

Title of the paper: Logics and interlocking directorships in a multi-stakeholder system

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Abstract

Our paper analyses the salient stakeholders of a destination by investigating the logics of actors affiliated to more than one stakeholder group. We hypothesize that (1) the logics of individuals who belong to two stakeholder groups are not simply located between the logics of the other individuals who belong to only one stakeholder group, and (2) an individual in an interlocking position has a different attitude but not a distinct logic in comparison with stakeholders belonging to only one group. The paper investigates these topics in tourism destination communities, i.e. multi-stakeholder systems where both resources and activities are divided among numerous actors. In many cases the logics of individuals in interlocking groups cannot be simply described as a “mixed” logic. A descriptive approach does not reveal any distinct logic, but some nuances suggest that interlocking stakeholders' attitudes differ from those of members of just one group. We conclude that actors in overlapping positions have different attitudes because of their *position* (they understand and successfully interpret the identity of the different groups they represent), their salience (they feel obliged to have a clear opinion), their structural function (they ensure constant adaptation to different issues and challenges by proposing solutions and innovations to their peers in their respective stakeholder groups). The research reveals the logics of key players, thus providing valuable contribution in terms of marketing, management and governance. The paper suggests a different perspective from the traditional stakeholder approach and new directions for the analysis of stakeholders' logics in community destinations.

Keywords: stakeholder theory, institutional logics, interlocking directorships, salient individuals, multi-stakeholder system, community tourism destinations

Logics and interlocking directorships in a multi-stakeholder system

1. Introduction

The traditional stakeholder research perspective emphasizes the importance of identifying various stakeholder groups that are ideally united by a particular set of interests and form a virtually homogeneous group (Freeman, 1984; Friedman & Miles, 2006). Our study explicitly challenges this assumption and suggests that individuals may have a certain degree of independence and unrelatedness, if only due to their multiple stakeholder group affiliation. In fact, it can be argued that salient individuals in business and politics sometimes appear to think and act irrationally, particularly when facing conflicting interests between the multiple peer groups to which they belong. This challenge is analyzed both within the fields of corporate governance (Fama & Jensen, 1983) and of interlocking directorships (Davis, 1996; Kaczmarek, Kimino, & Pye, 2014; O'Sullivan, 2009) in relation to big corporations, single businesses and social enterprises (Mason, Kirkbride, & BrydeMason, 2007). There is a great deal of research on boards of directors, investigating their composition, their roles and the power they exercise within businesses and in the management of relationships between stakeholders and shareholders. Their influence on decision making (Stevenson & Radin, 2015), on firm performance and on competitiveness (Ben Barka & Dardour, 2015; Carney, Gedajlovic, & Sur, 2011; Galbreath, 2006; Hermalin & Weisbach, 2003) has also been examined. We do not yet know, however, whether these findings are also applicable to other contexts, such as communities.

Our paper analyzes the different logics created by interlocking directorships in tourist destination communities, where both resources and activities are divided between numerous actors, both public and private, all with different roles, capabilities, competences and levels of authority. Logics are defined by Horn (1983, p. 1) as 'the underlying assumptions, deeply held, often unexamined, which form a framework within which reasoning takes place' (citation from Suddaby & Greenwood, 2005, p. 37). The extension of this concept to institutions, i.e. *institutional logics* (Friedland & Alford, 1991), allows conflicting logics to take place between the individual and organizational level. Within tourism studies the concept of logics is not widely used (e.g. see Elbe & Emmoth, 2014), but we consider it to be very challenging for its managerial implications, especially with reference to community destinations in which several stakeholders are involved and collaboration is very difficult (Beritelli, 2011a; Fyall, Garrod, & Wang, 2012). These multi-stakeholder systems are characterized (Beeton, 2006; Bieger, 1996; Franch, 2010; Hall & Richards, 2003; Kaspar, 1995; Murphy & Murphy, 2004; Zehrer & Hallmann, 2015) by the fact that:

- Tourism development affects both the businesses and organizations involved in the tourism service network and the local community.
- Most enterprises are small, local and family-run.
- Public assets, including environmental and landscape resources, are publicly controlled and local government can take appropriate legislative decisions to support tourism and local enterprises. It also participates in bodies and organizations engaged in the development of the territory.
- Destination management organizations (DMOs) play a key role in destination planning and development. Coordination is particularly important since DMOs manage resources which they do not own. They have to engage in a sort of meta-management of the whole community, yet have no authority over any of the actors operating in the area.

This last point is, in fact, one of the main challenges for the management and governance of community destinations: a DMO is supposed to fulfill a role similar to that of a board of directors in a business, but the context in which it operates is quite different (for a review of the roles and functions of DMOs see Beritelli, Buffa, & Martini, 2015; Pearce, 2015). It cannot influence stakeholder decision-making with the same tools, or to the same extent, as can a company's board of directors.

