

A process-based perspective of smart tourism destination governance

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Abstract

The tourism management literature has recently shown increasing interest in exploring the potential offered by the smart tourism destination initiative, conceived as the integrated use of ICT solutions for achieving greater efficiency and sustainability, enriching the tourist experience and boosting destination competitiveness. However, innovative technologies risk to be ineffective without adequate governance structures that are required to ensure the effective coordination and integration of tourism firms, government and communities in implementing a holistic smart-oriented development plan for destinations.

This paper aims to integrate the recent smart approach with the destination governance theory to develop a governance process framework for smart tourism destinations. The framework explains how the smart approach can inform the planning and implementation of smart development goals, and specifically how smartness principles, tools and methods can be applied to increase the sustainable competitiveness of destinations beyond the mere technology dimension, making explicit the role of collaborative structures, user-driven services, social innovation and local community involvement. At the theoretical level, the paper offers an integrative perspective for designing and implementing effective smart tourism destination governance structures and processes. In practical terms, the framework can be viewed as a flexible tool in the hands of destination managers and policy makers: it shows how to match the design of governance structures and processes with the specific destination context and how to exploit “smart dimensions” for its development by relying on an incremental logic based on subsequent, interdependent stages.

Key words: Smart Tourism; Destination governance; Smart governance; Conceptual framework.

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Introduction

Over the last decade the "smart city" paradigm has been proposed as an ideal model for sustainable, efficient and resilient urban system development (e.g. Caragliu *et al.*, 2009; Komnikos *et al.*, 2013; Nam & Pardo, 2011). Although a number of meanings and approaches have been associated with the "smart city" label (Hollands, 2008), it is generally agreed that urban *smartness* requires investments in human and social capital as well as innovative technologies (ICTs) capable of fuelling sustainable economic growth and a good quality of life through higher efficiency levels, new and/or improved services, reduced environmental impact and participatory governance (Caragliu *et al.*, 2009; La Rocca, 2014).

In the field of tourism studies, the *smart city* concept is attracting increasing attention as a lever for achieving higher competitiveness at the destination level (Boes *et al.*, 2015; Buhalis & Amaranggana, 2014; La Rocca, 2014; Wang *et al.*, 2013). Aligned with this approach, the concept of "smart (tourism) destination" (Buhalis & Amaranggana, 2014) has emerged to identify a tourism destination that largely relies on state-of-the-art technologies "to enable demand and supply to co-create value, pleasure, and experiences for the tourist and wealth, profit, and benefits for the organizations and the destination" (Boes *et al.*, 2015). Analyzing only the "technological" layer of a smart environment, some authors (Wang *et al.*, 2013; Zhu *et al.*, 2014) emphasize that the adoption of a tourism system built through state-of-the-art technologies can be a solution for centrally managing the dispersed tourism-relevant knowledge owned by all the actors involved in tourism service offerings along with providing the local community and visitors with innovative services and enriched experiences. Going beyond the technological perspective prevailing in previous research on smart tourism destinations, Buhalis and Amaranggana (2013) explained how tourism applications can be implemented in destinations in order to enrich tourism experiences and increase the level of destination smartness, but also recognized the importance of a more holistic perspective that includes competitiveness, sustainability and inclusiveness as key pillars beyond mere technology. Along the same lines, Boes *et al.* (2015) argued that technology is only an enabling factor for tourism smartness and identified other factors, namely leadership, social capital, innovation and human capital that are crucial for the development of a smart tourism destination.

