Creation of cultural spaces – modeling strategies of cross-sector and inter-departmental partnerships

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Goal and objectives of the dissertation

Goal

The goal of this research was to construct two models of cultural space that would encompass its cultural and tourist purpose. Cultural purpose refers to satisfying the cultural needs and fostering the local creativity of the community. Tourist purpose refers to tourism presentation and creation of tourist offer, with special respect for local context and capacities.

The basic structural elements of the models constructed would be universal and could be adapted for other urban contexts. The first model refers to public-civil partnership in the field of culture and the second model refers to public-civil-private partnership, where the field of culture is accompanied by the fields of tourism and urban planning.

Objectives:

- ✓ to construct new models based on partnerships between various stakeholders from public, private and civil sphere
- ✓ to create a base for creative tourism offer based on contemporary local culture
- ✓ to approach tourism from a more humanistic side – as an interaction between visitors and hosts

Methodology

The empirical part of the paper is placed in the framework of qualitative research that involves the phenomenological or interpretive research philosophy. For the purposes of this study, methods of case study and modeling were used. Case study was considered an appropriate method since it 'involves an empirical investigation of a particular contemporary phenomenon within its real life context using multiple sources of evidence'

(Robson, 2002: 178). As the proposed analysis aimed at comparing the structure of two or more phenomena, three already existing cultural spaces (WUK, Vienna, Austria; Metelkova, Ljubljana, Slovenia and Pogon, Zagreb, Croatia) were deconstructed to the following structural elements:

- ✓ key idea on which the cultural space was established,
- ✓ common goal for establishing partnership,
- ✓ organizational structure for partnership,
- ✓ decision making and management,
- ✓ internal resource analysis (human, technical, spatial and financial resources).

After the deconstruction, common denominators were defined, followed by a synthesis that allowed the new management model to be created. For estimating the relation between tourism, culture and urban planning (and renewal), data was collected by means of interviews with general managers of those institutions. In order to transfer interview transcripts into usable information and conclusions, an open coding was used.

Results

Partnerships, as a strategic tool in creation of cultural spaces, are important for several reasons. First, it comes to the creation of new organizational forms where they can produce new services, products and infrastructure, which together create new value for the community (Waddell & Brown, 1997: 3). Second, benefits for the city increase with its attractiveness - attracting visitors, contributing to the formation of a local character and distinctiveness of the city through culture, as well as creating the image of the city, according to the "bottom up" principle. Third, benefits for citizens reflect in accessible cultural facilities for cultural production and presentation, treating culture as a public good that meets their cultural needs and brings the opportunity to connect with cultural creation (Veselinović, 2012: 12). Fourth, those places can contribute to strengthening of social ties through cooperation and solidarity, as well as generate a sense of belonging to the community (Mercer, 2009).

Theoretical conclusions

Theoretical contribution refers to the proven significance of cross-sector and inter-departmental partnerships in the creation of cultural spaces. In the aspect of inter-departmental cooperation, it has been concluded that cooperation would rather be established on the lower levels of certain departments (culture, tourism, architecture, urban planning) and that the 'bottom up' initiatives will prompt the implementation and strengthen the effects of partnerships in practice.

Cultural spaces have impact on the cultural policy twofold. First, it is concerned with the impact of cultural spaces as innovative institutional practices in creating local cultural policies, and the other on the transfer of participatory decision-making at the level of local cultural policies.

Within the scope of cultural tourism, cultural spaces have a double role:

- ✓ meeting points of visitors (tourists) and the local population
- ✓ spaces that convey the values of contemporary urban culture

The last theoretical conclusion is related to cultural spaces and urban planning, where the research showed that cultural spaces should not have a direct effect on urban planning practices, and they can only serve as examples of good practice.

Practical application of the dissertation

Practical outcome of the dissertation is a management model of cultural spaces based on inter-sector and inter-departmental partnerships. This is highly valuable for the cultural and tourism policy and planning, with impacts on the tourism practice, as well. Considering the vast amount of empty spaces in the cities (former factories, military facilities or empty city plots), creation of cultural spaces could be an appropriate use of those facilities. They should gather the local creative community (artists and artistic collectives); provide the infrastructure that would enable the continuity of their creation. From the tourism point of view, those places

could serve as interactive spots in accordance with temporary tourism tendencies – interaction of locals and visitors, use of local creative potential and co-creation of tourist experience in a place where simultaneously production and presentation are taking place (Richards, 2007; Binkhorst, 2007; Richards & Wilson, 2007). Benefits for the city lie in contribution to the formation of its local character and distinctiveness, as well as creating the image of the city, based on local creativity and according to the 'bottom up' principle. This is of great value for the creation of a sustainable city image grounded in reality and active resources. And lastly, this type of cultural spaces could contribute to raising attractiveness for visitors and increase of number of creative tourists, seeking interactive and innovative offer.

Content of the dissertation

Abstract of chapter one

This chapter provides the conceptual framework for understanding cultural spaces and their determination in the context of this dissertation. The cultural spaces are contextualised through civil society and the public sphere, with a special explanation of the importance of civil society organizations in culture and their role in the survival of culture as a public good. In this section, special attention is paid to the context of the Republic of Serbia, which was important with one of the projected outcomes - proposal of the model of cultural space based on inter-sector and inter-departmental partnerships in the city of Novi Sad. Within the conceptual framework the concepts of cultural and social capital, cultural diversity and democracy, as well as the effects that can be achieved on the basis of the existence and functioning of a particular cultural space, were explained.

Abstract of chapter two

This chapter deals with the question of partnership as an element of a linking strategy in culture (Đukić, 2010: 247, 248) and it presents the possibilities of cross-sector and inter-departmental partnerships in the process of cultural spaces creation, with specific reference to the context of the Republic of Serbia. At the end of the first

chapter, cultural spaces were defined through the fields that determine it - in this dissertation, those are the departments of spatial planning, cultural policy and tourism.

Abstract of chapter three

In this chapter the term 'cultural space' was explained, with special attention to denotations of place and space, where 'space' emphasizes its flexibility and tendency to change shape and spread within the scope of the greater metropolitan area. Tag 'culture' gives definition to a space intended for culture in the broadest sense of its meaning (both for arts and for other cultural activities). This chapter also presents the theory about public space, local creativity and activism that needs to be fostered within the community. In addition, cultural spaces are viewed as a sort of public spaces in which they could come to the authentication of different social groups, thereby achieving a certain level of freedom and tolerance.

Abstract of chapter four

Chapter four explains the connection between cultural space and areas that determine it, in particular urban planning and renewal, cultural policy and tourism, giving insight into possible future influences and connections. Out of the previous theory and this chapter's insights, some assumptions for the hypothesis and research were developed. Based on urban renewal theory, it is argued that cultural spaces could have implications on urban planning, in a way to contribute to the shift of dominant planning paradigms, introducing a new, participative planning model. Connection between cultural spaces and cultural policy may be that the former may provide infrastructure for independent cultural initiatives, contributing to the acknowledging culture as a way of life, as well as the contemporary values and active resources. Cultural spaces and tourism should be connected in a way that they represent the spaces that fulfill the genuine needs of local community and then as such, create a spot for tourists, where they can meet culture in the making, with a possibility to co-create their unique tourist experience.

Abstract of chapter five

It refers to the setting, implementation and conclusions of empirical research, which consisted of three parts - field research, deconstruction of the notion of cultural space to the structural elements and interviews with people in management positions in existing cultural spaces, all in order to verify set of theoretical hypotheses.

Abstract of chapter six

The last chapter presents the conclusion of the complete work, with special regard to results, theoretical conclusions and practical implications.

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