To sum up, this paper looks at community destinations as complex systems with multiple stakeholder groups and analyzes the responses of key actors to a given set of substantive logics. Extant research in tourist destination community planning implies a clear categorization of actors into distinct, virtually exclusive stakeholder groups (Bornhorst, Ritchie, & Sheehan, 2010; Pforr, 2006; Stokes, 2008). This categorization allows the researcher to compare these groups and to analyze their bargaining positions, interests and actions. Several actors may be affiliated to multiple stakeholder groups. A community in a tourist destination resembles a pluralist organizational setting (Kraatz & Block, 2008). Such environments present us with the - frequently studied - problem of analyzing multiple institutional logics (Greenwood, Raynard, Kodeih, Micelotta, & Lounsbury, 2011). In our study we propose two new perspectives:

1. Stakeholder interests are analyzed not by looking at one group of individuals but at the aggregate of several individuals' interests and opinions. Therefore the logics within any one stakeholder group will not necessarily be homogeneous.
2. Overlapping stakeholder groups are believed to create a mix, or possibly an intermediate form, of perceptions, beliefs, opinions, and, consequently, logics. We challenge this assumption by hypothesizing that interlocking directors may have a different logic, clearly distinct from those embraced by the actors who only belong to one stakeholder group.

Although our research is exploratory, the paper extends that ‘theory and research which looks for organizational and managerial solutions to this basic dilemma of governance [i.e. in a pluralistic organizational setting]’ (Kraatz & Block, 2008, p. 262).

2. Literature review

The review addresses the three topics mentioned in the introduction: (1) the relevance of stakeholder theory and salient actors to community destinations, (2) the coexistence of institutional logics in a pluralistic setting, (3) interlocking directorships. While the first explains the inter-organizational framework of tourist destinations and the role of salient actors, the second presents the reasons and conditions for coexisting multiple logics and the dynamics involved. The concept of interlocking directorships explains why and how actors are affiliated to multiple stakeholder groups, thus causing institutional logics to overlap.

2.1 Stakeholder groups and salient actors in tourist destinations

The frameworks suggested by stakeholder theory (Donaldson & Preston, 1995; Freeman, 1984; Freeman, Harrison, Wicks, Parmar, & De Colle, 2010; Friedman & Miles, 2006) are useful when studying issues in community-type destinations. Research on stakeholder definition and salience (Laplume, Sonpar, & Litz, 2008) provides a key to identifying, describing and classifying the stakeholders within a destination and to analyzing the factors that influence their relationships and decision-making processes. Many different approaches have been developed to the discussion of stakeholders (Friedman & Miles, 2006); of relevance to our study are those which classify categories or groups in order to highlight their varied roles and/or interests. Particularly useful are the contributions about primary and secondary stakeholders (Clarkson, 1995) and the classification of stakeholder salience (Mitchell, Agle, & Wood, 1997). In tourism *primary stakeholders* may be individuals or groups who ensure the existence of the destination in accordance with their roles and interests: the CEO of a ski area company or the owner of the largest holiday resort in the region, for example. *Secondary stakeholders* are also important players, but they are not vital: a mayor who does not have other roles and responsibilities within the tourist industry and who mainly considers the interests of other interest groups when making decisions, or the owner of a restaurant who is also president of the local catering association, may be considered a secondary stakeholder. *Stakeholder salience* (Mitchell, et al., 1997) stresses the importance of a stakeholder according to their *power* as compared to that of other actors, the *legitimacy* they are accorded, and the *urgency*

they command, i.e. their capacity to gain the attention of others. ‘Highly salient stakeholders’ include stakeholders who possess all three of the above attributes and who are key players in the management and governance of tourism activities in community-type destinations.

Stakeholder theory has been widely applied in tourism research (for a review see Bornhorst, et al., 2010; Waligo, Clarke, & Hawkins, 2013). However, identifying stakeholders is a challenging task because stakeholder groups differ from destination to destination and their composition constantly changes (Timur & Getz, 2008; Elbe & Emmoth, 2014). For the purposes of this research, some contributions are especially relevant, i.e. those which underline (1) the roles and characteristics of actors (Byrd, 2007; Currie, Seaton, & Wesley, 2009; Nilsson, 2007; Sheehan & Ritchie, 2005); (2) the relationship dynamics and strategic choices of the actors (D’Angella & Go, 2009; Robson & Robson, 1996; Sheehan, Ritchie, & Hudson, 2007; Timur & Getz, 2008); (3) the impact of tourism strategies and managerial choices on stakeholder groups (Byrd, Bosley, & Dronberger, 2009; Gu & Ryan, 2008; Simpson, 2008); (4) stakeholders’ views and perceptions (Franch, Martini, & Buffa, 2010; Tkaczynski, Rundle-Thiele, & Beaumont, 2010; Zehrer & Hallmann, 2015).

The abovementioned literature argues that the key players are the main public and private actors involved in the local tourist industry, found in DMOs, in municipalities and central government bodies, in the accommodation sector and in transport companies. The power exerted by these actors depends on the destination, influenced by factors like their own social and economic relations and the destination’s development path and life cycle stage. Therefore, the configuration of stakeholder groups within community destinations is not stable. Our study explores a dynamic context in which interests change along with the development of the destination and where shifting issues strengthen or weaken the influence and importance of single actors and the groups they represent. In other words, as destinations evolve, new challenges and problems emerge, and the roles and importance of stakeholder groups inevitably adapt. This is important for the following empirical analysis, because individuals are seldom affiliated to only one stakeholder group and hence an individual’s perception and opinion will not always be congruent with a collectively formed logic.

