieristica (inquinamento marino, atmosferico, ecc.). Nel far questo, in accordo con Brida *et al.* (2012), particolare attenzione deve essere riservata all'uso di dati oggettivi che descrivano gli impatti positivi dell'attività crocieristica (es: la spesa media in città dei passeggeri e dell'equipaggio). Allo stesso tempo, lo studio evidenzia l'importanza di realizzare attività di comunicazione interna che siano incentrate sull'obiettivo di rendere evidente il numero delle attività che a livello locale risultano coinvolte nello sviluppo di questa forma di turismo, e/o la necessità di porre in essere attività che rendano più endogeno lo sviluppo del turismo crocieristico. In questo senso, si potrebbe pensare all'opportunità di mirare ad interagire maggiormente con le compagnie da crociera, in maniera tale da prevedere che a bordo delle navi si faccia un maggior uso di prodotti enogastronomici locali durante il tragitto di avvicinamento alla destinazione. In maniera simile, l'autorità portuale, la società di gestione dei servizi crocieristici, nonchè i *policy makers* e i destination marketers potrebbero collaborare in modo più efficace con gli imprenditori locali nello sviluppo di azioni atte a coinvolgere le compagnie crocieristiche nella promozione delle attrazioni locali, dell'identità e dell'autenticità della destinazione (es: con video, brochures, eventi, ecc.) o nel sensibilizzare i passeggeri sulla riduzione degli impatti negativi derivanti dalle loro visite nella destinazione.

Il presente studio, nonostante il suo contributo teorico e manageriale, non è certamente senza limiti. In primo luogo, i risultati dello stesso, nonostante esso sia stato realizzato su un campione rappresentativo e stratificato, non possono essere generalizzati al di fuori dello specifico contesto geografico in cui è stato condotto. Inoltre, non è stato preso in considerazione il ruolo che altri fattori intrinseci (es: il community attachment) o altre variabili psicografiche (es: l'orientamento al post materialismo e l'attenzione all'ambiente dei residenti) potrebbero avere nel discriminare il modo con cui i residenti percepiscono gli impatti del turismo da crociera. Infine, lo studio interessa il fenomeno delle percezioni e dell'atteggiamento dei residenti rispetto allo sviluppo del turismo che ha prevalente connotazione sociale, e che, come tale risulta fortemente influenzato da processi evolutivi e di progressiva variabilità nel tempo. Da questi limiti emergono interessanti traiettorie di ricerca. In primo luogo, sarebbe utile ripetere lo studio in altre destinazioni allo scopo di verificare se i risultati possono essere generalizzati o se essi cambino in base ai fattori estrinseci che caratterizzano la destinazione considerata nello studio. In secondo luogo, sarebbe interessante ripetere lo studio nella

stessa destinazione, allo scopo di verificare come nel tempo le percezioni e l'atteggiamento dei residenti cambiano come conseguenza delle azioni che i policy makers, destination marketers, autorità portuali e compagnie da crociera potrebbero decidere di mettere in atto per rendere lo sviluppo del turismo da crociera maggiormente sostenibile. Infine, sarebbe utile che futuri studi empirici si preoccupassero maggiormente di indagare il ruolo che altri fattori intrinseci e psicografici (community attachment, materialismo, ecc.) potrebbero giocare nell'influenzare le percezioni e l'atteggiamento dei residenti.

**Giacomo Del Chiappa**
**Giuseppe Melis**
**Marcello Atzeni**
Turismo crocieristico e percezioni della popolazione residente: i risultati di un'analisi cluster

## Bibliografia

AGUILÓ E., ROSELLÓ J. (2005), Host community perceptions. A cluster analysis", *Annals of Tourism Research*, vol. 32, n. 4, pp. 925-941.

BALLANTINE J.L., EAGLES P.F. (1994), "Defining Canadian ecotourists", *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, vol. 2, n. 2, pp. 210-214.

BELISLE F.J., HOY D.R. (1980), "The perceived impact of tourism by residents: A case study in Santa Maria, Columbia", *Annals of Tourism Research,* vol. 12, n. 1, pp. 83-101.

BESCULIDES A., LEE M., MCCORMICK P. (2002), "Residents' perceptions of the cultural benefits of tourism", *Annals of Tourism Research*, vol. 29, n. 2, pp. 303-319.

BRIDA J.G., ZAPATA S. (2010), "Cruise tourism: Economic, socio-cultural and environmental impacts", *International Journal of Leisure and Tourism Marketing,* vol. 1, n. 3, pp. 205-226.

BRIDA J.G., DEL CHIAPPA G., MELEDDU M., PULINA M. (2012a), "The perceptions of an island community towards cruise tourism: A factor analysis", *Tourism*, vol. 60, n. 1, pp. 29-42.

BRIDA J.G., DEL CHIAPPA G., MELEDDU M., PULINA M. (2012b), "A comparison of residents' perceptions in two cruise ports in the Mediterranean Sea", *International Journal of Tourism Research*, doi: 10.1002/jtr.1915.

BRIDA J.G., RIAÑO E., ZAPATA-AGUIRRE S. (2011), "Residents' attitudes and perceptions towards cruise tourism development: A case study of Cartage de Indias (Colombia)", *Tourism and Hospitality Research*, vol. 11, n. 3, pp. 187-202.

BRIDA J., OSTI L., BARQUET A. (2010), "Segmenting resident perceptions towards tourism - a cluster analysis with a multinomial logit model of a mountain community", *International Journal of Tourism Research*, vol. 12, n. 5, pp. 591-602.

BROUGHAM J., BUTLER R. (1981), "A segmentation analysis of resident attitudes to the social impact of tourism", *Annals of Tourism Research*, vol. 7, n. 4, pp. 569-590.

BUTLER R.W. (1980), "The concept of a tourism area cycle of evolution: Implications for management resources", *The Canadian Geographer,* vol. 24, n. 1, pp. 5-16.

CASARIN F. (2007), *Il marketing dei prodotti turistici. Specificità e varietà*, G. Giappichelli Editore, Torino.

CASTILLO-MANZANO J.I., LOPEZ-VALPUESTA L., ALANIS F.J. (2014), "Tourism managers' view of the economic impact of cruise traffic: The case of southern Spain", *Current Issues in Tourism*, doi: 10.1080/13683500.2014.907776

CHEN C.F., CHEN P.C. (2010), "Resident attitudes toward heritage tourism development", *Tourism Geographies*, vol. 12, n. 4, pp. 525-545.

CRUISE LINES INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION (2016), S*tate of the Industry Oulook.*

CRUISE LINES INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION (2017), *Cruise Industry Outlook 2017*, December 2016.

DAVIS D., ALLEN J., COSENZA A. (1988), "Segmenting local residents by their attitudes, interests and opinions towards tourism", *Journal of Travel Research*, vol. 27, n. 2, pp. 2-8.

DEL CHIAPPA G. (2012), "Community integration: A case study of Costa Smeralda, Italy", in Fayos-Sola E., Silva J., Jafari J., (Eds.) *Knowledge management in tourism: Policy and governance applications bridging tourism theory and practice*, Bingley, Emerald, (pp. 243-263).

DEL CHIAPPA G., ABBATE T. (2013), "Island cruise tourism development: A resident's perspective in the context of Italy", *Current Issues in Tourism*, doi: 10.1080/13683500.2013.854751.

DEL CHIAPPA G., LORENZO-ROMERO C., GALLARZA M. (2016), "Host community perceptions toward cruise tourism in a homeport: a cluster analysis", *Journal of Destination Marketing e Management*, online first http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jdmm.2016.08.011

DI CESARE F., TAMMA M. (2004), "La dinamica competitiva nella produzione crocieristica. Aspetti di metodo ed evidenze empiriche in uno studio sul Mediterraneo", *Economia e Diritto del Terziario*, n. 2 , pp. 415-343.

DIEDRICH A. (2010), "Cruise ship tourism in Belize: The implications of developing cruise ship tourism in an ecotourism destination", *Ocean and Coastal Management*, vol. 53, n. 5-6, pp. 234-244.

DOXEY G. (1976), "When enough's enough: The natives are restless in old Niagara", *Heritage Canada*, vol. 2, n. 2, pp. 26-27.

DWYER L., FORSYTH P.J. (1996), "Economic impacts of cruise tourism in Australia", *Journal of Tourism Studies,* vol. 7, n. 2, pp. 36.

DWYER L., FORSYTH P.J. (1998), "Economic significance of cruise tourism", *Annals of Tourism Research*, vol. 25, n. 2, pp. 393-415.

DYER P., GURSOY D., SHARMA B., CARTER J. (2007), "Structural modelling of resident perceptions of tourism and associated development on the Sunshine Coast, Australia", *Tourism Management,* vol. 28, n. 2, pp. 409-422.

EUROPEAN CRUISE COUNCIL (2012), *The cruise industry: Contribution of cruise tourism to the economies of Europe 2012.*,Retrieved from: http://www.europeancruisecouncil.com/content/economic%20report.pdf (accessed 20 October 2013).

EUROPEAN CRUISE COUNCIL 2012/2013 REPORT (2014), Retrieved from: http://www.ashcroftandassociates.com/downloads/ECC-Report-2012-2013.pdf.

FAULKNER B., TIDESWELL C. (1997), "A framework for monitoring community impacts of tourism", *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, vol. 5, n. 1, pp. 3-28.

FREDLINE E., FAULKNER B. (2000), "Host community reactions: A cluster analysis", *Annals of Tourism Research*, vol. 27, n. 3, pp. 763-784.

GATEWOOD J.B., CAMERON C.M. (2009), *Belonger perceptions of tourism and its impacts in the Turks and Calcos Islands* [Research project report]. Retrieved from: http://www.lehigh.edu/~jbg1/Perceptions-of-Tourism.pdf.

GURSOY D., CHI C.G., DYER P. (2010), "Local attitudes toward mass and alternative tourism: the Case of Sunshine Coast, Australia", *Journal of Travel Research*, vol. 49, n. 3, pp. 381-394.

GURSOY D., JUROWSKI C., UYSAL M. (2002), "Resident attitudes. A structural modeling approach", *Annals of Tourism Research,* vol. 29, n. 1, pp. 79-105.

GURSOY D., RUTHERFORD D. (2004), "Host attitudes toward tourism. An improved structural model", *Annals of Tourism Research*, vol. 31, n. 3, pp. 495-516.

HAIR J.F., BLACK W.C., BABIN B.J., ANDERSON R.E. (2014), *Multivariate data analysis (7th ed.)*, Harlow, Essex: Pearson Education Limited, Edinburgh Gate.

HAIR J., ANDERSON R., TATHAM R., BLACK W. (1999), *Análisis multivariante [Multivariate analysis]*, Prentice-Hall, Madrid.

HRITZ N., CECIL A. (2008), "Investigating the sustainability of cruise tourism: A case study of Key West", *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, vol. 16, n. 2, pp. 168-181.

INE (2014), *Instituto Nacional de Estadistica*, Retrieved from: http://www.ine.es/jaxi/tabla.do (accessed 20 November 2014).

JOHNSON J.D., SNEPENGER D.J., AKIS S. (1994), "Residents' perceptions of tourism development", *Annals of Tourism Research*, vol. 21, n. 3, pp. 629-642.

KLEIN R.A. (2009), *Paradise lost at sea: Rethinking cruise vacations*, Fernwood Publishing, Halifax, UK.

LINDBERG K., JOHNSON R.L. (1997), "Modeling resident attitudes toward tourism", *Annals of Tourism Research*, vol. 24, n. 2, pp. 402-424.

MADRIGAL R. (1995), "Residents' Perceptions and the Role of Government", *Annals of Tourism Research*, vol. 22, n. 1, pp. 86-102.

MARUŠIĆ A., HORAK S., TOMLJENOVIĆ R. (2008), "The socio-economic impacts of cruise tourism: A case study of Croatian destinations", *Tourism in Marine Environments*, vol. 5, n. 2-3, pp. 131-144.

MCLACHLAN G.J., BASFORD K.E. (1988), *Mixture models: Inference and applications to clustering,* Marcel Dekker, New York.

MURPHY P.E. (1983), "Perceptions and attitudes of decision making groups in tourism centers", *Journal of Travel Research,* vol. 21, n. 3, pp. 8-12.

NUNKOO R., GURSOY D., JUWAHEER T. (2010), "Island residents' identities and their support for tourism: An integration of two theories", *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, vol. 18, n. 5, pp. 675-693.

NYAUPANE G.P., MORAIS D.B., DOWLER L. (2006), "The role of community involvement and number/type of visitors on tourism impacts: A controlled comparison of Annapurna, Nepal and Northwest Yunnan, China", *Tourism Management,* vol. 27, n. 6, pp. 1373-1385.

PAPATHANASSIS A., BECKMAN I. (2011), "Assessing the poverty of cruise theory hypothesis", *Annals of Tourism Research,* vol. 38, n. 1, pp. 153-174.

PENCO L. (2013), *Il business crocieristico. Imprese, strategie, territorio,* Franco Angeli, Milano.

PERDUE R.R., LONG P.T., ALLEN L. (1990), "Resident support for tourism development", *Annals of Tourism Research*, vol. 17, n. 4, pp. 586-599.

PIZAM A. (1978), "Tourism's impacts: The social costs to the destination community as perceived by its residents", *Journal of Travel Research*, vol. 16, n. 4, pp. 8-12.

PULINA M., MELEDDU M., DEL CHIAPPA G. (2013), "Residents' choice probability and tourism development", *Tourism Management Perspectives,* vol. 5 , pp. 57-67.

RIVERA M., CROES R., LEE S.H. (2015), "Tourism Development and hapiness: a residents' perspective", *Journal of Destination Marketing and Management*, doi:10.1016/j.jdmm.2015.04.002.

ROTHMAN R. (1978), "Residents and transients: Community reaction to seasonal visitors", *Journal of Travel Research*, vol. 16, n. 3, pp. 8-13.

RUTIN J. (2010), "Coastal tourism: A comparative study between Croatia and Tunisia", *Tourism Geographies*, vol. 12, n. 2, pp. 264-277.

SINCLAIR-MARAGH GURSOY D., VIEREGGE M. (2014), "Residents' perceptions toward tourism development", *Journal of Destination Marketing and Management,* vol. 4, n. 1, pp. 36-45.

VAREIRO L., ROMPALDO P.C., CADIMA-RIBEIRO J.A. (2012), "Residents' perceptions of tourism impacts in Guimaräes (Portugal), A cluster analysis", *Current Issues in Tourism*, vol. 16, n. 6, pp. 535-551.

VARGAS-SÁNCHEZ A., PORRAS-BUENO N., PLAZA-MEJÍA M. (2011), "Explaining residents' attitudes to tourism: Is a universal model possible?", *Annals of Tourism Research*, vol. 38, n. 2, pp. 460-480.

VERMUNT J.K., MAGIDSON J. (2005), *Latent GOLD 4.0 user's guide, statistical innovation*, Belmont, Massachusetts: Inc.

VERNON J., ESSEX S., PINDER D., CURRY K. (2005), "Collaborative policymaking. Local sustainable projects", *Annals of Tourism Research,* vol. 32, n. 2, pp. 325-345.

WILD P., DEARING J. (2000), "Development of and prospects for cruising in Europe", *Maritime Policy and Management,* vol. 27, n. 4, pp. 315-333.

WILKINSON P.F. (1999), "Caribbean cruise tourism: Delusion? Illusion?", *Tourism Geographies,* vol. 1, n. 3, pp. 261-282.

WILLIAMS J., LAWSON R. (2001), "Community issues and residents' opinions of tourism", *Annals of Tourism Research,* vol. 28, n. 2, pp. 269-290.

## Academic or professional position and contacts

**Giacomo Del Chiappa**
Associate Professor of Management
University of Sassari - Italy
e-mail: gdelchiappa@uniss.it

**Giuseppe Melis**
Associate Professor of Management
University of Cagliari - Italy
e-mail: gemelis@unica.it.

**Marcello Atzeni**
Research Fellow
University of Cagliari - Italy
e-mail:marcelloatzeni@icloud.com.

# Customer-centric service innovation in health care: findings from a case study[1]

Maria Vincenza Ciasullo - Silvia Cosimato - Alex Douglas

## Abstract

*Purpose of the paper*: Embracing a service based approach, the present study is aimed at investigating the development of a patient-centred service innovation and its rising in the actors' value networks.

*Methodology*: A qualitative analysis based on an extreme case study has been performed. The investigation delved on a leading company offering specialized solutions for the treatment of chronic kidney diseases.

*Findings*: The study shed lights on those factors (e.g. resource openness, resource sharing, resource recombination and institutions generation) that stimulate patients' disposition to identify co-creation opportunities, which effects span from micro, to meso and macro level.

Service innovation spreads its outcomes both for the involved actors and for the well-being of the whole health care service ecosystem.

*Research limits:* This paper was limited by the analysis of a single health care provider, which did not allow the generalizability of findings. Further research is needed to better understand this intriguing topic, in order to grasp the relationship between actor engagement and service innovation.

*Practical implications:* The logic underling this study highlighted the importance that patient engagement has at different ecosystem levels and its influence on the resource integration at the roots of service innovation. The understanding of these practices will support health care managers in finding new ways to engage patients in the improvement of personal and collective health services.

*Originality of the paper:* This work represents one of the first attempts to theoretically and empirically conceptualize health innovation embracing a service ecosystem perspective.

*Key words: service innovation; healthcare; service ecosystem; value co-creation; patient engagement*

## 1. Introduction

Innovation in services has paid growing attention to health care (Karniouchina *et al.*, 2014), which is characterized by several challenges such as the ageing of the population, the growth of chronic diseases and

---

[1] The work is the result of all the authors' synergistic contribution. However, each author has dealt with some paragraphs more than others. More in detail: Alex Douglas has written paragraph 1, Maria Vincenza Ciasullo has written paragraph 2.1; section 3, 5 and 6; Silvia Cosimato has elaborated paragraphs 2.2, 2.3, and section 4.

changing lifestyles. A service-centred marketing approach is required to respond to these ever-changing social needs. Consequently, health providers should be more focused on finding novel ways to improve the value they offer to society. The literature (Corrigan, 2011) indicates that a personalized approach to medicine could lead to a better understanding of what patients really need. Therefore, the closer the interactions are, the more patients should act as experts to co-produce health-related services (Benzein *et al.*, 2008). To enable this, health organizations should embrace a patient-centred approach (McColl-Kennedy *et al.*, 2012; Kenett and Lavi, 2014) to make health care management open to patient involvement. However, this implies going beyond patient-provider interactions and to involve those multiple entities that populate the complex health care system (Sturmberg *et al.*, 2012). This approach should offer a global service, in which each entity participates to medical services creation and fruition, embracing a service-based view (Barile *et al.*, 2017). Thus, increasing interactions with patients opens up the possibility that health care organizations and other stakeholders' groups can create new opportunities for mutual value creation and foster service innovation integrating and applying their resources in new or different ways (Vargo and Lusch, 2011).