The premise of this work is that developing smart tourism destinations is essentially a governance issue. In the tourism management literature, the concept of destination governance has attracted increasing attention among researchers and practitioners (Beritelli *et al.*, 2007; Buhalis, 2000; Forum UNWTO, 2011; Pechlaner *et al.*, 2010; Raich, 2006). Although still lacking a common vision on the issue, research on destination governance can be considered the natural evolution of previous studies focusing on destination planning and destination management. In a comparative perspective, this research strand highlights the key role played by rules, mechanisms and culture for establishing policy and business strategies at the destination level by involving institutional actors (e.g. political bodies), firms and individuals (e.g. service suppliers, tourists and citizens) (Beritelli *et al.*, 2007; Beritelli, 2011; Laws, 2011). Tourism destination governance is a flexible and dynamic entity, including structures, institutions and practices regulating socio-economic interactions between public and private actors and used for establishing and implementing strategies for the sustainable and competitive development of the destination (UNWTO, 2011). Available research on destination governance is fragmented and no integrated overall frameworks currently exist (Beritelli, 2011). Indeed, it mainly consists of exploratory or descriptive studies, it usually relies on a static perspective and it focuses on factors explaining a specific destination governance model (Bregoli & Del Chiappa, 2013). More importantly, little is known about how destination governance can be built according to *smartness* principles (Errichiello & Micera, 2015; Micera & Errichiello, 2017; Baggio *et al.*, 2000).

This paper aims to contribute to the emerging debate on smart tourism destination governance. Bridging the smart city paradigm with the destination governance literature the authors elaborate a conceptual framework of the smart tourism destination governance process. To this end, the literature on destination governance, smart governance, smart city and smart tourism destinations is critically analyzed and integrated.

In line with this aim, the paper is organized as follows. Section 2 reviews the current debate on the smart tourism destination concept and points out the importance of investigating smart destination governance. Section 3 describes the methods adopted to elaborate the conceptual framework. Sections 4 and 5 are devoted to presenting the results. Specifically, section 4 critically reviews the main managerial theories on network and destination governance to understand their contribution to a process perspective on destination governance. Section 5 draws on three interrelated research strands, i.e. smart governance, smart city and smart tourism destinations to identify relevant "smart dimensions" and critically analyze their role in informing the content and actions of the various phases of a process aimed at developing smart destination governance. The resulting framework provides a valuable contribution for understanding how to apply smartness principles effectively to increase the sustainable competitiveness of the destination beyond the mere technological dimension, pointing to the importance, amongst other things, of a formal smart tourism strategic plan, the alignment of stakeholders' goals with smartness, the formation of public-private partnerships, the potential of living labs and monitoring performance indicators of smartness. The last section concludes with some suggestions for future research.

Smart tourism destination as a governance issue

Although it is widely claimed that the work of conceptualizing and defining a smart tourism destination is still ongoing (Baggio *et al.*, 2020; Cavalheiro *et al.*, 2019; Del Chiappa & Baggio, 2015; Gretzel *et al.*, 2015), and that further theoretical and empirical investigation is needed (Werthner *et al.*, 2015), the diffusion of the smart city paradigm in tourism has encouraged the emergence of a new research area within tourism studies called "smart tourism" (Gretzel *et al.*, 2015). This is understood as "*tourism supported by integrated efforts at a destination to collect and aggregate/harness data derived from physical infrastructure, social connections, government/organizational sources and human bodies/minds in combination with the use of advanced technologies to transform that data into on-site experiences and business value-propositions with a clear focus on efficiency, sustainability and experience enrichment*" (p. 8).

Baggio and Del Chiappa (2013a, 2013b) were among the first to point out the value of smart technologies in the context of a tourism destination. The authors underlined how a destination – intended as a network that integrates and puts in place a plurality of stakeholders and is engaged in offering services and experiences to tourists – can be integrated and supported by a technological infrastructure. This is able to create a digital environment fostering collaboration, knowledge sharing and transfer, and the development of a consensus among stakeholders.

In this direction, the smart tourism destination is widely understood as a tourist destination that makes extensive use of new technologies and social media to support bottom-up development projects aimed at producing and sharing new knowledge, fostering convergence among stakeholders' opinions and exploiting tangible and intangible resources in an effective and efficient way (Micera *et al.*, 2013; Presenza *et al.*, 2014;). Similarly, Lopez de Avila (2015) defined a smart tourism destination as "*an innovative tourist destination, built on an infrastructure of state-of-the-art technology guaranteeing the sustainable development of tourist areas, accessible to everyone, which facilitates the visitor's interaction*

with and integration into his or her surroundings, increases the quality of the experience at the destination, and improves residents' quality of life."