Consequently, primary stakeholders must be identified at the individual level (i.e. as salient actors), according to their importance and influence, and not based on the stakeholder group with which they are affiliated. They must be analyzed with reference to the logics they embrace.

One of the limitations of stakeholder theory (Jones & Wicks, 1999; Key, 1999; Mainardes, Alves, & Raposo, 2012), is that it does not explain why and how individuals form their logics, particularly in contexts in which multiple identities combine with multiple interests in a dynamic environment. This is where the approach of institutional logics comes into play (Mitchell, Agle, Chrisman, & Spence, 2011; Parent, Kristiansen, Skille, & Hanstad, 2015).

2.2 Institutional pluralism and coexisting logics

The literature on *institutional logics* usually focuses on the institutional and organizational level and addresses an overarching set of organizing principles that, through concrete practice and symbolic constructions, prescribe how to interpret organizational reality and what constitutes appropriate behavior, and provide guidelines on how to interpret and function in social situations (Friedland & Alford, 1991; Thornton, 2004). Thornton and Ocasio (2008) propose five principles for a meta-theory of institutional logics: (1) embedded agency, which assumes the partial autonomy of individuals, organizations, and institutions in any explanation of social structure or action (Friedland & Alford, 1991); (2) society as an inter-institutional system, including sectors such as markets, corporations, professions, states, families, and religions (Thornton, 2004); (3) material and cultural characteristics of institutions, which prescribe how single agents must deal with economic or political issues and how best to do this; (4) the need for multiple level analysis - of organizations, markets, industries, inter-organizational networks, geographic communities, and organizational fields; (5) historical contingency, which allows us to examine how larger environments affect individual and organizational behavior and how the past influences the present (Marquis, 2003).

The following five principles need to be included in an analysis of the institutional logics found in community destinations: (1) stakeholders can be expected to act on behalf of the groups they are affiliated to; (2) a destination is an inter-institutional system that includes economic systems, political-administrative entities, one or more communities; (3) local actors recognize the destination as a construct with potentially conflicting goals, open to various interpretations, for which different scenarios could be advocated; (4) the destination can be analyzed from different viewpoints and in different ways; (5) destinations have a history and have developed in a particular way: their past shapes current interpretations and releases new ideas and processes but also limits fields of action.

Institutional logics are particularly relevant to our research for two other reasons. First, a destination must be seen in the context of its institutional pluralism, a situation which can also lead to fragmentation, incoherence, conflict, goal-ambiguity, and organizational instability within community destinations (Hall, 2003; Jamal & Getz, 1999; Vernon, Essex, Pinder, & Curry, 2005; Williams, Penrose, & Hawkes, 1998). Second, multiple affiliations to institutions put an actor in a particular position. Actors possess multiple identities as a direct result of their multiple institutional memberships (March, 1999). Institutions provide actors with meanings that shape individuals' logics and that are subsequently turned into actions (Zilber, 2002), therefore professions that operate in multiple institutional spheres have plural logics (Dunn & Jones, 2010; McPherson & Sauder, 2013). 'A network position that bridges fields lessens institutional embeddedness by exposing actors to inter-institutional incompatibilities, increasing their awareness of alternatives'

(Greenwood & Suddaby, 2006, p. 38). Thus, when competing logics coexist, actors guided by different logics may maintain strong separate identities but collaborate in ways that result in mutually desirable outcomes and thus sustain the coexisting logics (Reay & Hinings, 2009, p. 646), increasing their awareness of alternative possibilities and widening the available repertoire of responses (Greenwood, et al., 2011). In sum, multiple logics develop out of multiple affiliations, which, in turn, are the result of the fact that single individuals are points of connection between the groups they belong to. Interlocking directorships, frequent in communities and markets, produces the phenomenon described above.

2.3 Interlocking directorships

Interlocking directorships occur when someone who is affiliated to one organization sits on the boards or committees of other organizations. Mizruchi (1996) suggests that interlocks may form (1) because of collusion (Baker & Faulkner, 1993; Pennings, 1980), (2) because of cooption and monitoring (Ornstein, 1984; Pennings, 1980; Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978; Stearns & Mizruchi, 1986), (3) in order to improve a firm's reputation and increase its legitimacy (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Parsons & Jones, 1960) or (4) because of an individual's ambition to advance their career (Stokman, Van der Knoop, & Wasseur, 1988; Zajac, 1988). Alternatively, (5) interlocks may also be produced by social ties, when a particular class or elite group meets on the common ground of one or more boards (Mace, 1971; Mills, 1956; Palmer & Barber, 2001; Pettigrew, 2007; Scott, 1991; Useem, 1984).