Service Dominant (SD) Logic goes beyond the traditional linear and technological approach to innovation, considering it different from a new offering and aimed at improving actor value co-creation (Michel *et al.*, 2008; Ordanini and Parasuraman, 2011). This perspective approaches innovation as the outcome of behaviours and interactions occurring between individuals and organizations, which cooperate to achieve mutual benefits. Therefore, service innovation should be investigated from a systemic and dynamic perspective, which grasps the complexity of health care service. In this sense, the service ecosystem approach (Vargo *et al.*, 2016) blurred the systems' boundaries, boosting the engagement of several actors in fulfilling customers' needs. A service ecosystem includes different service systems and is characterized by the ability to self-adjust and innovate through shared institutional logics (Vargo *et al.*, 2015).

Actor engagement, resource integration and value co-creation are the main features of service innovation, inextricably linked because resource integration relies on the ongoing combination of resources by actors (resource integrators) in co-creating value. Resource integration, which is at the core of value co-creation, calls for actors' engagement in service exchanges, thus when actors are not engaged resource integration does not occur and value cannot be co-created (Storbacka *et al.*, 2016).

Despite the growing interest in co-creation, the literature calls for better investigations into "What tools and processes enable effective co-creation" (Barczak, 2012; p. 356), encouraging the study of those practices (e.g. activities and interactions) that enhance the collaboration among users to foster service delivery processes. The health care service literature mainly focused on those activities and interactions of resource integration occurring in the patient-physicians dyad (McColl-Kennedy *et al.*, 2012). However, service innovation analysed as an outcome that contributes to the well-being of a health care service ecosystem is still in its infancy (Joiner and Lusch, 2016; Frow *et al.*, 2016); therefore, literature and

empirical evidence are scant. This study aims to fill this gap by investigating the development of a patient-centred service innovation and its rising in the actors' value networks. Three important contributions arouse from the overall study. First, it offers a more granular perspective on co-creation, trying to operationalize it, analysing the factors that stimulate patients' disposition towards the activation of their resources to identify co-creation opportunities. Second, it sheds lights on those mechanisms that foster the co-innovation between different actors. Finally, it highlights the way service innovation contributes to the well-being of actors and the service ecosystem.

**Maria Vincenza Ciasullo**
**Silvia Cosimato**
**Alex Douglas**
Customer-centric service innovation in health care: findings from a case study

The remainder of the paper is organized as follows. The next section reviews the literature on service innovation and the case for patient engagement. Then, the theoretical model for service innovation used to analyse the selected case study is described. Next, research method and case study findings are presented and discussed. Finally, theoretical and practical implications are highlighted.

## 2. Theoretical background

### 2.1 Framing service innovation

The literature traditionally approached service innovation as a firm-centric process (Carlborg *et al.*, 2014) based on dyadic interactions which enable the rise of sequential value from innovation-creating firms to innovation-adopting customers (Akaka *et al.*, 2017). In this approach, firms' activities and results lead innovation towards the development of new products or processes. Most research on innovation set the success of new services at firm level, often focusing on the development of a new service or defining service innovation according to a process-based perspective (Gallouj and Windrum, 2009). Michel *et al.* (2008) approached service innovation as a change of customer role and of value-creation process. A synthesis approach to service innovation considered innovation and value creation not necessarily focused on services or products, technological or non-technological elements, but on how firms deal with customers' participation in a joint creation of value (Gallouj and Windrum, 2009). At the same time, the literature stretched the boundaries of service innovation beyond firms' activities, embracing an open approach based on the ongoing interactions between multiple actors, including customers and end-users (von Hippel 2007). Open innovation (Chesbrough, 2011) covers a range of externally cooperative models, such as value chain innovation (Sundbo and Toivonenn, 2011); user-driven innovation models (Von Hippel, 2007) and service innovation networks (Storbacka *et al.*, 2012). In service innovation networks, the traditional supplier-customer division becomes redundant (Vargo and Lush, 2011) because each actor seeks and provides resources at the same time; thus, all actors are resource integrators and as such, potential innovators. In a similar vein, a web of actors integrates resources in larger constellations through dynamically shaped activities (Gummesson and Mele, 2010). Therefore, innovations

represent the outcome of behaviours and interactions occurring between individuals and organizations (Edvardsson *et al.*, 2011) collaboratively and synergistically able to encourage the creation of new knowledge.

Scholars have paid great attention to ITs' influence in fostering the interaction between users and providers that lead to a better understanding of people's needs (Akaka *et al.*, 2016), highlighting how service innovation does not occur within firms, but in the wider ecosystem to which they belong.

To summarize, the literature underlined that innovation is "the outcome of innovation networks in which different agents cooperate to coproduce a service-based innovation result" whose key insight is "the critical role of a customers' co-creation perspective" (Rubalcaba *et al.*, 2012, p. 699). Scholars (Ordanini and Parasuraman, 2011) considered SD Logic able to grasp the emergence of service innovation combining services and goods in a comprehensive service view (Vargo and Lusch, 2008) consistent with the above-mentioned synthesis approach. In this sense, a service is the application of specialized competences (knowledge, skills, time and expertise) through deeds, processes and performances aimed at benefiting another entity or the entity itself. A relational process of offer-making (e.g. value propositions) sheds lights on customers and the resources they mutually share (Vargo and Lusch, 2008). Hence, the customer is no longer a passive actor, but an active part of the exchange process in which value co-creation occurs through resource integration episodes (Lusch and Vargo, 2006). Firms (or any other actors) cannot deliver value, but they can provide only the value propositions to several socio-economic actors who shape the expectations of value-in-use in a specific social context (Edvarsonn *et al.*, 2011). Therefore, service innovation represents the re-bundling of different resources beneficial to all actors in a given context who are always involved in a net in which the beneficiary is included (Lusch and Nambisan, 2015). The need for a systemic approach to service innovation empatizes the role of direct and indirect service exchanges (Chandler and Vargo, 2011) and institutions' ability to forge resource integration and value co-creation processes (Vargo and Akaka, 2012; Vargo *et al.*, 2016). Vargo *et al.* (2015) defined service ecosystems as dynamic value co-creation configurations of resources (e.g. service systems), including people, organizations, shared information and technology, internally and externally connected to other service systems through value propositions aimed at creating mutual value (Frow *et al.*, 2014). Therefore, service ecosystems represent communities of interacting actors who share and exchange their resources to adapt to the environment and co-evolve, making service ecosystems able to achieve a long-lasting well-being, constantly changing and adapting their structure (Vargo *et al.*, 2008; Baccarani and Cassia, 2017). So the service ecosystem approach lead to grasp its ability to self-adjust, face changes and survive (Lusch *et al.*, 2016) in environments where actors' agencies and institutions interact to create value for themselves and others (Wieland *et al.*, 2012; Taillard *et al.*, 2016). In service ecosystems, embedded social and economic actors are loosely coupled and included in sub-systems nested at three levels: micro, meso and macro. How different actors come together and are engaged in

service exchange contributes to service innovation and, consequently, to their viability and the ecosystem well-being.

**Maria Vincenza Ciasullo**
**Silvia Cosimato**
**Alex Douglas**
Customer-centric service innovation in health care: findings from a case study

## 2.2 *Patient engagement and resource integration for health service innovation*

The shift from the traditional bio-medical model towards a patient-centred approach to care (Bergeson and Dean, 2006) led scholars to focus on patient engagement, putting patients' needs at the core of health services' design and delivery.

Embracing a service ecosystem view, the engagement of patients - which assumes different traits at each ecosystem level - acts as a motivational construct fundamental to value co-creation and to resource integration essential for service innovation (Storbacka *et al.*, 2016). The micro level is characterized by interactions between physicians and patients, who act as resource integrators combining operant (e.g. knowledge, skills) and operand resources (e.g. equipment, medicine, facilities, financial resources, etc.). These resources come from those health providers, public sources and social networks in which patients are embedded, from patients' personal knowledge, experience, and skills (Vargo and Lusch, 2011) or even from private sources, such as families, informal caregivers and friends. Patients are individually engaged in resources integration through specific co-created activities such as cooperating, sharing information, combining complementary therapies and co-learning (McColl-Kennedy *et al.*, 2012). Thus, individual and organizational health literacy, the willingness and desire to participate as well as well-trained professionals foster patients' engagement, improving their experiences, emotional and physical well-being (Coulter, 2012; Palumbo *et al.*, 2016). To summarize, at the micro level the engagement of patients is rooted in their contribution to enhance or renewing service encounters to improve service outcomes (e.g. experiences of care, enhanced service quality, satisfaction with care, motivation to adhere, trust in the clinicians and system, self-efficacy).

At the meso level, service innovation benefits come from those activities of resources integration which involve organizations (e.g. hospitals, clinics, hospital emergency units, care home, etc.) participating in wider networks and held together by their willingness to align their goals. These interactions also involve specific groups of the target population (e.g. patients' associations, families' associations, etc.), characterized by similar needs and demands. At this level, the engagement depends on their contribution in evaluating the design of new or renewed services in order to make them compliant with peoples' needs and able to offer better health outcomes (Cantù and Tzannis, 2016). However, institutions (e.g. shared rules, norms, values and beliefs, shared language) and institutional arrangements (e.g. sets of interdependent institutions) occurring at the meso level are fundamental to exploit the outcome achieved at micro level and to institutionalize service innovations at macro level (Storbacka *et al.*, 2016). Institutions as "socially embedded systems of rules" (Hodgson, 2006, p. 8) offer a structure for resource integration and value co-creation in service ecosystems (Vargo and Akaka, 2012). Therefore, institutions and institutional arrangements lead actors to a shared view of the environment

in which they interact. The above-mentioned social mechanisms foster resource integration that at the meso level can change the extant resources configuration to co-produce solutions able to make generic and specific health care services more efficient and effective.

At the macro level, complex networks of relationships arise, aimed at shaping a viable co-creating environment in which state health authorities and other organizations contribute to spread in the market and in society's new services. Here too, patients acting as engaged citizens offer insights that public institutions can use to frame new practices. At this level, patient engagement can occur through the involvement of societal institutions or organization, such as the ethical committee, which is called upon to pronounce about the ethical or non-ethical orientation of an innovation. Patients' engagement occurring at all ecosystem levels led to re-conceptualize the patient-provider relationship, making the patient a real co-creating actor.

Finally, literature suggests that patient engagement is boosted by ICTs, which facilitate actors' interactions, fostering open information sharing able to reduce the information asymmetry that traditionally affects patient-provider interactions (Barile *et al.*, 2014).

*2.3 A framework for service innovation*

Dealing with service innovation, Lusch and Nambisan (2015) developed a theoretical framework based on *service platform, value co-creation processes and service ecosystem.*

Organizations should design their offerings as service platforms that foster daily service exchange and the emergence of new scalable solutions. In this way, service platforms promote the capture of value-in-use experienced by customers. Thus, rebuilding value propositions and making them compliant with ever-changing customer's needs implies knowing customers' value-in-use.

A service platform is layered, modular and based on multiple actors' interactions intended to share tangible and intangible resources. It is built upon those service encounters that occur at the micro level. In this sense, service platform, firstly, enhances resource liquefaction as the opportunity to extract knowledge from its primary source (e.g. customer value experienced) and to recombine it with other resources to create innovation opportunities. Secondly, they enhance resource density or "the degree to which mobilization of resources for a 'time/space/actor' unit can take place" (Normann, 2001, p. 27). The highest resource density occurs when at a given place and time "an actor provides and integrates all the resources necessary to co-create the best value in that context" (Lusch *et al.*, 2010, p. 23). Customers can assume different roles in the development of a service platform. They can perform as "correspondent", providing information that often contributes to the development of new ideas and solutions or to improve the existing service (Edvardsson *et al.*, 2011), or as "ideator", adding to firm knowledge about their contextual needs and integrating it with knowledge about how they use existing market offerings to envision new services (Lusch and Nambisan, 2015).

Value co-creation processes describe the complex interconnected activities that lead to a supportive resource integration in a wide actors' network settled at the meso level of a service ecosystem. The activities at the core of value co-creation focus on actors' different roles and responsibilities which sustain the understanding of a service context. Consequently, they should be built upon a cross-sectorial collaboration based on shared rules, norms of reciprocity, trust, empathy and mutual beneficial interactions occurring in the actors' value network. Customers can play different roles such as "correspondent, tester, and dreamer" (Edvardsson *et al.*, 2011) or even "reflective practitioner" (Lusch and Nambisan, 2015).

A service ecosystem puts emphasis on common principles intended as shared institutional logics which facilitate resource integration, the re-bundling between all the involved actors and the enhancement of ecosystem well-being. According to Chandler and Vargo (2011) "the notion of service ecosystem is a fundamental aspect of value co-creation because it acknowledges how large-scale social structures and institutions evolve relative to the individual service efforts of actors, dyads, triads, and complex networks" (p.10). Moreover, to support the maintenance of those shared institutional logics that act as coordination mechanisms in actors' behaviours (Barile *et al.*, 2016) the authors advocated the co-construction of a common mind-set. This approach takes the systemic view of innovation, grasping the influence of the micro, meso and macro levels of interaction and institutions in value creation (Vargo and Lusch, 2016). This emphasizes that the flexibility and the adaptability, typical of service ecosystems, allow the engagement of different configurations of actors, who proactively create innovation opportunities.

## 3. Research objectives and methodology

This study aims at investigating the development of a patient-centred service innovation and its rising in the actors' value networks. Therefore, the main questions this study points to answer are:

RQ1: How can patients engage in improving health care services?
RQ2: How can health care organizations integrate actors' specific resources with their own resources to design new medical solutions?
RQ3: How can service innovations enhance ecosystems' well-being?

To this end, a case study was implemented (Yin, 2003). This qualitative methodology was chosen because of its suitability for practice-oriented research and for answering the "how" research questions (Baxter and Jack, 2008); thus, it fosters a better understanding of complex social phenomena such as the multi-actor contribution to service innovation in healthcare. To deal with the complex reality of management studies, qualitative methodologies are superior to quantitative (Gummesson, 2006). Using a non-probabilistic technique (Newman, 2000) and choosing a purposing case, Fresenius Medical Care was selected, because of its long-standing patient-centric innovative approach to dialysis services.

**Maria Vincenza Ciasullo**
**Silvia Cosimato**
**Alex Douglas**
Customer-centric service innovation in health care: findings from a case study

### 3.1 The Case Company

Fresenius Medical Care started in Germany in 1912 as a pharmaceutical manufacturer. In the 1960s, as haemodialysis was beginning to be adopted, it developed the infusion solutions for dialysis treatment. Fresenius became the world's largest producer of dialysis equipment due to ongoing R&D activities'. The success of the company came from its ability to develop value-added solutions, offering integrated services aimed at improving the overall quality of care. Although Fresenius is still a main provider of dialysis machines, about 75% of its revenues come from the services it provides. Currently, the company is active in more than 120 countries, served through a global network consisting of about 110,000 employees (medical and non-medical staff) and an actors' network characterized by interdisciplinary skills including biotechnology, ICTs and engineering. The case company, building on its strategy of a patient-centred approach to care, developed a broad collaboration network of international public/private organizations for the treatment of renal diseases.

### 3.2 Data Collection

Several data collection methods were combined according to Eisenhardt's (1989) suggestions. In particular, our analysis performed both a desktop study and a field analysis. Drawing on Dul and Hak's (2008) insights, multiple techniques were used to collect empirical data. A desktop analysis of documentation was performed, including corporate reports, handbooks, brochures and scientific papers provided by the case company or accessed via its corporate web site and social networks.

The sources of the empirical findings were 20 semi-structured interviews conducted to obtain a deeper understanding of the observed phenomenon. Interviewees included managers from Fresenius and from partner companies, medical and non-medical staff, patients and peers (family members, friends, colleagues). The interviews were administered through a set of questions and conducted on the interviewees' premises. Initially, the company executives (general manager, human resources manager, marketing manager, service manager, R&D manager) were interviewed to get a general perspective on the company's strategic orientation towards innovation. Then, actors embedded in Fresenius value network were interviewed (service manager, innovation manager, R&D manager). To obtain information about the way innovation was built, implemented and experienced, some medical and non-medical staff as well as patient representatives were approached. Open questions were used to encourage the interviewees to participate in an open dialogue with the interviewers. The interviews lasted, on average, 45 minutes, the data was captured on tape and then transcribed. Before starting data collection, a research protocol was prepared to organize data into digital worksheets and allow the authors individually and independently to analyse them.

*3.3 Data Analysis*

**Maria Vincenza Ciasullo**
**Silvia Cosimato**
**Alex Douglas**
Customer-centric service
innovation in health care:
findings from a case study

The case study was analysed adapting the Lusch and Nambisan (2015) conceptual framework of service innovation (see Tab.1).

An iterative coding process and theoretical categories were implemented. The categories, used to classify data, were derived from Lusch and Nambisan's (2015) key themes to improve their comparability. However, initial codes resulting from the above-mentioned conceptual framework were progressively defined according to the data obtained during the interviews. To ensure research reliability, data were triangulated; thus, the coding process was iterative, being based on the classification, testing and redefining of gathered data through a critical and mutual debate between the authors. All collected data and information were critically examined and a research report was written. Finally, specific categories were derived from the overall coding process as showed in the next section.

*Tab. 1: The key themes of patient-centered service innovation*

| Key Themes | Aims and Actions | Ecosystem level |
|---|---|---|
| *Service platforms*<br>- Tangible and intangible resources<br>- Rules/protocols for enhancing resource exchange in the service encounter<br>- Emerging value proposition | *Strategic aim to enable customer engagement* | Micro level |
| *Service processes*<br>- Mechanisms for enhancing resource integration in the service value network<br>- Actors' roles and responsibilities<br>- Knowledge transparency<br>- Adapting processes/activities | *Strategic aim to enable actor value network engagement* | Meso level |
| *Service ecosystem*<br>- Structural flexibility and integrity<br>- Institutional logic (e.g. rules, norms, laws, regulations, meanings, etc.)<br>- Systemic service culture and management | *Strategic aim to enhance a common mindset based on mutual value creation processes* | Macro level |

Source: adapted from Lusch and Nambisan, 2015.

## 4. Findings

*4.1 The rise of patient-centred service innovation*

*The service platform*

The case company developed a strategic approach to the ongoing renewal of its offering to improve the well-being of kidney patients. To do that Fresenius based its approach to innovation on a real and ongoing dialogue and cooperation among its medical staff, patients and peers. A network of patients was engaged not only in a physical but also in an online environment thanks to a digital platform. In particular, it fostered

resources exchanges among medical and non-medical staff, patients and their families, enabling them to share traditional anamnestic information (e.g. the history of vascular access, clinical tests and analyses, the hospitalization history, the drugs therapies, etc.) and those related to social and psychological responses to treatments. The platform is layered on three main channels: 1) the "social channel", enabled by digital tools that allows physicians, patients and peers to communicate and share information about medical and non-medical experiences; 2) the "informative channel", enabled by and integrated information system offering data relevant to the everyday life of patients and peers; 3) the "operative channel", characterized by digital records able to report and manage each step of care path and some ancillary functions (e.g. scheduled time, appointments management, etc.) to customize dialysis treatments.