The smart tourism destination is considered one of three key pillars of *smart tourism* (Gretzel *et al.*, 2015), along with *smart business* and *smart experience*. The smart tourism destination concept is viewed in strict continuity with the smart city concept, although its focus is on tourism development. It extends the key principles of the smart city paradigm to urban or rural tourist areas and considers both residents and tourists in their efforts to support mobility, resource availability and allocation, sustainability and quality of life/visits.

In the attempt to conceptualize smart tourism destination, the first studies adopted a strong technological perspective. Wang *et al.* (2009) specifically referred to a platform that instantaneously integrates information about "*tourist activities, the consumptions of tourists and the status of tourism resources*". Starting from this main function, new contributions have emphasized its technological and informational nature, underlining the role played by the three technological components of a smart tourism destination¹: cloud computing, Internet of Things (IoT) and an end-user internet service system (Huang & Li, 2011). Zhu *et al.* (2014) argued that in order to become smart, tourism destinations should be endowed with a smart tourism system that centrally manages all the tourist (usually fragmented) information in a city with consequent benefits for visitors, tourists and residents. The qualifying factor of any smart tourism destination project is the presence of an appropriate connectivity system ensuring effective exchange of information between tourists, governance actors, tourism sites and tourism businesses. Gajdošík (2019) pointed out that through the use of technologies, stakeholders are dynamically connected: from the perspective of ICT management, technologies allow stakeholders to create, collect and exchange information in real time to meet the needs of customers, also incorporating systems of recommendation, contextualization and decision support; on the demand side, technologies improve the experience by providing real-time information to help tourists explore destinations before, during and after their trips.

In order to conceptualize smart tourism destination, Buhalis and Amaranggana (2013) drew on the smart city literature, and specifically on Cohen's Smart City Wheel (2011) which identifies six smartness dimensions as key outcomes of a process of smart city development, i.e. smart governance, smart environment, smart mobility, smart economy, smart people and smart living. According to the authors, a variety of smart applications (including augmented and virtual realities, vehicle tracking systems, multi-language applications, NFC tags and QR codes, etc.) can be implemented with each of their utility functions in one or more of the 6As components (i.e. attractions, access, amenities, available packages, activities and ancillary services) of a destination (Buhalis, 2000), producing impacts on one or more smartness dimensions. For example, the "interpretation" utility function offered by augmented reality applications can be exploited to enhance visitors' experience of tourism sites before, during and after the visit, thereby contributing to smart destination development through impacting the areas of smart people and smart mobility. Moreover, the authors also discussed how the smart transformation of a destination, through relying on real-time information, digitalization, personalized services, open data and interoperable platforms, contributes to producing a number of changes for major stakeholders, including tourism organizations, local communities, governments and tourists, positively affecting their roles, attitudes and behaviours.

Despite the value of previous work in conceptualizing smart tourism destination and providing frameworks and guidelines to transform a tourism destination towards smartness, few contributions have hitherto pointed out the relevance of governance structures and processes to ensuring the

effectiveness of a smart development plan for a tourism destination (Gretzel, 2018; Ivars-Baidal *et al.*, 2019; Santos *et al.*, 2017). For example, Santos *et al.* (2017) underlined that as the main barriers to the evolution of smart tourism destinations lie at the strategic-relational level, governance has a key role to play in ensuring transparency, openness, accountability, collaboration, innovation and efficiency, with respect to all citizens. However, destination governance is a major area within studies in tourism and destination management (Berittelli *et al.*, 2007; Pechlaner *et al.*, 2012; Svensson *et al.*, 2006) since governance will lead to effective organization of activities and coordination of multiple stakeholders in pursuing higher destination competitiveness (Crouch, 2011; Del Chiappa & Bregoli, 2012; Paunović *et al.*, 2020; Pechlaner *et al.*, 2010).

Accordingly, in order to exploit the potential of smart principles, tools and methods to build a more competitive destination, it is important to conceptualize and understand in depth what destination governance means and its role in infusing smartness into a tourism destination.

