Cultural Heritage as an Instrument for The Tourism Sector: A Cultural Network Approach

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Abstract

1. Introduction

The definition of efficient management strategies for the protection and valorisation of the cultural heritage is quite complex mainly because it depends both on the cultural products and the stakeholders involved in the process (organizations, institutions etc.). The transformation process of the Italian cultural system has raised the need to search for new and different forms of organization of cultural institutions, which can take advantages of the potential link between cultural heritage and economic development (Leon and Tuccini, 2011; Causi and Leon, 1990; Trimarchi, 2003).

Following De Carlo and Dubini (2010), we look at cultural heritage as a resource for local development consistent with resource-based view (RBV) and analyse the formation and stability of potential cultural networks among heterogeneous cultural and territorial actors.

The relation between cultural heritage and economic development through tourism is often seen as highly conflictual from the managerial literature (Berry, 1994; Boniface, 1998; Jansen-Verbeke, 1998). In order to define new forms of efficient management of cultural heritage for the local development, we focus on the relationship between cultural heritage, economy and territory, integration and territorial cultural systems (Valentino et al., 1999; Di Filippi et al., 2007), analysing the formation and the strength of cultural networks by means of the network formation theory.

2. Aim of the paper and Methodology

Specifically, this paper analyses the formation and stability of potential cultural networks among heterogeneous cultural and territorial actors distinguishing between two different network stability notions, the pairwise stability and the hypergraph stability in order to characterize between bilateral (e.g. endogenous network formation) and multilateral outcomes (e.g., induced cultural systems).

We develop a cultural network formation game (Bala and Goyal 2000, Currarini and Morelli 2000, Dutta and Mutuswami 1997) in a setting with three heterogeneous entities: a well-known cultural institution, considered a major touristic attractor (AP) of the territory (e.g., a very popular Museum), a minor cultural attractor (AM), (e.g., a rural ethnographic museum), and a touristic firm (T) taking advantages from the presence of the attractors in the territory.

3. Results

The Pairwise stability results highlight that the empty network and the two sponsorship configurations (i.e., The firm as sponsor and the two attractors in turn as exclusive sponsee) are not stable equilibria

of the game. The two cultural attractors always have incentive to form a link if there exist a positive public subsidy associated to the museum network formation. On the other hand, the touristic firm always prefers to connect to both attractors.

The results on the hyperlink stability for the cultural district and the museum cultural district, point out the potential for both the architectures to be stable equilibria of the game.

In order to reach a stable induced cultural district, public subsidies must be set at the Minimum Quality Standard cost level and the density effect should also be considered as an important element of stability, especially according to the museum cultural district Pairwise-Stability results.

Keywords: management, tourism, network formation, organizational model

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