The discussions about everyday exchange among medical and non-medical staff, patients and peers revealed that emotions, trust and assurance influenced patients and their caregivers' experiences. A young girl reported:

*"I know I'm ill, but since my first time at the clinic I feel somewhat better, less lonely and sad. I think it is because of my doctors. They're great guys. I can always talk to them, also staying at home. I can ring them and ask for some advice, but I can also chat with them. I really feel that they are there for me".*

Another patient declared:

*"Since I started the dialysis my life turned bad. I feel constrained in too many of my daily activities. I have to be careful about the diet, the pressure, to not push too hard. But I just wish to go out for a dinner with my wife or do sport. Could someone give me some advices? Which sport should I do?"*

Physical and psychological experiences led some patients to share, via online chat and forum, feelings like pain, uncertainty, fear, hope and even happiness felt during the treatments. One patient reported:

*"I wrote a post on the forum telling how I felt during my dialyses. I have to say that it was very hard for me to lie down on the bed. I felt powerless, bored and lonely. It was horrible. I think that the comfort of the clinic environment should be improved, allowing us to sit on a couch, use our mobiles or tablets, read a book or talk to our caregivers. What about it?"*

The wife of another patient put it this way:

*"We found that dialysis infusions and drugs smelt very bad. This terrible smell followed my husband and me in the clinic and even at home. I thought I smelled it everywhere. I tried to support my husband, but he felt sick and exhausted. He told me he can't resist, but there was nothing that I could do for him. It was a horrible day. I felt helpless and useless".*

On the other hand, a nurse said:

*"It was very hard to support a suffering adolescent. He said 'I hate this hospital; because I can't do my things, chat with my friend'. He felt like he was stuck in bed. What struck me was that the boy considered the dialysis room*

*an 'alien spacecraft'. I think we should strive to find solution to relieve both physical and psychological symptoms".*

*Service Processes*

Experiences occurred at the micro level led the case company to critically think about them and evaluate the need for new medical solutions. Drawing on the experiences of physicians, patients and peers, Fresenius general management decided to revise their haemodiafiltration therapy. To do this the active participation of some business organizations belonging to different industries (e.g. biotechnology, medical engineering, ICTs) and some other non-business organizations (e.g. nephrologists' association and kidney patients and families' associations) was necessary.

The coordination and collaboration with value network actors were fostered by regular open dialogues, meetings and by assembling coordination teams. Moreover, the digital platform represented the environment in which all the actors exchanged and shared information enhancing resource integration. In this way, the prototype of the new haemodiafiltration service was co-designed. The Fresenius R&D manager reported:

*"The integration of patients' needs in our research activities led us to rethink the whole haemodiafiltration service. The desire to give our patients a normal life, led us to seek a solution able to make their kidneys as close as possible to natural functioning ones. Therefore, we rethought the haemodiafiltration service in order to enable it to remove a higher rate of fluids, lowering the cardiovascular risks. This idea arising from patients' requirements called for the contribution of different competences that we were, fortunately, capable of sharing with our partners. The result of our long-lasting collaborative efforts was the haemodiafiltration online".*

Two main components characterized the innovation; the first related to the technical and medical dimension and the second to the psychological and social dimension. The first one was developed due to knowledge sharing among biotech, medical engineering and ICTs companies, who co-designed the new service through ongoing experiments. The innovation manager of a medical engineering company stated:

*"We daily worked together with several practitioners to rethink the haemodiafiltration and developed the haemodiafiltration online. The innovation arose from our knowledge sharing, competences and skills that performed better in terms not only of uremic molecules removal, but also of machine design, which completely removed the risk of accidental torsions or knots in hematic lines. In this way, we improved the overall safety of dialysis treatment".*

Supporting the previous statement, the R&D manager of the biotech company said:

*"We designed and developed more effective middle molecules removal, reproducing high-flux membranes. We supported the technological advancement of dialysis machines, enhancing the structure of the membranes used for blood filtration, making their layers and the support region wider*

*as well as making them much more bio-friendly. We developed a next-gen membrane, the Helixone, whose innovation lies in its ability to retain the good molecules such as the albumin. Finally, we worked on the smell of the dialysis fluids; thus, we made them better, correcting their typically acrid smell".*

The second dimension of the haemodiafiltration online was co-designed due to the contribution of the network of kidney clinics, public hospitals, nephrologists' association and kidney patients and families' associations. The ICT company supported them in co-designing new ancillary activities aimed at offering physical and psychological support during the treatment. ICT's service manager reported:

*"Reading the patients' and careers' posts on the forum and sharing my impression with other researchers, we understood that patients' needs and anxieties are often related to their emotional state and to the way they 'feel' the treatment. In fact, they complained of feeling that the clinic was a place of suffering and that they were passive targets of unknown treatments and tools. To reduce the stress level that negatively affects patients' response to treatments, we designed a system for their ongoing monitoring based on sensors connected to the haemodiafiltration machine and to the digital platform. These sensors measure and record patients' stress levels during the treatment, in order to reduce it".*

Software engineers updated the management software of the haemodiafiltration machines. This new software release connected patients to the digital platform through touch screen monitors and tablets, enabling real-time medical and non-medical data recording. Some nephrologists belonging to their professional association tested the software; one of them stated:

*"When I used the tablet and the touch screen monitor I understood that all my wishes had come true. I could monitor fluids infusion and filtration parameters as well as those related to the patient's physic and psychological response to the treatment. I felt very relieved, because these devices let me choose to manually or automatically start the machine, reducing the possible complications, included the most dangerous cardiovascular ones".*

All the activities that led to the development of haemodiafiltration online actively involved both physicians and patients in designing the innovation. Indeed, they agreed to test each component of the service concept step by step, offering suggestions for the development of new ideas. A member of the kidney patients' association pointed out:

*"I found the couch for my treatment uncomfortable. I think doctors should use more ergonomic couches or armchairs and, if possible, with a specific support for the arm with the vascular access in order to make the treatment less hard and invasive".*

In a similar manner, a female patient stated:

*"I found the couch not so bad, but what I need is a support for my mobile, laptop and iPad. Yes, I always have them all with me. Just another*

*little thing, please, I'd like to listen to some music during my three hours of treatment".*

The psychological and social component of the haemodiafiltration online was enhanced reassembled the medical team. In fact, some psychologists were added to assist emotionally fragile patients. Fresenius general manager stated:

*"Patients' experience is deeply influenced by their psychological state, so I understood that the solution was offering our weakest patients constant and emphatic support, thanks to the action of a psychologist, who will assist them during the treatment".*

Finally, a systemic mind-set inspired the case company to tighten partnerships with other service providers to offer a more effective daily well-being to patients. Some collaborative agreements were defined with companies active in tourism and hospitality sector. These actors (hotels, resorts, B&B, restaurants, etc.) shared Fresenius' mind-set and dedicated some of their internal areas to haemodiafiltration online machines.

*Service Ecosystem*

The conjoint efforts that occurred at the micro and the meso level influenced the wider societal level. Institutional actors such as the Ministry of National Health and the State Medical Board approved Fresenius' innovation, finding it compliant with the current sector-specific standards and regulations. The Regional director of the State Medical Board stated:

*"Analysing the new dialysis service, we found it very interesting that patients were actively involved in the whole process of innovation. We have also positively evaluated the rethinking of the medical staff, which now involves a psychologist for supporting patients better. Thus, our positive judgement is based on the previous considerations and the new service complying with current regulations".*

At the macro level, actors' engagement, their alignment towards shared goals and the deep collaboration that occurred at the micro and meso levels led to develop a new care protocol, then implemented by several other public and private health providers. For example, in Italy, the Bolognini hospital currently runs the dialysis service according to this protocol. In summary, the service innovation fostered the market success of the case company and its partners who developed new competences and skills in their own businesses and in the treatment of kidney diseases.

## 5. Discussions

The case study findings offered some additional insights on how resources are recombined at the various eco-system levels, shaping the social context that enables service innovation (See tab.2). At the micro level, findings highlighted a growing self-disclosure among patients' networks and their disposition to share sensitive health information. This

was possible due to non-planned processes enabled by the digital platform, which activated patients' silent resources on a physical, psychological, emotional and relational level. Thus, using its dynamic functions, patients and peers could share information about medical and personal experiences, which fostered cooperation between them and health professionals negating space, time and/or social status constrains.

*Tab. 2: The emergence of patient-centered service innovation*

| Key Themes | Aims and Actions | Ecosystem level |
|---|---|---|
| *Service platforms*<br><br>- Co-experience in service encounter<br>- Rules/protocols for enhancing resource exchanges in service encounters<br>- Emerging value propositions | *Re-conceptualize the patient role to explore value proposition considering patient as a co-ideator*<br><br>- Activation of silent resources<br>- Non planned process | Micro level |
| *Service processes*<br><br>- Mechanisms for enhancing resource integration in the service value network<br>- Actors' roles and responsibilities<br>- Knowledge transparency<br>- Adapting processes/activities | *Re-defining the critical interfaces supporting actors' interaction to develop value propositions considering patient as a co-innovator*<br><br>- Integrate information system that acts as interface to share knowledge in the network<br>- Patient centricity<br>- Ongoing experiment to co-innovate in a reflective, experiential and systemic way | Meso level |
| *Service ecosystem*<br><br>- Structural flexibility and integrity<br>- Institutional logic (e.g. rules, norms, laws, regulations, meanings, etc.)<br>- Systemic service culture and management | *Institutionalizing in the market and society the co-developed value propositions*<br><br>- Open regional group<br>- Sector-specific laws, regulations and standards perceived as guide<br>- Common and systemic service culture spread across the whole value network through cooperation and co-development experiments | Macro level |

Source: Our elaboration

Information sharing fostered by the digital platform also supported medical professionals, who could learn about patients and peers' feelings (e.g. sadness, loneliness, powerlessness, etc.) perceptions (e.g. side effects from a medication), emotions and attitudes toward medical services (Ugolini *et al.*, 2014). Therefore, at the micro level the co-experience (Prahalad and Ramaswamy, 2004) in the service encounter was shared in patients and peers' networks and, contextually, learned by health professionals (Nambisan and Nambisan, 2009), paving the way for creating innovation in service. This led to change patients' roles, as they become co-ideators of new services, sharing their experiences to create new knowledge. Thus, knowledge-for-knowledge exchanges boosted new or more effective responses to the demands of actors involved in the service

encounter (Osei-Frimpong and Owusu-Frimpong, 2015). However, service innovation arises in complex value networks, which at the meso level are characterized by the interaction between service systems characterized by different skills and core competences that in health care are fundamental to generate innovations (Jaakkola and Jakanen, 2013). Findings showed that the cooperation between different actors - e.g. biotechnology, medical engineering, ICT companies, nephrologists' associations and kidney patients and families associations - supported the case company in co-designing the haemodiafiltration online.

**Maria Vincenza Ciasullo**
**Silvia Cosimato**
**Alex Douglas**
Customer-centric  service
innovation in health care:
findings from a case study

The interactions between these actors were supported by an easy access to resources that made them capable at synergistically integrating biomedical, technological and psychological skills. The easy access to resources was a fundamental driver of their disposition to be engaged. Actor engagement was also fostered by their common mind-set. In a real and virtual environment, the exchange and combination of actors' knowledge, experience and expertise fostered the bundling of new and superior resources. Resource integration was promoted by regular open dialogues, meetings and by the implementation of coordination teams. Therefore, the digital platform allowed resource liquefaction, enabling the intertwining of virtual and physical layers of communication in order to support the shaping of new social connections that opened up to innovation opportunities. In fact, the functionalities of the digital platform led actors to co-design the prototype of the new haemodiafiltration service, making the dialysis patient-oriented. With the shared purpose of improving patient well-being in terms of physical and psychological state, the actors' network co-developed the new dialysis treatment. In summary, learning from the physical and social context in which patients lived, they developed an innovation complying with personal and collective interests (Fisher and Smith, 2011). The new treatment was focused not only on patients, but also on the physical and social context they belonged in order to improve the quality of life of the whole community.

The interfaces rethinking supported actors' interactions enabling the conjoint development of the new value proposition. These interfaces sustained also the co-design of the new service, enabling patients to act as co-innovators (Mele *et al.*, 2014). Indeed, patients and physicians, acted as "testers", using their experience to evaluate the obtained results, simulating several situations and the related contexts of use (Edvardsson *et al.*, 2011). In this way, ongoing experiments enabled knowledge sharing between patients, physicians and all actors involved in the value network, co-innovating in a systemic manner.

Finally, at the macro level, the results of activities and interactions occurring at the previous levels have been institutionalized in the new care protocol for the treatment of kidney diseases. In fact, this innovation became a current medical practice and is now adopted by other public and private health providers. State organizations and authorities performed as innovation intermediaries (Lusch and Nambisan, 2015), acting as "carriers" (Lappalainen *et al.*, 2012) and supporting the spread of the new haemodiafiltration service into the health service ecosystem.

### 6. Conclusions and further remarks

This study supported a deeper understanding of the ongoing transformation of patient-centric service innovation in actors' networks according to an institutional logic. Together with service research in the health care context and Lusch and Nambisan (2015) conceptual framework on service innovation, empirical research led to discuss and contextualize it in dialysis service. This has advanced the understanding of the systemic and non-deterministic nature of innovation, which lies upon actors' disposition towards resource integration (Pinho *et al.*, 2014) and the way actors' activities are coordinated and adapted to each other. In this direction, the digital platform has mediated social space, supporting the rising of connection opportunities between all the involved actors. More in depth, the platform fosters an open communication between the actors, making them capable at better generating value-in-use, facilitating resource openness, resource sharing, resource recombination and, finally, institutions generation between and within the intertwined ecosystem levels.

Patients' disposition to co-create rises from a path of community identification, which led members to felt gradually themselves as an integral part of it, gaining social legitimacy, emotional support, help and friendliness.

All these factors are nourished by a feeling of safety reinforced by those social relationships that make community members active participants willing to share their experiences and discuss about their health status. The sharing of these experiences led patients' network to a self-disclosure towards the health service, which led them to assume a more conscious behaviour and to self-manage their illness, care and daily life. All these factors nourished members' willingness, making them even more knowledgeable, skilled and self-efficient. In other words, this process was at the core not only of the emergence of social benefits, but also of a valuable knowhow that make individuals open to share their knowledge and expertise. From the health professionals' side, the platform made them able to join patients, families and peers in an ongoing learning process, supported by a deeper individualized knowledge of patient behaviours and a high medical and non-medical staff commitment with the service. This implied their attitude to be informative and empathic with patients, creating a tie that goes beyond the mere professional relationship, enabled their agency.

Resources recombination, pointing to create new and higher level ones, required the involvement of actors' network in closer collaborations fostered by the easy access to resources that the digital platform enhance. An integrated information system acted as a specific interface to share and create new knowledge in the actors' network through ongoing experiments aiming to co-innovate in a reflective, experiential and systemic way (Witell *et al.*, 2015). The patients' network was actively engaged through specific interfaces that facilitated the sharing of their experiences and their participation in the co-design, co-development and co-delivery of the new service. The engagement of the patients' network led them to be partners

of multi-disciplinary teams, paving the way for a shared decision-making. Therefore, they were considered as real co-creating actors, performing as experts that together with the service providers offered ideas and insights to rethink and renewing health service. According to an institutional logic and embracing a service ecosystem orientation, service innovation relies on a systemic service culture, intended as a fundamental informal mechanism, which makes that social change launched by the innovation meaningful. The co-developed value proposition was institutionalized in the market and in society becoming an effective innovation.

The main findings let to consider service innovation as rising from the interplay between micro, meso and macro ecosystem level, which mutually influence each other. This influence is evident from micro to meso and macro as well as downwards from macro to meso and micro. Thus, the study, thanks to an empirical explication, contributes to a better understanding of the antecedents for service innovation in healthcare, offering a more granular vision of value co-creation practices (activities and interactions). Therefore, service innovation arises from service networks including not only the dyad health provider-patient, but also other service systems both private (e.g. families, peers, biotechnology, medical engineering companies, etc.) and public (e.g. nephrologists' association, Ministry of National Health, etc.). In this way, the interactions occurring among and within the intertwined levels contributed to the emergence of the service innovation, which is the outcome of value co-creation practices and contributed to each actor's well-being and at the same time to ecosystem viability, nourished by the generation of new institutions.

Previous research explored the conceptual domain of this topic, but empirical studies are still lacking (Beirao *et al.*, 2017). This led to a main theoretical implication according to which this qualitative study adds to the development of midrange theories (Brodie *et al.*, 2011; Vargo and Lusch, 2017; Vargo *et al.*, 2017) linking the high-level SD Logic conceptual perspective with specific empirical findings in health care context. More specifically, the study empirically advances service theory, further developing the practice to better understand the empirical features of value co-creation operationalizing it. In particular, the study sheds lights on the involved actors, resource exchanged and social mechanisms that supported by technology foster the co-innovation process. This led to consider technology as the outcome of social practices and at the same time the input for their renewal (Vargo and Lusch, 2016).

From a managerial point of view, findings can support health service managers in fostering patients' engagement in service outcomes' improvement. In particular, service managers might be inspired from the analysed findings grasping those factors which boost patients' empowerment in order to encourage value co-creation activities and, in this way, achieve patient satisfaction. Digital platforms pave the way for service innovation opportunities, so this implies that service managers should integrate, people, technologies, process and information (Maglio *et al.*, 2009). Understanding how service innovation influences the different actors involved and the whole ecosystem is important. Therefore, service managers should zoom in to understand and enhance, at each ecosystem

**Maria Vincenza Ciasullo**
**Silvia Cosimato**
**Alex Douglas**
Customer-centric    service
innovation  in  health  care:
findings from a case study

level, resource integration activities and zoom out to grasp the way each level boost and shape the others. More in detail, health service organizations should grasp the importance of resource integration occurring within and across levels and the way it might be improved. Last but not least, the understanding of the enablers for service innovation can support managers to better elaborate relational strategies for stimulating actor's engagement and for establishing meaningful relationships to challenge the complexity of health care service.

Despite the contributions outlined above, this study is somewhat limited by the investigation of a single case study referred to a chronic disease. Therefore, additional research should investigate the factors that stimulate the engagement of patients' service networks in non-chronic illnesses, as in the case of acute diseases. Finally, even though the results of this paper support the current use of technologies (e.g. ITCs platforms) to increase the opportunities for service innovation, further research is needed to better understand organizational, social, legal and ethical barriers that affect the complex health care service system. In this direction, some open questions emerge. How to involve patients (e.g. elder, ethnic minorities or patients' simply reluctant) that are unwilling to use health technologies? How to limit technologies' intrusiveness in patients' life? How health professionals should protect personal and sensitive information? What are the main ethical implications that health professional should consider approaching service innovation?