Research method

This study sets out to propose a conceptual framework that shows the process along with a destination governance can be set up. The point of departure is the adoption of a process perspective: rather than focusing on destination governance as a result the authors looked at it as a complex developmental process that moves along a number of basic sequential stages. In order to identify these stages, Wang and Xiang's model (2007) of collaborative destination marketing is used as a starting point. This model was selected, since the authors' research goal resembled that of this study in some respects: they also aimed to elaborate a conceptual framework showing how a collaborative multi-stakeholder process related to a tourism destination is developed. Destination marketing and destination governance are two key processes of a destination and both are built up on a collaborative arrangement between public and private actors. In particular, involving both public (not market) and private actors in orienting and orchestrating the smart development of a tourism destination is a necessary requirement of any tourism destination governance model, since both sets of actors have control over key tourism resources at destination level. On the basis of this reasoning it is plausible to assume that, similar to a process of collaborative destination marketing, a smart destination governance process develops along key sequential stages of "assembling", "ordering", "implementation", "evaluation" and "transformation" (Figure 1). The "assembling" stage, which refers to a status quo analysis at destination level in terms of resources, actors and activities, is required to identify relevant private, public and third sector stakeholders (including citizens) to involve in drawing up a strategic smart tourism plan and establish agreements for collaborating. In the "ordering" stage strategic goals are set up on the basis of available resources consistent with the smart development of the destination. In the "implementation" stage, roles, procedures and coordination mechanisms are established for regulating the governance-oriented public-private partnership. The "evaluation" and "transformation" stages are, respectively, concerned with monitoring the efficiency and effectiveness of the outlined smart governance strategy and organization, and with establishing initiatives to consolidate the partnership or revisit it in terms of actors involved, organizational structures, coordination and integration mechanisms.

Starting from this basic framework, the authors conducted a critical review of the literature on destination governance, smart governance, smart city and smart tourism destination in order to identify the content of each stage in terms of key actions to take for designing and implementing effective governance structures and processes for smart tourism destinations. The first step was the identification of the main theories that influenced the historical development of management and organization studies on network governance, and especially destination governance (i.e. Resource-based Theory and Industrial Organization Economics, Property Rights and Agency Theories, Transaction Cost Theory,

Network Theory, Collaboration Theory and Stakeholder Theory) and draw on them to identify the key issues to address in each stage of development of smart tourism destination governance. Subsequently, through a critical review of existing studies on smart governance, the smart city and smart tourism destination we discuss how the key pillars of the smart paradigm can inform the framework through shaping the development process of tourism destination governance. In particular, in answering the research question (i.e. how “smartness” can inform a process-based framework on destination governance), the “why”, “where”, “who” and “how” questions related to smart tourism and smart destination development are considered.