So, 'heavily interlocked directors constitute a vanguard of the corporate elite, integrated into the community and often in the forefront of innovations' (Mizruchi, 1996, p. 288). This applies to tourist destinations, too. The relevance of this claim has been highlighted in various studies: the observation that interlocking directorships increase information flow and the spread of practices (Shropshire, 2010) has also been conceptualized for tourist destinations (Shaw & Williams, 2009); interlocking directorships occur not only for professional reasons, but also through family ties (Silva, Majluf, & Paredes, 2006), a typical feature of small (tourist destination) communities (Keller & Bieger, 2004; Thomas, 1998; Tinsley & Lynch, 2001). One research stream has looked at the relationship between the interlocks in corporations and the location of their directors, suggesting that spatial proximity is an important driver for the creation of interlocks (Green, 1983; Kadushin, 1995; Koenig, Gogel, & Sonquist, 2006; Kono, Palmer, Friedland, & Zafonte, 1998; Lincoln, Gerlach, & Takahashi, 1992). This has also been confirmed for interlocks between salient organizations and institutions in tourist destinations (Beritelli & Laesser, 2014; Beritelli, Strobl, & Peters, 2013). The existence of DMOs as focal organizations in a tourist destination favors the

formation of interlocking directorships through the representation of various stakeholder groups on the board of directors (Bregoli, 2013). To sum up, interlocking directorships are – for different reasons – a ubiquitous phenomenon in tourist destinations. They obviously tend to concentrate power in the hands of small groups (i.e. an elite) but they can also increase the effectiveness of decision making. Identifying the elite actors in a tourist destination allows us not only to analyze the primary stakeholders and their influence on their peer group(s), but also to spot the lead actors at the interstices between interest groups. These actors can play a bridging role in the midst of a multiplicity of conflicting and coexisting institutional logics.

3. Research questions

The literature review seems to suggest that multiple logics are the reason for differing values and interests among stakeholder groups. Individuals may be so strongly oriented towards a specific logic that their affiliation to a stakeholder group is enough to determine their beliefs and actions and consequently the outcomes of individual and collective planning and management processes. Our study explicitly challenges this assumption and suggests that individuals may have a certain degree of independence and un-relatedness, if only due to their multiple stakeholder group affiliation. The following two hypotheses form the basis of the empirical study:

Hypothesis 1: The logics of individuals who belong to two stakeholder groups are not simply located between the logics of the other individuals who belong to only one stakeholder group.

Hypothesis 2: An individual in an interlocking position has a different attitude, but does not have their own distinct logic.

We challenge the assumption that interlocking directors must adopt a mix of the logics/an in-between form of thought of the stakeholder groups they belong to. Thus, actors belonging to both groups - the ABs - may not always form their logics in the intersection between A and B. Our second hypothesis assumes that these differences do not necessarily define a distinctly new logic, but rather a different personal attitude. In other words, the profiles of stakeholders in interlocking positions are different to those of actors who just belong to one group and these differences are related to key topics for the destination's tourism development and planning.

The methodology adopted to test the hypotheses and the results of the research are described in the sections below.

4. Methodology

4.1 Operationalizing the logics through claims

To apply a straightforward and viable operationalization of institutional logics in the framework of a tourist destination community, we can formulate substantive logics in terms of prognostic framing (Snow & Benford, 1988). Institutional logics determine ‘which issues and problems are salient’ and ‘which answers and solutions are the focus of management’s attention’ (Thornton, 2002, p. 83). We build on the Weberian approach of substantive rationality that relies on a variety of different coherent value sets (Kalberg, 1980). Substantive logics are formulated as claims (Toulmin, 2003); for instance, a claim could be: ‘Visitors must be made aware of our local culture’. Following Toulmin’s approach, the justification may be ‘Our local culture is something valuable and must be preserved’, the reason may be ‘Visitors do not know and understand our culture and can affect it negatively’. Finally, the rebuttal could be ‘Visitors may be aware of our culture but as they do not live here, they can’t really understand our condition’. Confronting a respondent with their claim requires them to take a position and, in so doing, to justify the related actions, i.e. to reveal the values that govern a certain, delimited, aspect of their life. By allowing a graded response to the claim, we can measure the importance. We used a four-point scale with the following possible answers: strongly agree = 2, somewhat agree = 1, somewhat disagree = -1, strongly disagree = -2.

4.2 Selecting the fields and formulating the claims

As pointed out by Jamal and Getz (1995) ‘Achieving coordination among the government agencies, between the public and the private sector, and among private enterprises is a challenging task, however, and requires the development of new mechanisms and processes for incorporating the diverse elements of the tourism system...’, and ‘...the local authorities have the delicate task of juggling private sector interests with local resident needs and wants, in order to maintain the economic health of the community and ensure that development is sustainable’ (Jamal & Getz, 1995, p. 193). Taking account of community destinations’ main features, we selected four fields where conflict and dissent are most likely to arise and formulated the claims as follows:

1. ‘Large companies threaten the development of the destination’.
2. ‘Public sector institutions (municipal and regional authorities) should intervene in the destination’s development’.
3. ‘The DMO must coordinate the development strategies for the destination’.
4. ‘Locals must participate in and benefit from the destination’s tourism development’.