### References

AKAKA M.A., ALVAREZ S., KJELLBERG H., NENONEN S., STORBACKA K., VARGO S.L., YOUNG S. (2016), "Market (Re) creation Through Innovation and Entrepreneurship", in *Celebrating America's Pastimes: Baseball, Hot Dogs, Apple Pie and Marketing?*, Springer International Publishing, London, pp. 415-416.

AKAKA M.A., VARGO S.L., WIELAND H. (2017), "Extending the Context of Innovation: The Co-creation and Institutionalization of Technology and Markets", in *Innovating in Practice,* Springer International Publishing, London, pp. 43-57.

BACCARANI C., CASSIA F. (2017), "Evaluating the outcomes of service ecosystems: The interplay between ecosystem well-being and customer well-being", *The TQM Journal,* vol. 29, n. 6, pp. 834-846.

BARCZAK G. (2012), "The future of NPD/innovation research", *Journal of Product Innovation Management,* vol. 29, n. 3, pp. 355-357.

BARILE S., POLESE F., SAVIANO M., CARRUBBO L. (2017), "Service Innovation in Translational Medicine" in *Innovating in Practice,* Springer International Publishing, London, pp. 417-438.

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

BARILE S., LUSCH R., REYNOSO J., SAVIANO M., SPOHRER J. (2016), "Systems, networks, and ecosystems in service research", *Journal of Service Management*, vol. 27, n. 4, pp. 652-674.

BAXTER P., JACK S. (2008), "Qualitative case study methodology: Study design and implementation for novice researchers", *The Qualitative Report*, vol. 13, n. 4, pp. 544-559.

BEIRÃO G., BEIRÃO G., PATRÍCIO L., PATRÍCIO L., FISK R.P., FISK R.P. (2017), "Value cocreation in service ecosystems: Investigating health care at the micro, meso, and macro levels", *Journal of Service Management*, vol. 28, n. 2, pp. 227-249.

BENZEIN E.G., HAGBERG M., SAVEMAN B.I. (2008), "Being appropriately unusual': a challenge for nurses in health-promoting conversations with families", *Nursing Inquiry,* vol. 15, n. 2, pp. 106-115.

BERGESON S.C., DEAN J.D. (2006), "A systems approach to patient-centered care", *Jama*, vol. 296, n. 23, pp. 2848-2851.

BRODIE R.J., SAREN M., PELS J. (2011), "Theorizing about the service dominant logic: the bridging role of middle range theory", *Marketing Theory*, vol. 11, n. 1, pp. 75-91.

CANTÙ C., TZANNIS A. (2016), "The service innovation in healthcare network", *Mercati e Competitività*, n. 4, pp. 109-130.

CARLBORG P., KINDSTRÖM D., KOWALKOWSKI C. (2014), "The evolution of service innovation research: a critical review and synthesis", *The Service Industries Journal*, vol. 34, n. 5, pp. 373-398.

CHANDLER J.D., VARGO S.L. (2011), "Contextualization and value-in-context: How context frames exchange", *Marketing Theory,* vol. 11, n. 1, pp. 35-49.

CHESBROUGH, H. W. (2011), "Bringing open innovation to services", *MIT Sloan Management Review,* vol. 52, n. 2, p. 85.

CORRIGAN P.O. (2011), "Personalized medicine in a consumer age", *Current Pharmacogenomics and Personalized Medicine (Formerly Current Pharmacogenomics)*, vol. 9, n. 3, pp. 168-176.

COULTER A. (2012), "Patient engagement-what works?", *The Journal of Ambulatory Care Management,* vol. 35, n. 2, pp. 80-89.

DUL J., HAK T. (2008), *Case Study Methodology in Business Research,* Elsevier, Burlington, MA.

EDVARDSSON B., TRONVOLL B., GRUBER T. (2011), "Expanding understanding of service exchange and value co-creation: a social construction approach", *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, vol. 39, n. 2, pp. 327-339.

EISENHARDT K.M. (1989), "Agency theory: An assessment and review", *Academy of Management Review,* vol. 14, n. 1, pp. 57-74.

FISHER D., SMITH S. (2011), "Cocreation is chaotic: What it means for marketing when no one has control", *Marketing Theory*, vol. 11, n. 3, pp. 325-350.

FROW P., MCCOLL-KENNEDY J.R., PAYNE A. (2016), "Co-creation practices: Their role in shaping a health care ecosystem", *Industrial Marketing Management*, vol. 56, 2016, pp. 24-39.

FROW P., MCCOLL-KENNEDY J.R., HILTON T., DAVIDSON A., PAYNE A., BROZOVIC D. (2014), "Value propositions: A service ecosystems perspective", *Marketing Theory,* vol. 14, n. 3, pp. 327-351.

GALLOUJ F., WINDRUM P. (2009), "Services and services innovation", Journal of Evolutionary Economics, vol. 19, n. 2, pp. 141-148.

GUMMESSON E. (2006), "Qualitative research in management: addressing complexity, context and persona", *Management Decision*, vol. 44, n. 2, pp. 167-179.

GUMMESSON E., MELE C. (2010), "Marketing as value co-creation through network interaction and resource integration", *Journal of Business Market Management,* vol. 4, n. 4, pp. 181-198.

HODGSON G.M. (2006), "What are institutions?", *Journal of Economic Issues,* vol. 40, n. 1, pp. 1-25.

JAAKKOLA E., HAKANEN T. (2013), "Value co-creation in solution networks", *Industrial Marketing Management,* vol. 42, n. 1, pp. 47-58.

JOINER K.A., LUSCH R.F. (2016), "Evolving to a new service-dominant logic for health care", *Innovation and Entrepreneurship in Health*, vol. 3, n. 3, pp. 25-33.

KARNIOUCHINA E., VICTORINO L., VERMA R. (2014), "Product and service innovation: ideas for future cross-disciplinary research", *Journal of Product Innovation Management*, vol. 23, n. 3. pp. 274-280.

KENETT R., LAVI Y. (2014), "Integrated management principles and their application to healthcare systems", *Sinergie*, n. 93, pp. 213-239.

LAPPALAINEN I., KALLIO K., TOIVONEN M. (2012), "Facilitating service development in a multiagent environment: Different roles of consultancy" in Spohrer J.C., Freund L.E. (Eds.), *Advances in the human side of service engineering,* CRC Press, Boca Raton, FL, pp. 276-285.

LUSCH R.F., NAMBISAN S. (2015), "Service innovation: A service-dominant logic perspective", *Mis Quarterly,* vol. 39, n. 1, pp.155-176.

LUSCH R.F., VARGO S.L. (2006), "Service-dominant logic: reactions, reflections and refinements", *Marketing Theory,* vol. 6, n. 3, pp. 281-288.

LUSCH R.F., VARGO S.L., GUSTAFSSON A. (2016), "Fostering a trans-disciplinary perspectives of service ecosystems", *Journal of Business Research*, vol. 69, n. 8, pp. 2957-2963.

LUSCH R.F., VARGO S.L., TANNIRU M. (2010), "Service, value networks and learning", *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, vol. 38, n. 1, pp. 19-31.

MAGLIO P.P., VARGO S.L., CASWELL N., SPOHRER J. (2009), "The service system is the basic abstraction of service science", *Information Systems and e-business Management,* vol. 7, n. 4, pp. 395-406.

MCCOLL-KENNEDY J.R., VARGO S.L., DAGGER T.S., SWEENEY J.C., KASTEREN Y.V. (2012), "Health care customer value cocreation practice styles", *Journal of Service Research,* vol. 15, n. 4, pp. 370-389.

MELE C., COLURCIO M., RUSSO-SPENA T. (2014), "Research traditions of innovation: Goods-dominant logic, the resource-based approach, and service-dominant logic", *Managing Service Quality,* vol. 24, n. 6, pp. 612-642.

MICHEL S., BROWN S.W., GALLAN A.S. (2008), "An expanded and strategic view of discontinuous innovations: deploying a service-dominant logic", *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, vol. 36, n. 1, pp 54-66.

NAMBISAN P., NAMBISAN S. (2009), "Models of consumer value cocreation in health care", *Health Care Management Review,* vol. 34, n. 4, pp. 344-354.

NEWMAN W.L. (2000), *Social Research Methods,* Allyn & Bacon, London.

NORMANN R. (2001), *Reframing business: When the map changes the landscape,* John Wiley & Sons, Hoboken, NJ.

ORDANIN A., PARASURAMAN A. (2011), "Service innovation viewed through a service-dominant logic lens: a conceptual framework and empirical analysis", *Journal of Service Research,* vol. 14, n. 1, pp. 3-23.

OSEI-FRIMPONG K., WILSON A., OWUSU-FRIMPONG N. (2015), "Service experiences and dyadic value co-creation in healthcare service delivery: a CIT approach", *Journal of Service Theory and Practice,* vol. 25, n. 4, pp. 443-462.

PALUMBO R., ADINOLFI P., ANNARUMMA C., MUSELLA M. (2016), "The Special Information Needs of Low Health Literate Patients. Exploratory Insights from an Italian Survey", presented at *XXVIII Sinergie Annual Conference Referred Electronic Conference Proceeding Management in a Digital World. Decisions, Production, Communication, 9-10 June 2016 - University of Udine (Italy).*

PINHO N., BEIRAO G., PATRÍCIO L.P., FISK R. (2014), "Understanding value co-creation in complex services with many actors", *Journal of Service Management,* vol. 25, n. 4, pp. 470-493.

PRAHALAD C.K., RAMASWAMY V. (2004), "Co-creation experiences: The next practice in value creation", *Journal of Interactive Marketing,* vol. 18, n. 3, pp. 5-14.

RUBALCABA L., MICHEL S., SUNDBO J., BROWN S.W., REYNOSO J. (2012), "Shaping, organizing, and rethinking service innovation: a multidimensional framework", *Journal of Service Management,* vol. 23, n. 5, pp. 696-715.

STORBACKA K., BRODIE R.J., BÖHMANN T., MAGLIO P.P., NENONEN S. (2016), "Actor engagement as a microfoundation for value co-creation", *Journal of Business Research,* vol. 69, n. 8, pp. 3008-3017.

STORBACKA K., FROW P., NENONEN S., PAYNE A. (2012), "Designing business models for value co-creation", in *Special Issue-Toward a Better Understanding of the Role of Value in Markets and Marketing,* Emerald Group Publishing Limited, pp. 51-78.

STURMBERG J.P., O'HALLORAN D.M., MARTIN C.M. (2012), "Understanding health system reform-a complex adaptive systems perspective", *Journal of Evaluation in Clinical Practice,* vol. 18, n. 1, pp. 202-208.

SUNDBO J., TOIVONEN M. (2011), User-based innovation in services, Edward Elgar Publishing, Cheltenham, UK.

TAILLARD M., PETERS L.D., PELS J., MELE C. (2016), "The role of shared intentions in the emergence of service ecosystems", *Journal of Business Research*, vol. 69, n. 8, pp. 2972-2980.

UGOLINI M., ROSSATO C., BACCARANI C. (2014), "A five-senses perspective to quality in hospitals", *The TQM Journal,* vol. 26, n. 3, pp. 284-299.

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., LUSCH R.F. (2008), "Service-dominant logic: continuing the evolution", *Journal of the Academy of marketing Science,* vol. 36, n. 1, pp. 1-10.

VARGO S.L., LUSCH R.F. (2011), "It's all B2B… and beyond: Toward a systems perspective of the market", *Industrial Marketing Management,* vol. 40, n. 2, pp. 181-187.

VARGO S.L., LUSCH R.F. (2016), "Institutions and axioms: an extension and update of service-dominant logic", *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, vol. 44, n. 1, pp. 5-23.

VARGO S.L., LUSCH R.F. (2017), "Service-dominant logic 2025", *International Journal of Research in Marketing*, vol. 34, n. 1, pp. 46-67.

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.

VARGO S.L., WIELAND H., AKAKA M.A. (2015), "Innovation through institutionalization: A service ecosystems perspective", *Industrial Marketing Management,* vol. 44, January 2015, pp. 63-72.

VARGO S.L., WIELAND H., AKAKA M.A. (2016), "Innovation in Service Ecosystems", *Invited Paper Journal of Serviceology,* vol. 1, n. 1, pp. 1-5.

VARGO J.J., NIKLEWSKI P.J., WILLIAMS J.L., MARTIN J.F., FAIGEL D.O. (2017), "A systems perspective on markets-Toward a research agenda", *Journal of Business Research,* vol. 79, October 2017, pp. 260-268.

VON HIPPEL E. (2007), "Horizontal innovation networks-by and for users", *Industrial and Corporate Change,* vol. 16, n. 2, pp. 293-315.

WIELAND H., POLESE F., VARGO S., LUSCH R. (2012), "Toward a Service (Eco) Systems Perspective on Value Creation", *International Journal of Service Science, Management, Engineering and Technology,* vol. 3, Jul-Sep., n. 3, pp. 12-24.

WITELL L., ANDERSON L., BRODIE R.J., COLURCIO M., EDVARDSSON B., KRISTENSSON P., WALLIN ANDREASSEN T. (2015), "Exploring dualities of service innovation: implications for service research", *Journal of Services Marketing,* vol. 29, n. 6/7, pp. 436-441.

YIN R.K. (2003), *Case study research: design and methods, Applied social research methods series,* Sage Publications, Thousand Oaks, CA.

## Academic or professional position and contacts

**Maria Vincenza Ciasullo**
Associate Professor of Management
University of Salerno - Italy
e-mail: mciasullo@unisa.it

**Silvia Cosimato**
PhD in Marketing and Communication
University of Salerno - Italy
e-mail: scosimato@unisa.it

**Alex Douglas**
Management University of Africa, Nairobi - Kenya
Co-Editor The TQM Journal
e-mail: tqmeditor@gmail.com

# A framework for analysing convergence between online brand identity and online brand image. The case of the British Museum[1]

Monica Fait - Paola Scorrano - Amedeo Maizza
Alkis Thrassou

## Abstract

***Purpose of the paper:*** *The aim of the paper is to analyze the level of convergence between online brand identity and online brand image in the museum sector.*

***Methodology****: This paper proposes an operative framework - called Assessing Web Convergence (AWC) - for extracting information from the web, processing it with text mining techniques and interpreting it in order to monitor the level of convergence between identity and image on the web for the British Museum (BM).*

***Results****: Empirical testing of the framework has shown that in the case of the British Museum, the museum's communication and the users' perception share four thematic areas: Aim and Organisation, Prospects, Art and Collections and Visit Experience. It is possible to observe that the effectiveness of such communication does not depend on the apparent homogeneity of the themes but on the convergence between identity and image with reference to three qualitative dimensions - Functional, Holistic and Experiential.*

***Research limitations:*** *The framework is limited by its purely qualitative approach.*

***Practical implications:*** *The proposed operative framework can be used by museums for self-diagnosis. Specifically, the interpretative phase enables management to identify and exemplify those elements that enable museums to transform data into knowledge that is useful for developing and enhancing their competitive strategies with regard to the co-evolution of web content.*

***Originality of the paper****: The operative framework's originality lies in the possibility of extraction and analysis of non-structured information which, if interpreted from the perspective of convergence between identity and image, can be transformed into knowledge, useful for decision-making.*

*Key words: web communication; museum; online brand identity; online brand image; text mining; co-creation*

---

## 1. Introduction

Web communication contexts (social media, Web 2.0 and its offshoots) represent important enablers for the development of a synergistic relationship between organisation and user (Amirkhanpour *et al.*, 2014). The interactive and dynamic dimension of user engagement is strengthened by the capacity of the Web 2.0 tools (Hoffman and Novak, 1996; Prahalad and Ramaswamy, 2013) such as forums, noticeboards, chatrooms, newsgroups, personal Web pages, social networks and blogs (De Valck *et al.*, 2009) for the sharing, interaction and socialisation of values and content (Tuten and Solomon, 2014). Actually, the dynamic and integrated nature of social communication stimulates cognitive processes, experiential and emotional associations (Fiore et. al., 2005a) and interest in the organisation and the brand (Fiore *et al.*, 2005b). This facilitates a multidimensional approach - with cognitive, emotional, and/or behavioural dimensions - to the brand (Bowden, 2009; Brodie *et al.*, 2013; Hollebeek, 2011; Van Doorn *et al.*, 2010).

Adopting a user-oriented perspective, in the web the user no longer expects to merely acquire information but to interact with its source and with other users. This is not just a technological development, but a radical change in the architecture of communication and information that has generated a "software culture". This culture takes the form of multimedia content, information and human interactions, and is typical of a networked society that lives in a global (albeit virtual) village (Castells, 1996). Indeed, social communication enables the emergence of individual subjectivity. Each subject that is, thanks to the reduction of inter-personal barriers, performs a series of activities that amplify their social networks (interaction), disseminating and acquiring knowledge, and sharing their experiences with others (Armano, 2008; Wilson, 2008). Thus, social networks become a place where the value proposition finds itself face to face with the public, and where perceptions can be constructed, analysed and measured (Tuten and Solomon, 2014). It is in this context therefore that the two fundamental components of the brand - identity and image - can come together and learn from each other (Aaker, 1991; Keller, 1993, 2009).

These dimensions are two important sources of the brand equity. Since the brand equity depends on what consumers know and remember about the characteristics of the dimensions, their evolution and their convergence are essential elements for the stability of brand equity over time (Nandan, 2005; Dilip and Saikat, 2007).

In this new cultural perspective (Thrassou and Vrontis, 2009), museums must adapt their traditional educational role, centred on the creation and dissemination of knowledge, in response to the feedback that these new users are potentially able to provide.

In the first part, the paper recalls the recent literature on the importance of social media in the interaction between brands and users (Berthon *et al.*, 2012; Kotler *et al.* 2010; Kaplan and Haenliein, 2010; Muñiz and Schau, 2011; Bambauer-Sachse and Mangold, 2010; Weinberg and Pehlivan,

2011). Then, it analyses the literature that recognises the social media as a way to invite the public to participate in the creation of culture and to acquire awareness of its identity. According to the literature which argues that in today's communications environment a strong brand can be created and maintained by strengthening identity and image linkage (Nadan, 2005; Dilip and Saikat, 2007), the paper goes further at the exploratory level that analyze the importance that communication changes have in the creation and maintenance of the identity-image linkage. It suggests an operative framework for extracting information from the web, processing it by text mining techniques and interpreting it in order to monitor the level of convergence between *brand identity* (communicated by the company) and *brand image* (perceived by users). The framework is tested on the British Museum which is proving to be aware of the potential of social communication as a mean to disseminate knowledge, increase and personalise the appeal of the offer and generate new mechanisms of interaction and dialogue (López *et al.*, 2010; Schweibenz, 2010). It allows to answer the following research question: "How can a museum set and monitor an effective communication strategy via social web communication?".