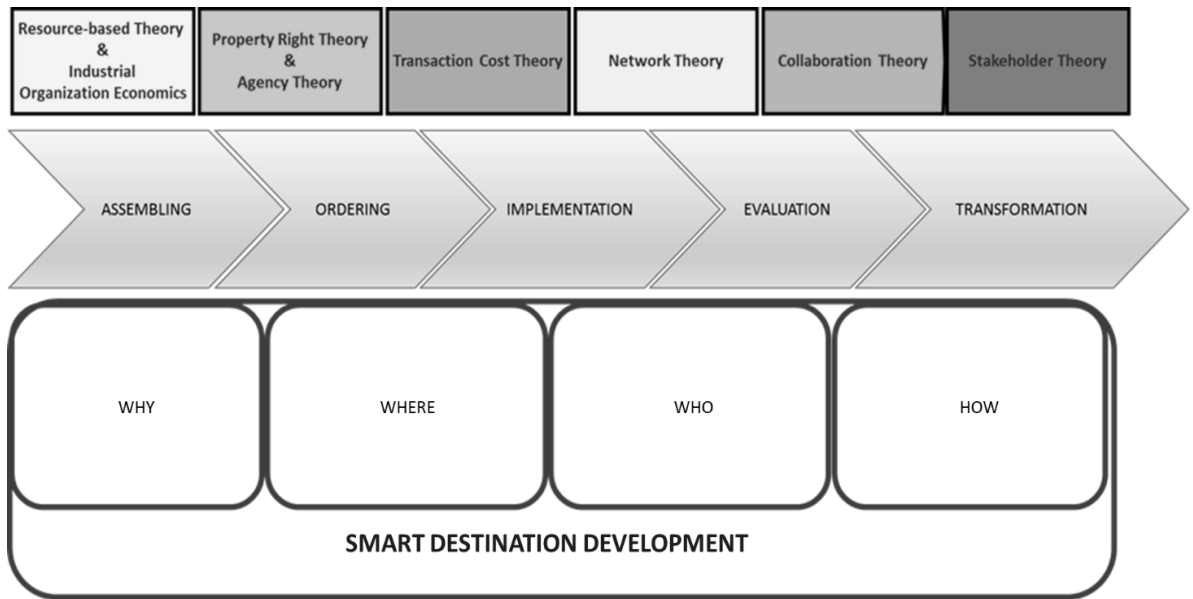


Figure 1. *The process of smart tourism destination governance: the basic framework*

The destination governance development process: an integrated perspective

Several strategic management and organization theories have been used in tourism research to understand destination governance, such as resource-based theory, stakeholder theory and transaction cost theory (Bregoli & Del Chiappa, 2013). However, by mainly relying on a few specific theories, existing contributions only provide a fragmented understanding of the issue. Such studies refer to governance structure, comparative analysis on the different governance models and the discussion on the features of good governance (Zhang & Zhu, 2014). More importantly, the existing literature remains predominantly anchored to a static perspective, focusing on some aspects or dimensions of what instead represents a highly complex and multi-faceted issue (Beritelli, 2011). As a result, a holistic, integrated and more comprehensive perspective is still lacking.

Moving in this direction, we first critically reviewed tourism management research to ascertain how relevant managerial theories, namely resource-based theory and industrial organization economics, property rights and agency theories, transaction cost theory, network theory, collaboration theory and stakeholder theory, hitherto informed the debate about destination governance. In this respect, for each theory, Table 1 (in Appendix) reports the key assumptions, drivers, governance models and related main

features along with the leading authors who drew on the theory in question to advance research into network/destination governance.

The above theories were critically reviewed to shed light on their contribution in informing all the stages, i.e. “assembling”, “ordering”, “implementation”, “evaluation” and “transformation”, of the tourism destination governance process and the consequent actions to take to sustain its development. Existing tourism research on destination governance (Flagestad & Hope, 2001; Beritelli *et al.*, 2007) reveals that *Resource-Based Theory* (RBT) (Barney, 2002) and *Industrial Organization Economics* (IOE) (Porter, 1996) make a sizeable contribution to informing the contents of the “assembling” and “ordering” stages of the destination governance process. Drawing on these two theories, Flagestad and Hope (2001) focused on the “structure” of destination governance. On the basis of the specific bundles of resources, competences and capabilities of a destination and their combination in a specific configuration within the value chain, the authors distinguished two ideal and opposite models of destination governance structure, namely the community model and the corporate model. The two configurations can be defined in terms of two key dimensions, i.e. centralization/decentralization of power and influence in decision-making. In the first governance configuration the property and/or control of local resources, infrastructures and activities are more homogeneously distributed among a number of different public and private stakeholders. In the second, those assets are under the control of few leading firms. Accordingly, we identified a number of actions to take in the “assembling” stage that are consistent with the specific governance structure of the tourism destination:

- a) analysis of the tourism destination’s macro-environment (Beritelli *et al.*, 2007), including institutional, technological, socio-economic and cultural factors along with the stage of the destination life cycle. Combined, these factors shape both threats and opportunities for destination development and growth and thus have to be considered in setting up an appropriate tourism destination governance structure.
- b) identification of resources, competences and capabilities and their configuration in a unique value chain along with the analysis of market structure and potential (for example in terms of tourist flows) which together influence the competitive positioning of the destination. RBT and IOE also point out the importance - in the “assembling” stage - of mapping local resources and identifying the stakeholders who own or control them.

As for the “ordering” stage, aimed at establishing goals and strategies for the development of the destination governance, RBT and IOE point to the constraints placed by available resources (e.g. natural, financial, knowledge, etc.) on the achievement of strategic goals, influencing priorities and the specific direction of intervention. Accordingly, they prescribe a strategic agenda for tourism destination development based on them.