These four fields reflect four key topics for the development of community destinations. As underlined in the introduction to the paper (see section 1):

- Tourism development in tourist destinations is based on endogenous paths, often driven by small enterprises. Whether or not the presence of large companies is agreed on, allows us to understand whether respondents prefer tourism development to be predominantly based on small local (often incumbent) enterprises or on large (often newcomer) enterprises.
- Public agents are key actors for the development of community destinations. They preserve landscape and natural resources, they support local enterprises and they define tourism policies. Assessing the level of agreement on public intervention reveals attitudes about the role of public actors and about public-private partnerships.
- DMOs play an important role in promoting tourism offers and in coordinating the multitude of private and public stakeholders involved in local tourism chains. Stakeholders do not necessarily agree on the tourism planning and development envisioned by the local DMO (see the review quoted in the introduction). It is therefore crucial to understand whether stakeholders agree on the coordinating role of the DMO.
- The involvement of the local community and actors is a distinctive feature of tourist destinations: agreeing about the inclusion of locals represents an important starting point in the development of tourism policies and planning based on community participation and on top-down and bottom-up coordination.

4.3 Case selection and data collection

For the empirical study, we chose four community-type destinations located in the Swiss and Italian Alps. A snowball sampling technique was used, so that we could find out the most salient representatives of the various stakeholder groups. Eight to twelve important actors were identified in each destination, based on their participation in the most recent strategic planning and development processes. The respondents were asked to name up to five other actors whom they considered to be important for the future development of the destination. The sample ended when the most recently interviewed actors named other actors who had already been interviewed. Most actors in the four destinations were willing to participate, so the sample covered almost all of the relevant individuals, i.e. for Saas-Fee (CH) 13 respondents, for Lenzerheide (CH) 21 respondents, for Valle di Sole (I) 25 respondents, for Valle di Fassa (I) 26 respondents, producing a total sample of 85 respondents.

The abovementioned data collection procedure ensured that all the participants knew each other either directly or, through common acquaintances, indirectly. The analysis therefore focused on

functional elites (Michels, 1911; Mosca, 1896); it is, after all, the elite that reaches consensus on crucial issues affecting their community (Parsons, 1963). Interviewing only the prominent actors also allowed us to identify particularly influential individuals, those sitting on more than one board of directors, who are therefore interlocking directors.

4.4 Data treatment and analysis

In a first step, the 85 respondents were grouped according to their stakeholder group affiliation. The following overlapping groups were created: *public agents* (n = 21); *accommodation* (n = 28); *private* (i.e. all other business owners and managers not belonging to the accommodation sector) (n = 44); *DMO* (i.e. managers and employees of DMOs and members of the board of directors) (n = 32). An analysis comparing four different constellations was then performed. For each constellation, members belonging to one group only ('single' in Table 1) were compared to individuals affiliated to both groups ('overlapping' in Table 1). The three groups were compared for each constellation using the mean average and the variance. The mean average measures the degree to which the respondents agree or disagree with the claim and therefore provides a possible indication of their position. Referring to the first research hypothesis, we question whether individuals in overlapping positions between two groups embrace the (homogeneous) value system of both the groups they belong to and therefore produce an intermediate value. For example, if the mean average for the individuals in the DMO group is -.29 and that for the accommodation group is .48, the answers from the actors affiliated to both groups might be expected to fall between these, at about .13. Whenever the values associated with interlocks fall between those of the two groups they belong to, we can assume a 'mixed logic'. Otherwise, there are some grounds for supposing that interlocking individuals follow a different and independent logic.

5. Results

5.1. Descriptive analysis

Table 1 shows the results of the descriptive analysis. A comparison of the mean average and variance for the individuals belonging to one group only with those for the actors in interlocking positions reveals a differentiated picture. Some of the means (highlighted in bold in the Table 1) shown for the individuals in the overlapping groups are not located between the values of the other

two groups. This shows a different profile for the overlapping groups, thus suggesting that individuals in interlocking positions are potentially distinct from those in one group only.

Table 1

From a descriptive point of view, the results show that individuals belonging to an interlocking group differ from the individuals belonging to only one group with regard to the logics connected to the role of DMOs. ‘Accommodation and public agents’ and ‘private and DMO’ focus more on the coordinating role of the DMO than do the individuals who just belong to one group (see Table 1, constellations 1 and 3). In both cases the mean values are higher. In contrast, different results for the constellation ‘public agents and DMO’ are revealed (see Table 1, constellation 2). In this case the mean value of the interlocking group is lower than that of the other two single groups, describing a scenario in which stakeholders in overlapping position think that DMOs must coordinate the destination development strategies, but they probably assume a ‘new perspective’ about the role of DMO. A similar interpretation could be suggested with reference to the intervention of public institutions in the destination’s development. Stakeholders in this overlapping position expressed a mixed logic, in between that of the just public agent group and the just DMO members, but the mean value of the interlocking group is lower than the value of just public agents. In this case, too, individuals in an interlocking position appear more skeptical about the role of territorial authorities and organizations in tourism development.

In addition to the positive responses about the coordination role of the DMO, the logics expressed by the overlapping group of the third constellation, ‘private and DMO’, are characterized by higher mean values in the items about the intervention of public institutions and local inclusion (participation in and benefit from tourism development).

The fourth constellation is mostly characterized by the different logics expressed by the interlocking group about the roles of public institutions and the local community. In this case the individuals belonging to ‘DMO and accommodation’ are not convinced that public institutions should intervene in destination development and they agree less than the single groups about the importance of including local people.