Secondary questions that derive from this are: "What are the elements around which on line brand identity and on line brand image are formed?"; "What is the level of convergence between the message being communicated (identity) and the message perceived by the users (image)?".

**Monica Fait**
**Paola Scorrano**
**Amedeo Maizza**
**Alkis Thrassou**
A framework for analysing convergence between online brand identity and online brand image.
The case of the British Museum

## 2. Literature review

### 2.1 Social Media and Interactions between Brand and Users

Web 2.0 and its offshoots represent a "digital (r)evolution" (Macnamara, 2010) which facilitates the co-production of information and the enrichment of user experiences, enabling the extension of real social networks into virtual environments (Vrontis *et al.*, 2015). This is not a technological change but a new way of approaching users (O'Reilly, 2005). Web 2.0 is the place where the latter meet, publish material, create links and relations, discuss topics of common interest and express their opinion regarding new developments. Indeed, its main strength is user-generated content (UGC), i.e. content generated directly by the users themselves, the fruit of a participatory approach to the web (Berthon *et al.*, 2012) that today influences conversations and choices (Smith, 2009). The main contribution of social networks is thus to enable participants to play the roles of co-creator, commentator and author (Kotler *et al.*, 2010; Prahalad and Ramaswamy, 2004). The users become creators of content (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010; Muñiz and Schau, 2011), they are no longer passive (Li and Bernhoff, 2008), they influence each other and they are much more motivated to share their experience (Bambauer-Sachse and Mangold, 2010).

Thus, social media-driven brand management becomes an additional strategy that is characterised by monitoring and identifying relevant

conversations, based on the active participation and involvement of users as the determiners of choice (Weinberg and Pehlivan, 2011). In other words, it means adopting the vision of Convergence Culture (Jenkins, 2006) and recognising that visitors are losing their traditional role and becoming users of a technological tool by means of which they are part of a two-way relationship characterised by cooperation, participation and sharing of knowledge.

The managerial literature has long been aware of the importance of a) customer engagement, understood as the psychological state that is created as an effect of interactive content and the sharing of experiences with reference to a specific focus such as the brand (Ashley and Tuten, 2015); and b) consumer brand engagement, understood as the range of consumer behaviours towards a brand (Van Doorn *et al.*, 2010), which go beyond the purchase in the narrow sense (Verhoef *et al.*, 2010), giving rise to a two-way relationship between consumer and brand/product characterised by different levels of involvement (Sprott *et al.*, 2009). Thus, managerial studies have tended to focus on certain aspects such as community engagement, i.e. a structured set of relationships that are created between subjects interested in a brand, who share their motivation for interacting and cooperating with the other members of the community. The virtual brand communities influence the perception and the actions of their members (Muñiz and Schau, 2007), rapidly disseminating the information (Brown *et al.*, 2003), generating affinities between members (De Valck *et al.*, 2009) and feelings of empowerment among consumers. At the same time, they can strengthen the brand if companies manage to encourage interaction between members (Schau *et al.*, 2009) and generate a multidimensional approach to the brand involving cognitive, emotional, and behavioural dimensions (Bowden, 2009; Brodie *et al.*, 2013; Hollebeek, 2011; Van Doorn *et al.*, 2010). Such effects are stimulated by user-generated content (UGC) (Christodoulides *et al.*, 2012), which is focused on consumer choice (Daugherty *et al.*, 2008). The motives behind UGC include self-promotion, intrinsic enjoyment, and a desire to change public perceptions (Berthon *et al.*, 2008). Since consumers perceive such content as reliable (Christodoulides, 2012) and users adopt it and use it as a marketing tool (Muñiz and Schau, 2007), UCG has important practical implications for companies' communication processes. Companies therefore need to know all about it, analyse it and even create more of it themselves, pooling the ideas of engaged consumers. Furthermore, UGC contributes to the explosion of another key factor for communication: Word-of-Mouth (WOM). WOM's high power of persuasion (Buttle, 1998; Herr *et al.*, 1991), which is greater than that of traditional communication tools, derives from the fact that consumers consider it to be an objective source of information, generally seen to be credible and reliable, since it serves to "amplify" the experiences of real individuals, who willingly transmit them to other subjects (Adjei *et al.*, 2010). WOM thus has a significant impact on the assessment of the brand (Jalilvand and Samiei, 2012; Laczniak *et al.*, 2001). What has been set out, thus, leads far to a new perspective on communication which involves prompting or encouraging consumers to generate content in support of the brand. Indeed, a more

participatory and interactive form of cooperation with the consumer creates powerful brand associations (Christodoulides *et al.*, 2012), thereby establishing and improving consumer loyalty (Vivek *et al.*, 2012).

The authenticity of the relationship between consumer and brand that is generated in a virtual brand community is in fact an important part of the construction and maintenance of that brand's success, because it helps to form a unique identity and provides the pre-conditions for the creation of an image (Gundlach and Neville, 2012). Identity is that unique set of associations that the company seeks to create or maintain, which represent what the brand desires to be for its customers, implying a promise to them (Aaker, 1996). In contrast, image represents the perception of the elements associated with the brand and the value and the meaning assigned to them (Keller, 2003). Today, these components - brand identity and brand image - meet and interact on the web (Aaker, 1991; Keller, 1993). It is necessary therefore to create and monitor frequent and active feedback between consumers and brand (Keller, 2009), since the nature and quality of this feedback determines the company's ability to activate communication that will maintain convergence between the identity transmitted and the image perceived (Nandan, 2005). Indeed, reducing the gap between identity and image sustains the mental process by which, over time, the consumer identifies, remembers and recognises the brand (*brand awareness*).

*2.2 Identity, image and cultural organization*

Museums have been traditionally seen as authoritative and authentic providers of knowledge. By means of various activities - exhibitions, public programs, outreach and education - they provide interactive cultural experiences that enable the individual to interpret history and science (Thomas and Mintz, 1998). These interactions are the result of the convergence of various disciplines, all serving to put the individual in a position where they can create and visualise content within an authoritative cultural environment, without neglecting the need to share individual and collective experience.

Adopting the experiential approach of Pine and Gilmore (1999), studies of visitors - such as *The engaging museum* (Black, 2005) and *The Responsive Museum* (Lang *et al.*, 2006) - have long been aware that the mission of museums is evolving. The involvement of the public in processes of learning and discovery is no longer simply tied to the collection in the narrow sense, but to the overall environment and to their *interaction* with the collection.

Indeed, museums now need to provide multiple experiences: aesthetic and emotional, celebratory and educational, recreational and social (Kotler *et al.*, 2008).

In an effort to involve the community and the public, increase the participation of stakeholders and disseminate knowledge, museums have created constructive relationships with users by means of digital technologies (Bowen *et al.*, 2008; Parry, 2010). The adoption of these technologies has not only generated involvement, but has also innovated the process of creation of cultural value. This is because it has accentuated

**Monica Fait**
**Paola Scorrano**
**Amedeo Maizza**
**Alkis Thrassou**
A framework for analysing convergence between online brand identity and online brand image.
The case of the British Museum

cooperation in the creation of culture; it has developed experimentation and promotion of works of art; and it has broadened the user base, involving stakeholders of various kinds. All this has enhanced the cultural value of museums to the point that they now boast content of an evocative type, appealing to both individual and collective memory, linked to specific historical moments or places (Bakhshi and Throsby, 2011). Thus, the creation of value in cultural organisations, and museums in particular, is not a simple economic transaction but is associated mainly with the experience of the users. The primary challenge therefore is to recognise the motivation of the users in order to be able to co-create experience (Leinhardt *et al.*, 2003; White *et al.*, 2009) and encourage participation by users on an educational and creative level. This will increase and personalise the appeal of the cultural products and services on offer, thereby activating new mechanisms of interaction and dialogue (Taheri and Jafari, 2012; Vom Lehn and Heath, 2005).

Social media represent a way to invite the public to participate in the creation of culture. Users' questions and comments - even unusual ones - can provide the starting point for new dialogues between users and institutions. In addition, they make it possible to contextualise the visit within a process of learning. The interactions of visitors with the objects of learning are then re-contextualised in turn within the network (think of tweets for example), thereby generating a participatory culture (Jenkins *et al.*, 2009).

Opening up a participatory and modular dialogue with users, transforms the museum into a Participatory Museum (Simon, 2010), i.e. a platform that brings together the various subjects involved (creators, distributors, consumers, critics and collaborators) via personal user-generated content (UGC) and favours the cooperative creation of cultural value. The museum thereby transforms itself into a place, be it physical or virtual, where knowledge is being generated as well as being transmitted.

Whatever perspective is adopted, the common focus is that participatory communication is the driver for the co-production of museum value, which is in turn a fundamental precondition for enabling cultural institutions to disseminate their heritage beyond geographical boundaries, creating an identity that is shared not only with the actual visitors but also with potential ones (Rahaman and Tan, 2011; Slater and Armstrong, 2010).

The two-directional participation and communication, made possible by the relational component that characterises Web 2.0 environments, therefore enables museums to activate a process of modernisation in which they become a social, dynamic, multi-vocal and participatory place (Simon, 2010). Their functions of conservation, safeguard, communication and enabling public access are served in new ways. They can, thus, create a brand that is not only a sterile symbol, but also a tool with which to evoke emotions and a sense of belonging and participation. The social approach allows museums to connect with the experiences, memories and opinions that the visitors bring with them (Falk and Dierking, 2000). Numerous theoretical and practical studies have shown the tendency of museums to make use of digital technologies to involve visitors and communities

(Cameron and Kenderdine, 2007; Parry, 2010). The challenge then is for the museum to acquire awareness of its identity, of what makes it unique: its history, values, content, mission and how it is seen in the world. It also becomes necessary to consistently and effectively communicate the above-mentioned elements and monitor users' perceptions of them in order to activate a process of enrichment of its identity.

**Monica Fait**
**Paola Scorrano**
**Amedeo Maizza**
**Alkis Thrassou**
A framework for analysing convergence between online brand identity and online brand image.
The case of the British Museum

## 3. Hypothesis, framework and methodology

According with the above-mentioned literature, this paper focuses on identity-image linkage and tries to monitor the convergence between the message channelled by the brand and the message perceived by the users. The empirical experimentation was conducted by the case study technique centred on the British Museum (BM) in order to observe the identity that is transmitted by the BM and the image perceived by web users.

Hence, we hypothesised the following:

*H1: if there is homogeneity between the topics used for communicating the museum's brand identity and the elements associated with the brand by the users (image), then the notoriety of the museum brand is high.*

*H2: the effectiveness of web communication activities depends on the convergence between identity and image with reference to the cognitive, experiential and emotional dimensions of the users' perceptive process.*

### 3.1 The framework

The paper is based on a framework created by the authors -called Analysing Web Convergence (AWC) (Fait *et al.*, 2015; Scorrano *et al.*, 2015)-, based on the following approaches set out in the managerial literature:

| Phases | Theoretical background |
|---|---|
| Identification and interpretation of information | Question answering (Cooper and Ruger, 2000; Kwok *et al.*, 2001; Voorhees, 1999) |
| Processing of extracted data | *Content Analysis* (Berelson, 1952; Downe-Wamboldt, 1992; Kerlinger; 1986; Krippendorff, 1980; Weber, 1990;) and *Text Mining* (Bolasco, 1997; Feldman and Sanger, 2007) |
| Interpretation and analysis | Dimensions (functional, holistic and experiential) recognised by the managerial literature as forms, elements or characteristics of the basis of the perceptive process (Aaker, 1997; Mowen, 1995; Keller, 1993; Peter and Olson, 1996; Solomon, 2004). |

The approach envisages two operational dimensions:

*Pre-processing*; this is a preliminary phase before the extraction of the data and is designed to identify three variables (Scorrano and Fait, 2015): *What?,* identifying the object of the investigation and any related sub-categories that can better qualify it from a semantic point of view (brand name, services, product, etc.); *Who?,* identifying the types of subject for which the information must be extrapolated (tourist, blogger, fan, tour

operator, consumer, etc.); *Where?,* providing greater detail on the two spatial dimensions, which are: 1) of a geographical nature, designed to segment the information on the basis of the depth to which the phenomenon must be analysed; and 2) of a virtual nature, which involves identifying non-structured sources on the basis of which to conduct research.

*Processing*; in this phase, data collection is subject to text mining which underpins the Content Analysis method. Content Analysis is a research technique for the systematic and quantitative description of the content of communication (Berelson, 1952) and for the measurement of specific variables (Kerlinger, 1986). If the focus is on the characteristics of language as communication with attention to the content or contextual meaning of the text, then qualitative content analysis is particularly suitable (Babbie, 1992). The aim of content analysis is to provide knowledge and understanding of the phenomenon under study (Downe-Wamboldt, 1992), and to classify large amounts of text into an efficient number of categories with similar meanings (Weber, 1990). The output obtained is then interpreted with reference to three questions: *How? Why?* and *When?,* corresponding, in the interpretative process, to the three dimensions (functional, holistic and experiential) that make it possible to observe the qualitative significance of each word in the process of identity and image formation. *How?* refers to how users talk in the pre-identified non-structured sources. This phase coincides with the identification of the traditional core resources (the Functional Dimension) and therefore considers those lemmas that are representative of the intrinsic or extrinsic characteristics of a product, service or organisation (Grönroos, 1997; Zeithaml, 1988). *Why?* refers to the reason why users talk. It represents the process of psychological abstraction that determines the perception of the elements that characterise the product, service or organisation (the Holistic Dimension) and makes it possible to interpret them in accordance with a systemic approach. It considers aspects of their utilitarian and functional value that coincide with lemmas expressing psychological attributes (Dillon *et al.*, 2001; Williams, 2002).

*When?* refers to when users talk. It identifies the process of abstraction that accompanies the assessment of a product, service or organisation (the Experiential Dimension). This category includes those words that express the pleasure and enjoyment associated with consumption and are the expression of its Symbolic and Experiential value (Kempf, 1999; Kim and Morris, 2007; Park and Kim, 2003). It is thus possible to observe the hedonistic and experiential value attributed to the product, service or organisation, which is not necessarily limited to the moment of consumption, but also includes the search for information.

*3.2 Methodology*

According to the framework, in the pre-processing step the British Museum (BM) was selected as a museum to analyse (What?). This phase was conducted in accordance with the case study approach (Gummesson, 2000; Yin, 2013) and an Information-Oriented Selection perspective, which makes it possible to maximise the usefulness of information from

small samples and single cases selected on the basis of expectations about their information content. The selected case is *paradigmatic*, suitable for validating the framework, since it makes it possible to explore a phenomenon by means of a specific context whose key elements can be considered, by analogy, to be relevant to the phenomenon in question (Eisenhardt, 1989; Siggelkow, 2007). While recognising the limits of this method, whose results cannot be generalised, it can still be considered suitable for generating a qualitative information flow that serves to enhance learning (Flyvbjerg, 2006) and test the created framework.

**Monica Fait**
**Paola Scorrano**
**Amedeo Maizza**
**Alkis Thrassou**
A framework for analysing convergence between online brand identity and online brand image. The case of the British Museum

The BM aims to be "*A museum of the world, for the world*", enabling its visitors to "*Discover over two million years of human history and culture*" (BM Facebook page, 2015), and it seeks to fulfil this mission by means of social media tools and platforms. According to the BM's strategy document, Towards 2020:

*The familiar architecture of knowledge has dissolved. The Museum needs to rethink completely how it transmits information about the collection, and how it engages its visitors with the objects. New technology allows new ways of visiting the galleries: stories and images, enquiries and interactions, individual and group explorations all need to be crafted and promoted. And those who can never visit may now be enabled to experience, learn and enjoy.* (British Museum, 2015).

The BM is currently one of the most visited tourist attractions in the world with 6.7 million visitors a year (The Art Newspaper- Special Report, 2014; British Museum, 2014), and the number of online visits has seen rapid growth. In a year up to 31 March 2014, traffic on the main BM website increased to 20.5 million visits, with a total of 35.3 million across all BM websites. Videos on the website and YouTube amassed 1.5 million views and the number of followers on Facebook rose to half a million.

The centrepiece of the BM's website is the online presentation of its collection. Other examples of the Marketing department's use of social media to offer access to digital content, communicate ideas, and encourage and facilitate discussion include special exhibitions and the opportunity for visitors to communicate their experience through reviews, images and video. The BM has made this possible by integrating the most important social media (Facebook, Twitter, Google+, Instagram, Pinterest, Youtube) into its website and its blog, which has a good ranking. The blog was ranked by extracting the first 20 pages generated by Google.com for the search query "museum blogs". The blogs detected were then subjected to the web metrics tests proposed by Alexa (Actionable Analytics for the Web - www.alexa.com), which use a classification system based on a website's traffic, popularity and engagement.

The analysis was performed on the BM and the users of the BM's Facebook page (Who?). Regarding the sources (Where?), reference was made to: i) the BM's website and blog; and ii) the review section of the museum's Facebook page, which represent the zones - social community and social publishing- of social media marketing (Tuten and Solomon, 2014) most used by the BM.

Then, the processing step was conducted. The text corpus was obtained by considering everything published on the BM's website and FB page in

the month of April 2015 and was analysed using T-LAB (Lancia, 2012) a content analysis, visualisation, and mapping software package mainly used for word occurrence and co-word mapping. With the text corpus as input, T-LAB converts each word into a lemma (or lexical root) and makes distinctions between various grammatical categories such as verb, noun, and adjective with reference to an English dictionary. In this way two datasets were obtained (see Table 1):

*Tab. 1: T-LAB data for the BM website and Facebook posts*

|  | BM Website | Facebook posts |
|---|---|---|
| Text corpus | 1 | 1 |
| Elementary contexts | 959 | 518 |
| Forms | 7,449 | 3,328 |
| Lemmas | 5,720 | 2,796 |
| Occurrences | 46,926 | 16,970 |
| Keyword threshold | 7 | 4 |

Source: our elaboration

T-lab is an appropriate tool for communication studies because it allows analysis of keyword frequency and co-occurrence, this information being essential for understanding a phenomenon's conceptual framework.

This study adopts a summative approach to qualitative content analysis (Babbie, 1992; Morse and Field, 1995), which starts by identifying and quantifying certain words or content-as-text with the purpose of understanding the contextual use of the words or content. The main keywords were identified by means of co-occurrence analysis. These were then statistically analysed in accordance with the Co-word procedure in order to detect groups of words that were representative of the museum's core communication (online identity) and core perception (online image). In other words, the aim was to determine whether the degree of communicational homogeneity in each corpus was sufficient to generate groups of words that represent specific themes of online identity and online image. The summative approach to qualitative content analysis goes beyond mere word counts to include latent content analysis and interpretation (Holsti, 1969). Specifically, the level of convergence between the museum's online identity and online image was verified by comparison of the themes identified by the three questions: How? Why? and When?, corresponding, in the interpretative process, to the three dimensions - functional, holistic and experiential.

The co-occurrence analysis identified 767 keywords for the BM website and 379 keywords for the reviews on Facebook (FB). The keywords detected in both contexts were subjected to hierarchical clusterisation (Co-word analysis). The Co-word analysis is an elaboration of the co-occurrence by creating a table of m rows and n columns in which the first are the lexical units (UL) - individual words in the corpus- the second are units textual (UT) - sentences or parts of them included in the corpus (web site, post Facebook). In this way, it was possible to identify mini-clusters, represented

graphically by a similarity matrix created by the Multidimensional Scaling (MDS) method (see Figures 1 and 2). In the similarity matrix are reported proximity values (dissimilarity) derived from the calculation of an index association (coseno). This, in turn, makes it possible to represent relations between data within a small space. Both maps were sufficiently significant, with stress values of 0.14 and 0.13 respectively (0 < stress values < 1); if the value of stress is close to 0, the greater the goodness of fit (De Lillo, 2007; Lancia, 2012). The diameter of the terms reflects the probability that they will appear; the colours (quadrants) represent the division into themes of the most frequently discussed topics. Every mini-cluster created and named by T-Lab consists of groups of words related to each other. Observation of the words that generate the mini-clusters, thus, made it possible to identify four main thematic areas for each of the two contexts, to which explanatory names were given by us.

**Monica Fait**
**Paola Scorrano**
**Amedeo Maizza**
**Alkis Thrassou**
A framework for analysing convergence between online brand identity and online brand image.
The case of the British Museum

## 4. Results

The four thematic areas for the BM website and blog (see Fig. 1) are:

*Aim and Organisation*, characterised by the presence of mini-clusters made up of words explaining the museum's mission (Museum, Aim, Bring); organisational and planning aspects (Department, Project, Digital, Future, Audience); and the aesthetic value of the places (Great, Place).

*Prospects*. The mini-clusters that characterise this quadrant are explanatory of the museum's development objectives, mainly concerning its role as a manager of events and exhibitions (Exhibition, Research, Record, Work) and a driver of learning (Need, Develop, Study, Story).

*Art and Collections*, so called because the mini–clusters concern the various collections on display (Assyrian, Century, donate, Egyptian, Greek, Head, Human, King, Modern coin, Write, Country, Year).

*Visit Experience*. The mini-clusters comprising this theme refer to the moment of the visit and the emotions it stirs (Inspire, Require, Look, Surface, Hold, Person, Paper).

The thematic areas (see Fig. 2) extracted from the Facebook reviews have the same names as those of the previous context but differ in terms of their composition:

*Aim and Organisation*, characterised by the presence of a dominant mini-cluster indicative of the BM's historical, artistic and international mission (Museum) and others that are associated with the most important collections (Marble, China, Civilization, Elgin) and the Museum's function as the custodian of culture (Time, object, Great, BM).

*Art and Collections*. The main mini-cluster in this quadrant seems to highlight the collection's importance to our knowledge of Greek civilisation (Greek). This view is strengthened by the remaining mini-clusters, which highlight the storytelling role of the collections (Monument), and reaffirm the collections' importance as a driver of the learning of history (Understand).

*Fig. 1: MDS map for the BM website and blog*
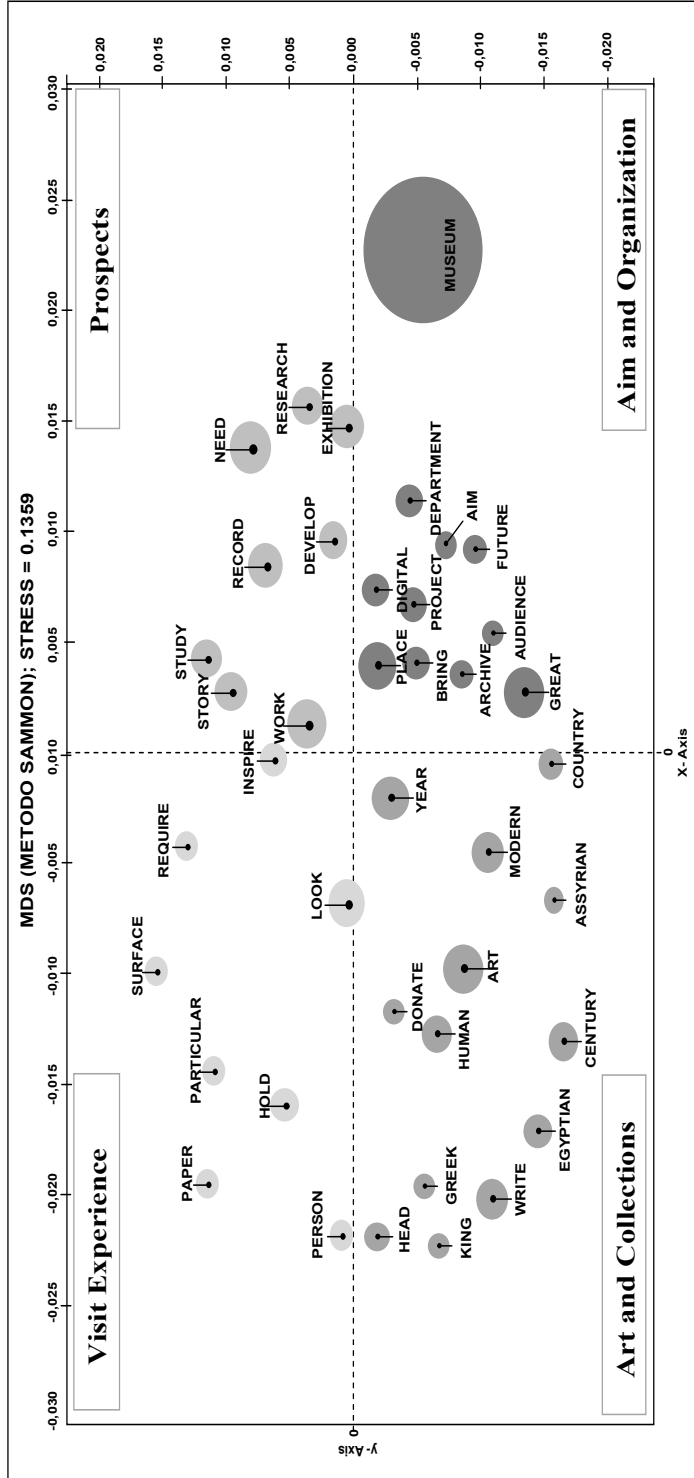
Source: our elaboration

*Fig. 2: MDS map for the Facebook reviews*
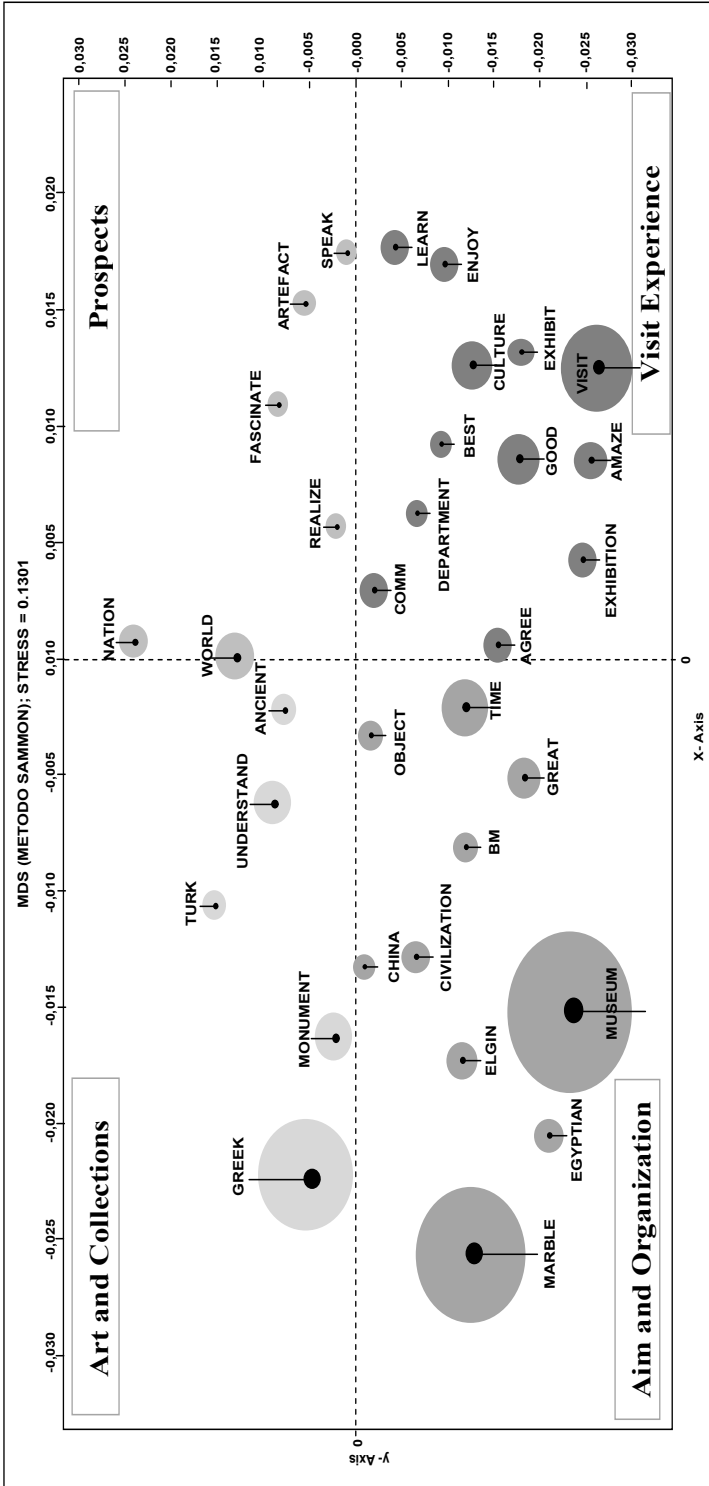
MDS (METODO SAMMON); STRESS = 0.1301

**Monica Fait**
**Paola Scorrano**
**Amedeo Maizza**
**Alkis Thrassou**
A framework for analysing
convergence between online
brand identity and online
brand image.
The case of the British
Museum

Source: our elaboration

*Visit Experience*, composed of mini-clusters that highlight the pleasure of the visit (Visit, Amaze, Exhibit, Enjoy, Good) and the pleasure of discovering something new (Agree, Comment, Best, Culture, Learn, Star).

*Prospects*. This macro-theme is the least important since the mini-clusters are small, limited in number and do not have a specific collocation. They seem to evoke the museum's role as a driver of learning (Artefact, Fascinate, Nation).

The analysis reveals that for the British Museum, which is acknowledged to enjoy high brand notoriety, there is indeed homogeneity between the topics used for communicating the museum's brand identity and the elements associated with the brand by the users (H1).

The methodology chosen (the summative approach to qualitative content analysis) includes latent content analysis and interpretation. Therefore, in order to clarify the nature of the convergence between online brand identity and online brand image (H2) and to analyse the effectiveness of the museum's web communication activities, further analysis was conducted by means of the AWC model. The adoption of the three questions - How? (Functional Dimension), Why? (Holistic Dimension), When? (Experiential Dimension) - that characterise the proposed framework enabled qualitative gap analysis within each theme.

Observing the internal composition of the Aim and Organisation theme (see Table 2), it appears that the identity and image approaches are slightly different.

*Tab. 2: Aim and Organisation*

|  | Online identity | Online image |
|---|---|---|
|  | BM website | BM Facebook reviews |
| *Functional dimension (How?)* | *Museum* (collection; culture; world; history; explore; object) *Department* (accessible; library; fund; catalogue; publication; curator) *Aim* (achieve; priority; partnership; engagement; expand) *Bring* (preserve; potential; style; expert; scientific; high; standard) | *Museum* (art; country; history) *Marble* (Greece; sculpture; Parthenon; return) *China* (Ching; Empire; Hong Kong) *Civilization* (Ottoman; respect; money; stole), *Elgin* (decorate; house; Lord) |
| *Holistic dimension (Why?)* | *Future* (adopt; constantly; generation; staff) *Audience* (worldwide; diverse; economy; global) *Project* (attempt; international; national; facilitate; piece; successful) *Digital* (technology; medium; main; excite; move) | *Time* (heritage; look; original; nice) *Object* (historical; opinion) *Great* (feel; stone; heart; man) *BM* (big, cultural; happy) |
| *Experiential dimension (When?)* | *Great* (allow; wonderful; Empire; create; highly; relevant; today) *Place* (event; experience; increasingly; ways; physical; remain; ritual; sacred) |  |

Source: our elaboration

In the Prospects theme (see Table 3), the gap is more evident.

**Monica Fait**
**Paola Scorrano**
**Amedeo Maizza**
**Alkis Thrassou**
A framework for analysing convergence between online brand identity and online brand image.
The case of the British Museum

*Tab. 3: Prospects*

|  | Online identity | Online image |
|---|---|---|
|  | BM website | BM Facebook reviews |
| *Functional dimension (How?)* | *Exhibition* (access; galleries; improve; loan; permanent; centre; conservation) *Research* (benefit; deliver; care; help; support) *Record* (complete; original; model; information; database; on-line; resource) *Work* (artist; studio; worker; close; influence; side; view) |  |
| *Holistic dimension (Why?)* | *Need* (visitor; public; space; Buildings; plan; development; seek) *Develop* (all over; skill; challenge; House; course; learning; vital) *Study* (artefact; currently; major; Iraq; Southern; memory; share) *Story* (continue; hope; material; visual; impact; rise; tell) |  |
| *Experiential dimension (When?)* |  | *Artefact* (exchange; wait; truth; write) *Fascinate* (human; bet; hey; life) *Nation* (century; land; existence; waste; policy; antiquity; stay) |

Source: our elaboration

The functional dimension has a different value: from the museum's point of view, the words highlight a focus on the intrinsic elements of the organisation. In contrast, the FB users notice the BM's historical and artistic mission and international aspects, focusing on its most important collections. The museum's holistic dimension is projected towards a futuristic vision of its mission that highlights the global reach of its activities in terms of planning, digital technology and other aspects. In contrast, the users limit themselves to stressing the museum's cultural importance. In addition, for the museum, the experiential dimension is a consequence of the organisational factor and the spaces used to host events. However, the users do not attach as much importance to these factors.

Indeed, the museum tends to communicate its future plans both from an organisational-functional point of view, highlighting research areas and exhibitions, and in a holistic sense, emphasising its role as a driver of learning and cultural development. Users on the other hand show little interest in the museum's future projects. Indeed, the mini-clusters are modest in both size and number and they have no specific link to the holistic and functional dimensions. The most interesting mini-clusters are those that stress the museum's experiential value. What the user seems to expect is to experience the fascination of the ancient, of the evolution of human life as narrated by the exhibits.

The greatest convergence is seen in the Art and Collections theme (see Table 4).

*Tab. 4: Art and collections*

| | Online identity | Online image |
|---|---|---|
| | BM website | BM Facebook reviews |
| *Functional dimension (How?)* | *Assyrian* (relief; court; palace)<br>*Century* (kingdom; powerful; Egypt; Sudan)<br>*Donate* (dynasty; pass; Iran; reign)<br>*Egyptian* (leave; tea completely; decipher; scholar; hieroglyph; knowledge)<br>*Greek* (lose, body; nudity; citizen; female; male, copy)<br>*Head* (send; Imperial; portrait; Meroë; Roman)<br>*Human* (civilization; complex; order; power; quality)<br>*King* (associate; symbolize; defeat; creature; dragon)<br>*Modern coin* (medal; modern; individual; mark; link; separate)<br>*Write* (discover; name; recognize; glyphs; word; script; read; system) | *Greek* (call; name; know; people; dream; lie)<br>*Ancient* (Armenia; Turkey)<br>*Turk* (Asia; sure; Region) |
| *Holistic dimension (Why?)* | *Country* (cultural; economic; Social; spend; transform)<br>*Year* (archaeologist; difficult; exist; set; feel; raise) | *Monument* (civilization; continue; picture; important; story; tell) |
| *Experiential dimension (When?)* | | *Understand* (dear; mind; remember; wish) |

Source: our elaboration

In both contexts, the focus is on the collections on display in the museum, with particular importance assigned by users to the Greek civilisation. It is also interesting to observe that the museum (in the process of communication) and the users (in the process of perception) have a similarly holistic view of the collections, made explicit via references to the value of the civilisations in terms of culture, discovery and memory. The users assign experiential importance to this function due to the ability of the collections to make them reflect on their own memories and knowledge.

Considering the words that make up the mini-clusters of the Visit Experience theme (see Table 5), it will be observed that many terms referring to the pleasure of the visit are equally present in both the communicative and perceptive phases.

The museum seeks to entertain and to please the visitors, as well as stimulate their imagination by means of attention to details and places. This view is shared by the users, who assign particular importance to the pleasure of being physically present in the museum and discovering something new.

It is therefore possible to observe the presence of latent differences between the message communicated and the message perceived. Without doubt, the notoriety of the BM's brand is linked to the recognisability of its historical and artistic mission and the museum's international profile. In addition, considering the information on the Art and Collections and Aim and Organisation themes, it is clear that the Museum's online presentation strategy for its collections is effective, since they tend to be recognisable for

users. In contrast, there is a gap in the experiential dimension. Observing this dimension within each of the four themes, it is seen that the museum tends to give particular importance to the experiential aspect in the moment of the visit or at any rate in the narration of the visit (the vision of the museum and the users' associative nodes tend to be similar). In contrast, it neglects the experiential value when it communicates its future plans (Prospects) and presents its collections (Art and Collections).

**Monica Fait**
**Paola Scorrano**
**Amedeo Maizza**
**Alkis Thrassou**
A framework for analysing convergence between online brand identity and online brand image.
The case of the British Museum

*Tab. 5: Visit Experience*

|  | Online identity | Online image |
|---|---|---|
|  | BM website | BM Facebook reviews |
| *Functional dimension (How?)* |  |  |
| *Holistic dimension (Why?)* |  |  |
| *Experiential dimension (When?)* | *Inspire* (approach; exile; souvenir; carry_out; simple; enjoy; wonder)<br>*Require* (easy; item; imagine; method)<br>*Look* (detail; reveal; scan; die; enable; long; period)<br>*Surface* (crack; fine; learn)<br>*Hold* (alongside; boy; dead; consider; creation; delicate, food; stay)<br>*Person* (gather; party; popular; subject; version)<br>*Paper* (apply; repair; Silk; carefully; edge). | *Visit* (collection; spend; Day; London; Love; place)<br>*Amaze* (huge; area; worth; interest; lot)<br>*Exhibit* (afternoon; appreciate; wonderful; pretty)<br>*Enjoy* (able_to; mix; live)<br>*Good* (compare; half; hand; thy; need; read; video)<br>*Agree* (idea; beautiful; full; care; precious)<br>*Comment* (earth; discover; perfect)<br>*Best* (awesome, different)<br>*Culture* (African; experience; India; today; long; bear; unique)<br>*Learn* (display; fur; fantastic mistake)<br>*Star* (Egyptian; Europe). |

Source: our elaboration

## 5. Conclusion

The proposed operative framework crosses the exploratory level that analyzes the importance that communication changes have in the creation and maintenance of the identity-image linkage. It represents a framework for the brand tracking - as monitoring of the information collected at different time-intervals - aimed at observing the firm's ability to generate affinity and feeling between brands and users. Furthermore, the framework is based not only on the traditional functional dimension but especially on the holistic and experiential dimensions of the brand.