5.2. Analysis of variance

The collected data are further analyzed by testing (1) whether the mean values of logics expressed by individuals belonging to each stakeholder group differ significantly from each other, and (2) whether such means differ from those of individuals belonging to both groups (interlocking). The visual inspection of the average mean scores with confidence intervals for individuals in each group allows a straightforward interpretation of the differences. Thus, when confidence intervals overlap we assume the groups not to be statistically different (group I \approx group II); when they do not overlap we assume that the means describe groups whose attitudes are indeed distinct (group I \neq group II). Figure 1 shows the mean values, with their 95% confidence intervals, of the answers provided by the groups in constellation 1 (public agents, accommodation, accommodation and public agents) to the logic ‘Large companies threaten the development of the destination’.

Figure 1

Respondents who are public agents only (group A) show different attitudes from those who are only involved in the accommodation sector (group B). Therefore (A=B) is false. In contrast, individuals in the interlocking position (group AB) delivered answers which were not distinct from those of public agents only (group A) and respondents only involved in accommodation (group B): the average mean score of AB is in between the mean scores of A and B, and their confidence interval overlaps with the other two. Therefore (AB=A, B) is true. This analysis was repeated for all the groups and constellations of our research. The results are shown in Table 2:

- Respondents only working as public agents agree that large companies may threaten the development of the destination (see Table 2, constellation 1), which logic is indeed significantly different from that of respondents working in the accommodation sector, who tend to disagree with this claim.
- Similarly, public agents tend to believe that locals must participate in and benefit from the destination’s tourism development (see Table 2, constellation 1), whereas respondents who are just members of the accommodation sector group, though they also tend to agree, show a significantly more moderate position.
- On this issue (the inclusion of locals), the opinion of public agents is also significantly different from that expressed by individuals working in the local DMO (see Table 2, constellation 2), the latter being more cautious than the former.

- The opinions of individuals in interlocking positions, despite the apparent differences in the means (see in Table 1), are not significantly different from those expressed by individuals belonging to only one stakeholder group. The difference in means and the large variances suggest that this result may be due to the limited number of individuals in interlocking positions. Further research might support the hypothesis of a (also statistically significant) distinct logic.

 Table 2

6. Discussion and implications

This research shows that the profile of the stakeholders in overlapping positions differs from that of individuals belonging just to one group. In many cases the logics of individuals in interlocking groups cannot be simply described as a ‘mixed’ logic: their position is actually different. At this level of analysis and using a descriptive approach no distinct logic is observable, but some nuances suggest that interlocking stakeholders have a different attitude.

For instance, looking at the logics of public agents and private actors and their interlocking group, we see that ‘public agent and DMO’ (constellation 2) scores a lower mean value on the coordinating role of the DMO. In contrast ‘private and DMO’ (constellation 3) has a higher value for the same question. It appears that public actors who are also on the board of a DMO see the limitations of institutions and public administrations reflected in the coordinating role of the DMO. In contrast, private actors in an interlocking position believe in the potential of the DMO as an organization with a wider scope than individual private enterprises.

Some trends also emerge from an analysis of the logics of certain single groups. In general, all the respondents express doubts about the benefits of large enterprises for the development of the destinations. Public agents in particular appear more wary of large companies. In contrast, the accommodation group is the most favorable. This reflects the different perceptions of the individuals within these groups. Public agents may give more weight to local small enterprises and to the support of endogenous development while hoteliers and other hosts probably consider the presence of large companies to be an opportunity to expand their businesses. The value accorded by public agents to the local dimension also emerges in their logic with regard to local actors: they are

more positive about local participation, underlining the importance of community participation for the success of the destination.

While the different profiles of interlocking may seem counterintuitive, we argue that this is in line with previous assumptions. In fact, these actors are peculiar in three respects. First, interlocking directors find themselves in an intermediate position in a pluralistic environment, and this position requires them to knit organizations, or, in our case, the destination, together (Gardner, 1990; Selznick, 1957). These individuals are also attributed agency because ‘... they work at the nexus of multiple identities (and multiple normative orders), [and] they regularly find themselves in situations where they have “no choice but to choose” ’ (Kraatz & Block, 2008, p. 263). Their choices (even their default choices) have significant consequences for the evolution of their organizations (Emirbayer & Mische, 1998), because these individuals, who stand at a structural fold, are multiple insiders, facilitating access to diverse resources (Vedres & Stark, 2010).

Second, actors who sit on multiple boards and have more than one management position are generally perceived to be influential. Essentially, individuals who claim membership of more than one group are in comparatively powerful positions (Burt, 1995; Lazega, 2001; Zajac, 1988). They often face the ‘politician’s dilemma’, that is ‘a conundrum which results from the interplay of the conformity and commitment problems. Constituents obviously want the organization (and the candidate) to espouse their values and to pursue policies that further their particular interests. But, they are also attracted to revealed commitment and integrity, and repulsed by obviously opportunistic and arbitrary acts’ (Kraatz & Block, 2008, p. 249). Thus, an individual in overlapping positions is – due to his ‘politically relevant’ role - obliged to be clear and unambiguous.