Despite its limitations, mainly linked to the interpretative phase, empirical testing of the framework has shown that the BM's communication and the users' perception share four thematic areas: Aim and Organisation, Prospects, Art and Collections and Visit Experience. Both perspectives focus on recognition of the BM's historical and artistic role and its international profile (Aim and Organisation) and on the recognisability

of its collections (Art and Collections), and conclude with the experience of the visit. In other words, the homogeneity between the topics used for communicating identity and the associative nodes of the user (image) is an indicator of brand awareness (H1).

The museum's social web communication was oriented towards the "balanced" generation of culture, i.e. it sought to avoid generating cognitive dissonance among visitors (including virtual visitors) to a museum. The framework's interpretative phase made it possible to observe that the effectiveness of such communication does not depend on the apparent homogeneity of the themes but on the convergence between identity and image with reference to three qualitative dimensions – Functional, Holistic and Experiential (H2). While convergence exists regarding the traditional educational role and the creation and dissemination of knowledge, as indicated by the functional and holistic dimensions of both the Aim and Organization and Art and Collections themes, a qualitative gap is present in the experiential dimension. Indeed, observing this dimension within the four themes, it is seen that the museum tends to give particular importance to the experiential aspect in the moment of the visit or at any rate in the narration of the visit (the vision of the museum and the users' associative nodes tend to be similar). In contrast, unlike the users, it neglects the experiential value when it communicates its future plans (Prospects) and presents its collections (Art and Collections). Indeed, users are keen to share the experience with other subjects even when they have not yet visited the museum themselves. Identifying new areas of interaction and dialogue is the key to personalising the appeal of the cultural offerings and creating effective and efficient action plans designed to increase awareness of the museum.

The findings suggest that the operative framework proposed is appropriete, in a relationship context as the Web 2.0, to know the qualitative gap between on line identity and on line image and to build a strong and recognizable brand over time since it creates a semantic and aesthetic systems consistent with the culture of the core target audience for the generation of sensory and cognitive categories.

## 6. Managerial implication and limitations

The literature has more often paid separately attention to the construction of brand identity and brand image, to the effect that each one, has singularly on the consumer's purchasing behaviour (Keller, 1993; Cretu and Brodie, 2007) or on building brand equity (Faircloth *et al.*, 2001; Madhavaram *et al.*, 2005; Wheeler, 2013).

Instead, assuming as relevant the link between identity and image (De Chernatony, 1999; Nandan, 2005), from a theoretical point of view, the paper contributes to enhance its importance with the aim to decrease the distance between these two factors. The assumption is that the convergence on the web between the two dimensions is an expression of a positive customer-based brand equity because it is synonymous of a familiarity with the brand not only with consumers, but also with the user

who may become such. The framework's originality lies in the possibility of extraction and analysis of non-structured information which, if interpreted from the perspective of convergence between identity and image, can be transformed into knowledge useful for decision-making.

Knowing the level of convergence between on line brand identity and on line brand image makes it possible to assess more accurately a) the multiplying effect of brand awareness and appeal; b) the sensory, emotional and cognitive perception of the brand; c) the level of user interactivity with respect to the strategies adopted; d) the suitability of creating targeted forms of promotional communication.

While providing knowledge, useful for setting future branding strategies, the framework is limited by its purely qualitative approach. Its evolution should therefore involve the construction of indices that enable a quantitative analysis of the intensity and richness of the interaction. Despite the subjectivity of the framework, its interpretative phase represents a self-diagnosis of one's web communication via an analysis of the differences between the various dimensions of core communication (identity) and core perception (image). This makes it possible to observe and monitor the areas of interaction between brand and users, the interest of users in specific key themes and the capacity of the organisation to activate the three strategic dimensions (Functional, Holistic and Experiential) via the Web.

**Monica Fait**
**Paola Scorrano**
**Amedeo Maizza**
**Alkis Thrassou**
A framework for analysing convergence between online brand identity and online brand image.
The case of the British Museum

## References

AAKER D.A. (1991), *Managing brand equity: Capitalizing on the value of a brand name*, Free Press, New York.

AAKER D.A. (1996), "Measuring brand equity across products and markets", *California Management Review*, vol. 38, n. 3, 102-120.

AAKER J.L. (1997), "Dimensions of brand personality", *Journal of Marketing Research*, Aug, 34, 3vol. ABI/INFORM Global, pp. 347-356.

ADJEI M.T., NOBLE S.M., NOBLE C.H. (2010), "The influence of C2C communications in online brand communities on customer purchase behavior", *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, vol. 38, n. 5, pp. 634-653.

AMIRKHANPOUR M., VRONTIS D., THRASSOU A. (2014), "Mobile Marketing: A Contemporary Strategic Perspective", *International Journal of Technology Marketing*, vol. 9, n. 3, pp. 252-269.

ARMANO D. (2008), "Brand interactions are the future: be prepared with an interaction designer", *Advertising Age*, vol. 79, n. 17, p. 24.

ASHLEY C., TUTEN T. (2015), "Creative strategies in social media marketing: An exploratory study of branded social content and consumer engagement", *Psychology and Marketing*, vol. 32, n. 1, pp. 15-27.

BABBIE E. (1992), *The practice of social research,* Macmillan, New York.

BAKHSHI H., THROSBY D. (2012), "New technologies in cultural institutions: theory, evidence and policy implications", *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, vol. 18, n. 2, pp. 205-222.

BERELSON B. (1952), *Content Analysis in Communication Research*, Free Press., Glencoe, Ill.

BERTHON P.R., PITT L.F., PLANGGER K., SHAPIRO D. (2012), "Marketing meets Web 2.0, social media, and creative consumers: Implications for international marketing strategy", *Business Horizons,* vol. 55, n. 3, pp. 261-271.

BERTHON P., PITT L., CAMPBELL C. (2008), "Ad lib: When customers create the ad.", *California Management Review*, vol. 50, n. 4, pp. 6-30.

BLACK G. (2005), *The engaging museum: Developing museums for visitor involvement*, Routledge, New York, U.S.A

BOLASCO S. (1997), "L'analisi informatica dei testi", in Ricolfi L. (a cura di), *La ricerca qualitativa*, NIS, Roma.

BOWDEN J.L.H. (2009), "The process of customer engagement: A conceptual framework", *Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice,* vol. 17, n. 1, pp. 63-74.

BOWEN J., BRADBURNE J., BURCH A., DIERKING L., FALK J., FANTONI S.F., LONSDALE P. (2008), *Digital technologies and the museum experience: Handheld guides and other media,* Rowman Altamira Press, Plymouth, United Kingdom.

BRODIE R.J., ILIC A., JURIC B., HOLLEBEEK L. (2013), "Consumer engagement in a virtual brand community: An exploratory analysis", *Journal of Business Research*, vol. 66, n. 1, pp. 105-114.

BUTTLE F.A. (1998), "Word of mouth: understanding and managing referral marketing", *Journal of Strategic Marketing*, vol. 6, n. 3, pp. 241-254.

CAMERON F., KENDERDINE S. (2007), *Theorizing Digital Cultural Heritage: A Critical Discourse (Media in Transition)*, The MIT Press., Cambridge, Massachusetts, U.S.A.

CASTELLS M. (1996), *The Information Age: Economy, Society and Culture, vol. 1: The Rise of the Network Society*, Blackwell Cambridge, MA-Oxford, UK.

CHRISTODOULIDES G. (2012), "Cross-National Differences in e-WOM Influence", *European Journal of Marketing,* vol. 46, n. 11, pp. 1689-1707.

CHRISTODOULIDES G., JEVONS C., BONHOMME J. (2012), "Memo to marketers: Quantitative evidence for change", *Journal of Advertising Research*, vol. 52, n. 1, pp. 53-64.

COOPER R.J, RUGER S.M. (2000), *A Simple Question Aswering System*, Trec- trec. nist.gov

CRETU A.E., BRODIE R.J. (2007), "The influence of brand image and company reputation where manufacturers market to small firms: A customer value perspective", *Industrial Marketing Management*, vol. 36, n. 2, pp. 230-240.

DAUGHERTY T., EASTIN M.S., BRIGHT L. (2008), "Exploring consumer motivations for creating user-generated content", *Journal of Interactive Advertising*, vol. 8, n. 2, pp. 16-25.

DE CHERNATONY L. (1999), "Brand management through narrowing the gap between brand identity and brand reputation", *Journal of Marketing Management*, vol. 15, n. 1-3, pp. 157-179.

DE VALCK K., VAN BRUGGEN G.H., WIERENGA B. (2009), "Virtual communities: A marketing perspective", *Decision Support Systems*, vol. 47, n. 3, pp. 185-203.

DILLON W.R., MADDEN T.J., KIRMANI A., MUKHERJEE S. (2001), "Understanding what's in a brand rating: A model for assessing brand and attribute effects and their relationship to brand equity", *Journal of Marketing Research*, vol. 38, n. 4, pp. 415-429.

DOWNE-WAMBOLDT B. (1992), "Content analysis: method, applications, and issues", *Health Care for Women International*, vol. 13, n. 3, pp. 313-321.

EISENHARDT K.M. (1989), "Building theories from case study research", *Academy of Management Review*, vol. 14, n. 4, pp. 532-550.

FAIRCLOTH J.B., CAPELLA L.M., ALFORD B.L. (2001), "The effect of brand attitude and brand image on brand equity", *Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice*, vol. 9, n. 3, pp. 61-75.

FAIT M., SCORRANO P., CAVALLO F., IAIA L., MAIZZA A. (2015), "Online Core Communication and Online Core Perception. Is There Convergence?", *Book of Proceedings of 8th Annual Conference of the EuroMed Academy of Business, "Innovation, Entrepreneurship and Sustainable Value Chain in a Dynamic Environment"*, Verona, 16-18 Settembre 2015, ISBN: 978-9963-711-37-6, pp. 584-597.

FALK J.H., DIERKING L.D. (2000), *Learning from museums: Visitor experiences and the making of meaning*, Altamira Press., Lanham, Maryland, U.S.A.

FELDMAN R., SANGER J. (2007), *The Text Mining Handbook. Advanced Approaches in Analyzing Unstructured Data*, Cambridge University Press, New York, NY.

FIORE A.M., JIN H.J., KIM J. (2005a), "For fun and profit: Hedonic value from image interactivity and responses toward an online store", P*sychology and Marketing*, vol. 22, n. 8, pp. 669-694.

FIORE A.M., KIM J., LEE H.H. (2005b), "Effect of image interactivity technology on consumer responses toward the online retailer", *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, vol. 19, n. 3, pp. 38-53.

FLYVBJERG B. (2006), "Five misunderstandings about case-study research", *Qualitative Inquiry*, vol. 12, n. 2, pp. 219-245.

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

GUNDLACH H., NEVILLE B. (2012), "Authenticity: Further theoretical and practical development", *Journal of Brand Management*, vol. 19, n. 6, pp. 484-499.

HERR P.M., KARDES F.R., KIM J. (1991), "Effects of word-of-mouth and product-attribute information on persuasion: An accessibility-diagnosticity perspective", *Journal of Consumer Research*, vol. 17, n. 4, pp. 454-462.

HOFFMAN D.L., NOVAK T.P. (1996), "Marketing in hypermedia computer-mediated environments: Conceptual foundations", *The Journal of Marketing*, vol. 60, n. 3 (Jul., 1996), pp. 50-68.

HOLLEBEEK L. (2011), "Exploring customer brand engagement: definition and themes", *Journal of Strategic Marketing*, vol. 19, n. 7, pp. 555-573.

HOLSTI O.R. (1969), *Content analysis for the social sciences and humanities*, Addison-Wesley, Reading, MA.

JENKINS H. (2006), *Convergence Culture: Where Old and New Media Collide*, New York University Press, New York.

JENKINS H., PURUSHOTMA R., WEIGEL M., CLINTON K., ROBISON A.J. (2009), *Confronting the challenges of participatory culture: Media education for the 21st century*, Mit Press, Cambridge Massachusetts, England, London.

KAPLAN A.M., HAENLEIN M. (2010), "Users of the world, unite! The challenges and opportunities of Social Media", *Business Horizons*, vol. 53, n. 1, pp. 59-68.

Monica Fait
Paola Scorrano
Amedeo Maizza
Alkis Thrassou
A framework for analysing convergence between online brand identity and online brand image.
The case of the British Museum

KELLER K.L. (1993), "Conceptualizing, measuring, and managing customer-based brand equity", *Journal of Marketing*, vol. 57, n. 1, pp. 1-22.

KELLER K.L. (2003), *Strategic Brand Management: Building, Measuring, and Managing Brand Equit*, 2d ed. Prentice Hall, Upper Saddle River, NJ.

KELLER K.L. (2009), "Building strong brands in a modern marketing communications environment", *Journal of Marketing Communications*, vol. 15, n. 2-3, pp. 139-155.

KEMPF D.S. (1999), "Attitude formation from product trial: Distinct roles of cognition and affect for hedonic and functional products", *Psychology and Marketing*, vol. 16, n. 1, pp. 35-50.

KERLINGER F.N. (1986), *Foundations of Behavioral Research,* Holt, Rinehart and Winston, New York, NY.

KIM J., MORRIS J.D. (2007), "The power of affective response and cognitive structure in product-trial attitude formation", *Journal of Advertising,* vol. 36, n. 1, pp. 95-106.

KOTLER N.G., KOTLER P., KOTLER W.I. (2008), *Museum marketing and strategy: designing missions, building audiences, generating revenue and resources*, John Wiley & Sons San Francisco, CA.

KOTLER P., KARTAJAYA H., SETIAWAN I. (2010), *Marketing 3.0: From products to customers to the human spirit,* John Wiley & Sons, San Francisco, CA.

KRIPPENDORF K. (1980), *Content Analysis: An Introduction to Its Methodology*, Sage, Newbury Park, CA.

KWOK C., ETZIONI O., WELD D.S. (2001), "Scaling question answering to the web", *ACM Transactions on Information Systems (TOIS)*, vol. 19, n. 3, pp. 242-262.

LACZNIAK R.N., DECARLO T.E., RAMASWAMI S.N. (2001), "Consumers' responses to negative word-of-mouth communication: An attribution theory perspective", *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, vol. 11, n. 1, pp. 57-73.

LANCIA F. (2012), T*he Logic of the T-LAB Tools Explained*, Retrieved [date] from http://www.tlab.it/en/toolsexplained.php.

LANG C., REEVE J., WOOLLARD V. (2006), *The responsive museum: working with audiences in the twenty-first century,* Ashgate, Aldershot, Hants, England; Burlington, VT.

LEINHARDT G., KNUTSON K., CROWLEY K (2003), "Museum Learning Collaborative redux", *Journal of Museum Education,* vol. 28, n. 1, pp. 23-31.

LÓPEZ X., MARGAPOTI I., MARAGLIANO R., BOVE G. (2010), "The presence of Web 2.0 tools on museum websites: a comparative study between England, France, Spain, Italy, and the USA", *Museum Management and Curatorship*, vol. 25, n. 2, pp. 235-249.

MACNAMARA J. (2010), T*he 21ˢᵗ century media (r)evolution: Emergent communication practices*, Peter Lang, New York.

MADHAVARAM S., BADRINARAYANAN V., MCDONALD R.E. (2005), "Integrated marketing communication (IMC) and brand identity as critical components of brand equity strategy: A conceptual framework and research propositions", *Journal of Advertising*, vol. 34, n. 4, pp. 69-80.

MORSE J.M., FIELD P.A. (1995), *Qualitative research methods for health professionals* (2ⁿᵈ ed.), Sage, Thousand Oaks, CA.

MOWEN J.C. (1995), *Consumer behavior*, 4° ed., Prentice Hall, Englewood Cliffs.

MUÑIZ A.M., SCHAU H.J. (2011), "How to inspire value-laden collaborative consumer-generated content", *Business Horizons*, vol. 54, n. 3, pp. 209-217.

MUÑIZ JR A.M., SCHAU H.J. (2007), "Vigilante marketing and consumer-created communications", *Journal of Advertising*, vol. 36, n. 3, pp. 35-50.

NANDAN S. (2005), "An exploration of the brand identity-brand image linkage: A communications perspective", *Journal of Brand Management*, vol. 12, n. 4, pp. 264-278.

PARK K.S., KIM J. (2003), "The roles of emotion and cognition in a product-trial attitude formation under different involvement conditions", *Journal of Marketing Management Research*, vol. 8, n. 2, pp. 79-102.

PARRY R. (2010), *Museums in a Digital Age*, Milton Park, Routledge.

PETER J.P., OLSON J.C. (1996), *Consumer behavior and marketing strategy,* 4° ed., Irwin, New York.

PINE B.J., GILMORE J.H. (1999), *The experience economy: work is theatre & every business a stage*, Harvard Business Press.

PRAHALAD C.K., RAMASWAMY V. (2004), "Co-creation experiences: The next practice in value creation", *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, vol. 18, n. 3, pp. 5-14.

PRAHALAD C.K., RAMASWAMY V. (2013), *The future of competition: Co-creating unique value with customers,* Harvard Business Press., Brighton, Boston, Massachusetts, U.S.A.

RAHAMAN H., TAN B.K. (2011), "Interpreting digital heritage: A conceptual model with end-users' perspective", *International Journal of Architectural Computing*, vol. 9, n. 1, pp. 99-113.

SCHAU H.J., MUÑIZ JR A.M., ARNOULD E.J. (2009), "How brand community practices create value", *Journal of Marketing*, vol. 73, n. 5, pp. 30-51.

SCHWEIBENZ W. (2010), "Museums and Web 2.0: Some Thoughts about Authority", *Handbook of Research on Technologies and Cultural Heritage: Applications and Environments: Applications and Environments*, n. 1.

SCORRANO P., FAIT M. (2015), "A conceptual model to develop data gathered from unstructured sources into marketing knowledge" in Vrontis D., Weber Y., Tsoukatos E., Maizza A., *Contemporary Trends and Perspectives in Wine and Agrifood Management,* Cyprus, EuroMed Press, ISBN: 978-9963-711-30-7.

SCORRANO P., FAIT M., MAIZZA A. (2015), "The relationship between unstructured information and marketing knowledge: an experiment in the US wine market", *International Journal of Management Practice*, vol. 8, n. 3, pp. 232-246.