Third, actors in overlapping positions contribute to the dynamics of change and adaptation in their organizations. Just as in pluralistic organizations where control must circulate between identity groups over time as a result of political processes (Ocasio & Kim, 1999), tourist destinations are confronted with different issues arising from different challenges and actors with multiple roles have a stabilizing, linking function (Beritelli, 2011b).

Summarizing these three aspects, we conclude that actors in overlapping positions between stakeholder groups report different attitude because of (1) *their position*, i.e. they understand and successfully interpret the identity of the different groups they represent (accepting coexisting logics), (2) *their salience*, i.e. they feel obliged to have a clear opinion (thus forming their own logic), (3) *their structural function*, i.e. they must ensure constant adaptation to different issues and challenges by proposing solutions and innovations to their peers in their respective stakeholder groups (translated into new logics). Figure 2 visualizes the influence that the position and salience of interlocking individuals has on the fluidity of institutional logics.

Figure 2

The particular, overlapping position of these actors causes individuals who just belong to one group to accept them and endorse the legitimacy of their difference. And because their different position has been legitimized, individuals in the overlapping position AB are able to understand and interpret the ambivalence of different coexisting logics. Actors involved in more than one stakeholder group are legitimized because their actions are perceived as ‘desirable, proper, or appropriate within some socially constructed system of norms, values, beliefs, and definitions’ (Suchman, 1995, p. 574) as suggested also in the model of stakeholder salience (Mitchell, et al., 1997). At the same time, interlockers accept their particular, powerful role, which requires them to develop new attitudes, just as Archer’s (2003) autonomous reflexives and meta reflexives do when they monitor themselves and their projects in the contexts in which they are operating; the former by using and developing societal structures, the latter - critics of society - by seeking structural change through commitment to strong values. Within stakeholder theory this form of power can also be described as normative, because it is based on symbolic resources (Mitchell, et al., 2011). A and B react and adapt to AB’s new attitude because s/he is able to capture their attention, that is, to create urgency. Therefore the new logic can differ from the logics of A and B, thus confirming the peculiar position of the interlocking individual and allow the logics of A and B to be questioned. This cycle, despite its simplicity, explains the importance of interlocking directors, both for the stability of, and changes within, institutional logics; it thus contributes to the quest for the principle of ‘who and what really counts?’ in stakeholder theory, by reconstructing the emergence of legitimacy, power, and urgency in a pluralistic environment (Mitchell, et al., 2011; Mitchell, et al., 1997).

7. Conclusion

Despite the explorative nature of the study, we believe that it provides an important indication for a differentiated set of logics, which depends on the multiple roles that actors can have. From a managerial point of view, these considerations are important with regard to both organizations and communities. Faced with the complexity of community destinations and the difficulty of coordinating all the stakeholders in the absence of a hierarchical structure, we consider the identification of players in overlapping positions and the reconstruction of their logics to be of

particular importance for destination marketing, management and governance. Distinguishing relationships woven by the various stakeholders, and analyzing their logics, reveals the key players who are best placed to transmit information within the destination. These individuals facilitate coordination between actors and build consensus between the public and private sectors and the local community with regard to plans and proposals for local development.

The limitations of the study indicate possible directions for further research. First, the study was carried out in four similar types of destination. Research in other types of community and other pluralist organizations may increase the external validity of the findings. Second, in the descriptive analyses and the independent sample tests we deliberately chose a quantitative approach, which easily detects differences in attitudes. However, this meant that we were not able to combine the substantive logics into a more comprehensive picture, or to extend the analysis, with either functional logics or the further elements of the Toulmin model. The above approaches would allow a more sophisticated reconstruction of the argumentative world of the respondents. Further quantitative studies using separate cases and possibly extending constructs would allow an in-depth content analysis of the logics. And qualitative research would help to shed more light on how the respondents perceive their organizational and community environments, why they embrace particular beliefs and how they defend and advocate them. All of which should add to the effort to understand how successful organizations realize ‘the genius of the *and*’ while avoiding ‘the tyranny of the *or*’ (Porras & Collins, 1994).

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Tables and Figures

Table 1 Single against double (overlapping) stakeholder group affiliation

		constellation 1			constellation 2			constellation 3			constellation 4		
		single (A)	single (B)	overlapping (AB)	single (A)	single (B)	overlapping (AB)	single (A)	single (B)	overlapping (AB)	single (A)	single (B)	overlapping (AB)
Logics	Groups	Public agents (12)	Accommodation (19)	Accommodation and public agents (9)	Public agents (15)	DMO (26)	Public agents and DMO (6)	Private (29)	DMO (17)	Private and DMO (15)	DMO (17)	Accommodation (13)	DMO and accommodation (15)
Large companies threaten the development	M	1.000	-.421	.222	.667	-.039	.667	.207	.059	.133	.294	-.308	-.133
	V	1.091	1.702	2.944	1.667	2.358	3.067	2.170	2.559	2.552	2.471	1.731	2.552
DMO must coordinate	M	.917	1.368	1.556	1.467	1.115	.500	.448	.824	1.200	.882	1.769	1.133
	V	2.083	1.246	.278	.695	1.306	2.700	2.328	2.029	1.029	1.735	.192	1.410
Public institutions should intervene	M	1.000	.342	.500	.900	.346	.500	.345	.147	.633	.765	.923	-.067
	V	.818	1.696	1.313	.650	1.715	2.200	1.055	2.149	1.267	1.254	.494	2.031
Locals must participate and benefit	M	1.708	1.026	1.500	1.700	1.135	1.417	1.017	1.059	1.333	1.382	1.423	.967
	V	.157	.735	.313	.171	.691	.342	.634	.809	.417	.392	.327	.838