SIGGELKOW N. (2007), "Persuasion with case studies", *Academy of Management Journal*, vol. 50, n. 1, pp. 20.

SIMON N. (2010), *The Partecipatory Museum*. Santa Cruz. http://www.participatorymuseum.org/read/

SLATER A., ARMSTRONG K. (2010), "Involvement, Tate, and me", *Journal of Marketing Management*, vol. 26, n. 7-8, pp. 727-748.

SMITH T. (2009), "The social media revolution", *International Journal of Market Research*, vol. 51, n. 4, pp. 559-561.

SOLOMON M.R. (2004), *Consumer behavior, buying, having, and being*, 6° ed., Pearson, Prentice Hall, New Jersey.

**Monica Fait**
**Paola Scorrano**
**Amedeo Maizza**
**Alkis Thrassou**
A framework for analysing convergence between online brand identity and online brand image.
The case of the British Museum

SPROTT D., CZELLAR S., SPANGENBERG E. (2009), "The importance of a general measure of brand engagement on market behavior: Development and validation of a scale", *Journal of Marketing Research*, vol. 46, n. 1, pp. 92-104.

TAHERI B., JAFARI A. (2014), "12 Museums as playful venues in the leisure society", *Contemporary Tourist Experience: Concepts and Consequences*, vol. 27 Routledge, New York, pp. 201-215.

THOMAS S., MINTZ A. (1998), *Virtual and the Real: Media in the Museum*, American Association of Museums.

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.

TUTEN T.L., SOLOMON M.R. (2014), *Social media marketing*, Pearson, Milano.

VAN DOORN J., LEMON K.N., MITTAL V., NASS S., PICK D., PIRNER P., VERHOEF P.C. (2010), "Customer engagement behavior: Theoretical foundations and research directions", *Journal of Service Research,* vol. 13, n. 3, pp. 253-266.

VERHOEF P.C., REINARTZ W.J., KRAFFT M. (2010), "Customer engagement as a new perspective in customer management", *Journal of Service Research,* vol. 13, n. 3, pp. 247-252.

VIVEK S.D., BEATTY S.E., MORGAN R.M. (2012), "Customer engagement: Exploring customer relationships beyond purchase", *Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice*, vol. 20, n. 2, pp. 122-146.

VOM LEHN D., HEATH C. (2005), "Accounting for new technology in museum exhibitions", *International Journal of Arts Management*, vol. 7, n. 3 (SPRING 2005), pp. 11-21.

VOORHEES E.M. (1999), *"The TREC-8 Question Answering Track Report", proceedings of the eighth Text REtrieval Conference (TREC-8),* Gaithersburg, Maryland, November 17-19, n. 199, pp. 77-82.

VRONTIS D., VIASSONE M., THRASSOU A. (2015), "The role and potential of Social Networks Sites in tertiary education", *Sinergie*, vol. 33, n. 97, pp. 55-81.

WEBER R.P. (1990), *Basic Content Analysis,* 2nd ed., SAGE Publications, Newbury Park, California, U.S.A.

WEINBERG B.D., PEHLIVAN E. (2011), "Social spending: Managing the social media mix", *Business Horizons*, vol. 54, n. 3, pp. 275-282.

WHEELER A. (2013), *Designing brand identity* (vol. 3, pp. 1-40), John Wiley & Sons, New Jersey.

WILLIAMS T.G. (2002), "Social class influences on purchase evaluation criteria", *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, vol. 19, n. 3, pp. 249-276.

YIN R.K. (2013), *Case study research: Design and methods,* Sage, Thousand Oaks.

ZEITHAML V.A. (1988), "Consumer perceptions of price, quality, and value: a means-end model and synthesis of evidence", *The Journal of Marketing*, vol. 52, n. 3, pp. 2-22.

## Web Site

Monica Fait
Paola Scorrano
Amedeo Maizza
Alkis Thrassou
A framework for analysing convergence between online brand identity and online brand image.
The case of the British Museum

*https://www.britishmuseum.org/pdf/Report%20and%20accounts%202013%20-%20 2014.pdf*

*https://www.britishmuseum.org/pdf/Towards_2020-The_British_Museum_Strategy. pdf*

*https://www.facebook.com/britishmuseum*

*http://www.museus.gov.br/wpcontent/uploads/2014/04/TheArtNewspaper2013_ ranking.pdf(The Art Newspaper, 100 Art Museum Attendance, Special Report 2014)*

## Academic or professional position and contacts

**Monica Fait**
Researcher of Management
University of the Salento, Lecce - Italy
e-mail: monica.fait@unisalento.it

**Paola Scorrano**
Researcher of Management
University of the Salento, Lecce - Italy
e-mail: paola.scorrano@unisalento.it

**Amedeo Maizza**
Full Professor of Management
University of Salento, Lecce - Italy
e-mail: amedeo.maizza@unisalento.it

**Alkis Thrassou**
Professor of Business
University of Nicosia - Ciprus
e-mail: thrassou.a@unic.ac.cy

**Book reviews**

Marco Revelli, **Non ti riconosco. Un viaggio eretico nell'Italia che cambia,** Einaudi, Torino 2016, pp. 252.

In questo nuovo volume di Marco Revelli, che insegna Scienze della politica all'università del Piemonte orientale, l'autore confessa, nella introduzione, di aver scelto, per questo suo ultimo libro, un titolo evocativo, suggeritogli proprio dal verso presente in una celebre composizione giovanile di Goethe. La perentorietà del «non ti riconosco», l'atto stesso del mancato riconoscimento, dice appunto Revelli, "assume appieno tutto il proprio significato dissolvente, di metafora temporale della frattura. Tanto radicale da non permettere ai due frammenti dell'Io, che stanno sulle sponde opposte della faglia, di vedere i propri tratti di continuità e considerarsi ancora parti dello stesso tutto".

Sappiamo che l'autore ha compiuto un lungo viaggio in Italia, da Torino a Lampedusa, soffermandosi in particolare nei luoghi emblematici di quello che, a suo tempo, più di trenta anni fa, venne chiamato il "secondo miracolo economico", luoghi che in questi ultimi tempi sono in disarmo ed in attesa che possano essere concretizzate nuove opportunità di lavoro in grado di determinare finalmente la ripresa dello sviluppo e della mobilità. Un costante riscontro fra il passato e il presente mette a nudo la netta rottura determinatasi fra due fasi storiche recenti che l'autore analizza nel suo viaggio-racconto che "si presta perciò a una duplice chiave di lettura, in quanto è imperniato sia su un continuo raffronto fra un'epoca e l'altra nei loro aspetti economico-sociali di fondo sia su una riflessione d'insieme sui loro rispettivi tratti distintivi e prospettici" (Valerio Castronovo).

Torino è la prima tappa del viaggio-racconto di Revelli, ma si deve puntualizzare subito che c'è stata la Torino di ieri e c'è adesso la Torino di oggi. A proposito di questa città e del primo capitolo di questo libro lo scrittore Corrado Stajano ha fatto questa riflessione: "Cosa era Mirafiori! Un posto ciclopico, infernale, mostruoso in tutti i sensi, con un perimetro di 11 chilometri, 32 porte, 60 mila operai […] Gli operai sopravvissuti sono 5.321, dalle linee di produzione escono un centinaio di auto al giorno, ne uscivano 5.000". Commentando e illustrando sempre il primo capitolo del libro di Revelli, Stajano aggiunge quest'altra sua riflessione: "La Fiat si chiama Fca, la sede legale del gruppo, dopo la fusione con la Chrysler, è ad Amsterdam, la sede fiscale a Londra. Tutto frantumato, sminuzzato, rimpicciolito, ridotto a rottame. La grande distribuzione ha vinto sulla grande produzione. A Torino, dove non c'è soltanto la Fca, la vita continua, nonostante tutto, e stanno nascendo laboratori; Arduino, per esempio, che non è un uomo, ma "una scheda" che crea gli oggetti più disparati; i Traders, fornitori di servizi, e non pochi inventori di nuovi lavori, il contrario della produzione fordista. Le iniziative esistono ma, se manca una politica sana e intelligente, come è possibile collegare tra loro tutte quelle energie positive?".

*Torino. La città promessa e la città perduta*, questo è il titolo significativo del capitolo dedicato da Revelli alla sua città, che evidentemente egli conosce molto bene. Non meno significativi sono tutti gli altri titoli dei capitoli successivi del libro. Il titolo del secondo capitolo *Fantasmi. Nel cuore della Brianza*, è così formulato, perché in esso si accenna inizialmente a ciò che resta di Consonno, frazione di Olginate in provincia di Lecco, ora ridotta a un cumulo di macerie, perché un giorno, nell'ottobre del 1976 ci furono "una pioggia torrenziale, una serie di frane, la strada interrotta. E di colpo Consonno si spense". Tale frazione, nel progetto del suo ideatore, doveva diventare e rimanere per sempre una specie di Las Vegas italiana nel cuore della Brianza. La catastrofe naturale, accennata nelle prime pagine del capitolo, sembra prefigurare nelle intenzioni dell'autore ciò che anni dopo capitò a questo distretto della Brianza diventato, intorno agli anni Ottanta del Novecento, un ricco polo industriale con centinaia di piccole imprese straordinariamente prolifiche, distretto chiamato allora in maniera enfatica la Silicon Valley italiana. Questo distretto industriale era diventato ricco non a ridosso della prima e ormai lontana rivoluzione industriale (quella del telaio e del legno), ma della ultima rivoluzione industriale "quella del digitale e del silicio". Con l'esplosione della bolla immobiliare americana incominciarono i guai. Infatti il 2008 fu l'anno dell'avvio della crisi economica mondiale ed anche per questo distretto della Brianza incominciarono la caduta a cascata, i tagli, la frenetica mobilità delle maestranze, la bancarotta delle imprese, in particolare quelle a conduzione familiare.

Il viaggio-racconto di Revelli continua verso altri centri industriali che veniamo a conoscere nel terzo capitolo, il cui titolo *Verso il Nordest. Casa, chiesa, capannoni,* vuole subito attirare, con effetto invasivo, l'attenzione del lettore su ciò che avvenne, dagli anni Ottanta in poi, nel Triveneto dove "in rapida successione, esplosero fragorosamente - per fatturato, per export, per attivi di bilancio - i distretti del Nordest: il distretto calzaturiero veronese e quello orafo vicentino, quello della concia di Arzignano e quello dell'occhiale di Belluno, lo Sportsystem di Montebelluna, il mobile d'arte di Bassano e le scarpe della Riviera del Brenta". Ed è sempre in stretta correlazione con la formulazione del titolo del capitolo che Revelli scrive che, in un batter d'occhio, ogni rimessa fu trasformata "in un reparto di fabbrica, ogni rustico annesso alla vecchia cascina in un capannone, ogni cantina in un laboratorio", e così il tutto venne saturato "in un reticolare processo produttivo onnivoro". Ma anche qui, come nel Nordovest, dopo il 2008 la crisi ha segnato il tracollo di molte aziende e "il paesaggio economico e sociale, un tempo rigoglioso e versatile, ha perso sempre più smalto e spessore al punto da risultare ormai irriconoscibile".

Il viaggio di Revelli, spostandosi verso sud, si ferma a Prato nella tappa descritta nel capitolo quarto il cui titolo *Il distretto di Prato. La Lupa e il Dragone* è caratterizzato dal richiamo zoomorfo, che allude alla "lupa", vecchia macchina stracciatrice della lana, insostituibile strumento di lavoro delle maestranze tessili pratesi, mentre con il "dragone" si allude alle attuali maestranze cinesi, la cui invasione di massa ormai impedisce alle maestranze pratesi di oggi di riconoscersi pienamente nella loro città di origine, sottratta "ai virtuosi imprenditori locali" a causa di "un dragone

cinese che si divora il sacro tessile pratese incorporandoselo". Infatti il 94 percento delle imprese cinesi lavora nelle confezioni, in settore estraneo alla tradizione pratese, mentre solo il 6 percento delle imprese cinesi lavora con il tessile, che è sempre stato il vero cardine del distretto. A questo punto netta emerge una importante riflessione dell'autore che si esprime così: "Ci si dimentica spesso del fatto, non secondario, che le imprese cinesi hanno contribuito, esattamente negli anni cruciali tra il 2008 e il 2012, per circa un terzo alla produzione totale del settore manifatturiero pratese, e per quasi la metà a quella del settore "tessile, abbigliamento e pelletterie", compensando col proprio valore aggiunto il crollo della produzione locale e con le proprie robuste esportazioni la micidiale contrazione di quelle delle imprese tradizionali del vecchio distretto". Con questa riflessione l'autore afferma che non c'è stata nessuna presunta "usurpazione" da parte della imprenditoria locale cinese, ma che è andata perduta, per così dire, l'opportunità di una alleanza produttiva e commerciale fra l'imprenditoria tradizionale pratese e quella cinese insediatasi in tempi recenti. Tale opportunità poteva giovare ad entrambe le comunità locali.

Con i primi quattro capitoli del suo libro l'autore ha scritto la maggior parte delle pagine dedicate alle tappe del viaggio, che, dopo Prato, si sposta lontano per arrivare alla città di Taranto, di cui si parla nel capitolo quinto intitolato *Cattedrali del Sud. Taranto, l'utopia capovolta.* La città pugliese è quella in cui è stato dislocato il quarto centro siderurgico del nostro paese, l'Ilva appunto di Taranto "un mostro destinato a divorare - non metaforicamente, fisicamente - la città. Sei milioni di metri quadrati di superficie subito, all'atto della inaugurazione del primo altoforno nel 1964". La superficie di questo enorme impianto fu ulteriormente estesa negli anni seguenti a tal punto da venire considerata l'acciaieria più grande d'Europa. Il centro siderurgico di Taranto che doveva rappresentare finalmente il riscatto primario delle classi sociali più disagiate dell'Italia meridionale alla fine è diventato soltanto una fabbrica di morte, come sottolinea Revelli senza dubbio commosso, perché l'Ilva di Taranto è diventata portatrice di una catena di tumori, diffusi persino in alcuni quartieri prossimi all'impianto siderurgico. Non meno sconvolgente è l'approccio per il lettore che si sofferma sulle pagine dell'ultimo capitolo il quinto, intitolato *Cattedrali del Sud. Gioia Tauro, nell'orto degli ulivi.* È stato scritto da parte di un giornalista, attento commentatore del libro di Revelli (B. Vecchi) che a Gioia Tauro "le cattedrali dell'industrializzazione hanno fatto arricchire faccendieri, imprenditori in abito blu". Infatti secondo l'autore bisogna affermare che in questa città calabrese la criminalità organizzata diventa impresa globale, che usa il porto come una base per i suoi traffici e come bancomat, visto che chi lo usa come punto d'attracco per i container deve pagare una quota alla malavita organizzata. Per uscire da questa specie di "apocalisse sociale", descritta soprattutto negli ultimi due capitoli del libro, a Revelli occorre prendere il traghetto e sbarcare a Lampedusa, all'isola cui è dedicato l'ultimo testo del libro che si intitola così: *Epilogo. Lampedusa. Exit.* In questo lembo di terra di confine, il più periferico di una Italia irriconoscibile, estrema frontiera fra Europa e Africa, luogo noto per la pratica dell'accoglienza turistica, ancora oggi resta luogo di accoglienza, ma per masse disperate di esseri umani fuggiti dalla loro patria e proprio

qui l'autore Marco Revelli visita con angoscia un cimitero dove le croci sono state costruite con il legno delle barche affondate.

Umberto Casari

**Year 2017 Reviewers**

**The Editors in Chief and the Editorial Advisory Board of Sinergie
are grateful to the reviewers who contributed
to the peer reviewew process in 2017**

| | |
|---|---|
| Alberto Mattiacci | *Sapienza Università di Roma* |
| Aurelio Mauri | *Università IULM* |
| Alessandra Mazzei | *Università IULM* |
| Clelia Mazzoni | *Università della Campania Luigi Vanvitelli* |
| Gaetano Miceli | *Università della Calabria* |
| Laura Michelini | *Università Lumsa di Roma* |
| Roberta Minazzi | *Università dell'Insubria* |
| Arabella Mocciaro Li Destri | *Università di Palermo* |
| Michele Modina | *Università del Molise* |
| Andrea Moretti | *Università di Udine* |
| Alfonso Morvillo | *Irat-Cnr* |
| Maria Rosara Napolitano | *Università del Sannio* |
| Francesca Negri | *Università di Parma* |
| Roberto Nelli | *Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore* |
| Claudio Nigro | *Università di Foggia* |
| Costanza Nosi | *Università Lumsa di Roma* |
| Andrea Paci | *Università di Firenze* |
| Paola Paniccia | *Università di Roma Tor Vergata* |
| Roberto Parente | *Università di Salerno* |
| Simonetta Pattuglia | *Università di Roma Tor Vergata* |
| Giovanna Pegan | *Università di Trieste* |
| Luca Pellegrini | *Università IULM* |
| Anna Claudia Pellicelli | *Università di Torino* |
| Tonino Pencarelli | *Università di Urbino Carlo Bo* |
| Alessandra Perri | *Università Cà Foscari* |
| Luca Petruzzellis | *Università di Bari* |
| Paolo Piciocchi | *Università di Salerno* |
| Angelo Presenza | *Università del Molise* |
| Tommaso Pucci | *Università di Siena* |
| Andrea Quintiliani | *Università Telematica Pegaso* |
| Marco Remondino | *Università di Genova* |
| Antonio Renzi | *Sapienza Università di Roma* |
| Riccardo Resciniti | *Università del Sannio* |
| Angelo Riviezzo | *Università del Sannio* |
| Marco Romano | *Università di Catania* |
| Stefania Romenti | *Università IULM* |
| Angeloantonio Russo | *Università Lum Jean Monnet* |
| Giuseppe Russo | *Università di Cassino e del Lazio Meridionale* |
| Ivan Russo | *Università di Verona* |
| Giuseppe Sancetta | *Sapienza Università di Roma* |
| Marcello Sansone | *Università di Cassino e del Lazio Meridionale* |
| Savino Santovito | *Università di Bari* |
| Marialuisa Saviano | *Università di Salerno* |
| Francesco Schiavone | *Università di Napoli Parthenope* |
| Mario Scicutella | *Università di Bari* |
| Paola Scorrano | *Università del Salento* |
| Alfonso Siano | *Università di Salerno* |
| Paola Signori | *Università di Verona* |
| Patrizia Silvestrelli | *Università di Macerata* |

**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

**sinergie**
italian journal of management

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.

# 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.

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 | € | 90, 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 2017 entitles the subscriber to attend the Sinergie-Sima 2017 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:

*Innovation, Entrepreneurship and Digital Ecosystems*

*Value co-creation:*
*le sfide di management per le imprese e per la società*

*Transformative business strategies*
*and new patterns for value creation*