M = Mean; V = Variance

For the overlapping group:

bold = mean value not between the other two mean values

Table 2 Test for differences between groups

		constellation 1		constellation 2		constellation 3		constellation 4	
		single (A=B)	overlapping (AB=A,B)	single (A=B)	overlapping (AB=A,B)	single (A=B)	overlapping (AB=A,B)	single (A=B)	overlapping (AB=A,B)
Logics	Groups	Public agents = Accommodation	Public agents and accommodation = Public agents, accommodation	Public agents = DMO	Public agents and DMO = Public agents, DMO	Private = DMO	Private and DMO = Private, DMO	DMO = accommodation	DMO and accommodation = DMO, Accommodation
		Large companies threaten the development	F	T	T	T	T	T	T
DMO must coordinate	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T
Public institutions should intervene	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T
Locals must participate and benefit	F	T	F	T	T	T	T	T	T

F = False; T = True

Figure 1. Mean values and 95% confidence intervals of Constellation 1 (public agents, accommodation, public agents and accommodation) on the logic “Large companies threaten the development of the destination”.

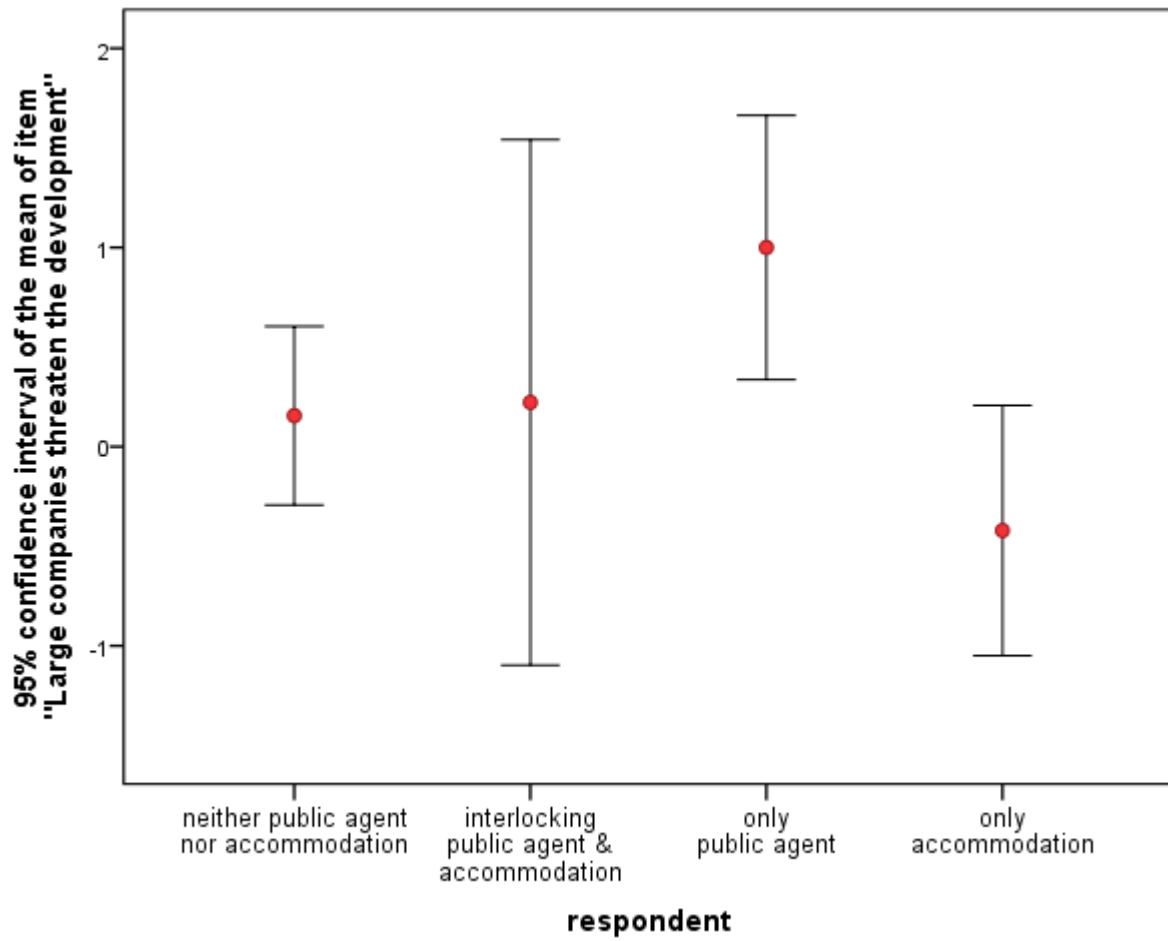


Figure 2. Interlocking actors and the shift of logics