As emerges from Beritelli *et al.* (2007), Property Rights (PR) (Coase, 1960) and Agency Theory (AT) (Jensen & Meckling, 1976) not only support, as do RBT and IOE, the value of destination competitiveness analysis but, more importantly, they serve to highlight the need to identify the key players of the current tourism offer system so as to ascertain the distribution of resources and activities and the power asymmetries and interdependencies that such a distribution produces.

Transaction Cost Theory (TCT) (Williamson, 1979) has been used in tourism research on destination governance by Beritelli *et al.* (2007), Wang and Xiang (2007) and Haugland (2011). Specifically, Beritelli *et al.* (2007) were the first to highlight the fact that, within dyadic relations, transaction costs and the risk of opportunistic behaviour are variables that influence the choice of the destination governance

structure. However, it is in the contribution of Wang and Ziang (2007) that the potential of TCT is exploited within the context of destination marketing to explain that governance structures can alternatively assume the forms of "hierarchy", "market" and "network" and, more importantly, that the structure changes over time as the risk of opportunistic behaviour and transaction costs increase/decrease. Finally, Haugland (2011) relied on TCT to identify four governance structures that differ according to the nature of coordination, the extent of formal contracts and the existence of an actor with a pivotal role. From a critical review of the existing research, it is argued that TCT can be mainly respectively used in the "assembling" and "implementation" stages of our model. As for the first stage, when destination analysis should be carried out to select partners to include in the governance system, TCT prescribes the identification of inter-organizational mechanisms that bind tourism system actors together and the contractual or fiduciary nature of mutual coordination. In the "implementation" stage, it is derived from TCT the need to establish the legal form of the partnership since this choice depends on transaction costs and the risk of opportunistic behaviour.

Network Theory (NT) (Gulati, 1995; Powell, 1990) has been recently used by tourism scholars to understand the nature and forms of destination governance and how to make it effective (e.g. Beaumont & Dredge, 2010; Bregoli & Del Chiappa, 2013; Scott *et al.*, 2010). The use of NT at the destination level relies on the assumption that the destination comprises a network of relationships among a number of actors belonging to the tourism offering system. These relationships and the complexity of their "governance" vary according to a variety of dimensions, namely the number of participants, the level of reciprocal trust, the nature and intensity of interdependences, and the degree of alignment and trade-offs among different interests and goals (Provan & Kenis, 2007).

Beaumont and Dredge (2010) evaluated the effectiveness of local tourism governance networks by proposing some characteristics for good governance: 1) Positive cultures, constructive communication and committed communities; 2) Transparency and accountability; 3) Vision and leadership; 4) Acceptance of diversity and search for equity and inclusion; 5) Knowledge development, learning and sharing of skills; 6) Clear roles and responsibilities of participants and clear operational structures and network processes. A similar approach was adopted by Eagles *et al.* (2012) which identified ten criteria to assess the good governance of parks and protected areas, stressing the importance of the historical and cultural context and by Dinica (2009) who focused on the role of ideology in influencing the institutional set-up, the choice of the governance model and the willingness of people to change the rules.

Some authors (Bregoli & Del Chiappa, 2013; Pavlovich, 2003; Scott *et al.*, 2010) have pointed to the potential of using Social Network Analysis (SNA) methods and techniques to understand the structural dimensions of destinations (e.g. centrality, inclusiveness, cohesion, etc.) and showed that also governance components, such as power and cooperation, can be measured through SNA statistics. However, others have emphasized the importance of integrating the structural analysis with the relational one in order to shed light on the role of other key dimensions influencing governance, such as existing social capital (Saxena, 2005) or leadership skills (Del Chiappa & Bregoli, 2012). The key assumption of network theory is that the destination success depends on the coordination and the integration degree of resources, products and services of single firms. In particular, in order to remain competitive, tourism destinations have to innovate and their innovation capability depends on how knowledge, a key intangible resource, is produced, transferred and exploited at the destination level enabling it to function as a "local system of innovation" (Guia *et al.*, 2006). In this respect, some tourism scholars (e.g. Baggio & Cooper, 2010; Del Chiappa & Baggio, 2015) pointed to the value of network theory

and social network analysis to shed light on how destinations source, share and use knowledge and how policy intervention can support their capacity to compete through innovation.

In sum, the contribution of NT is obtained in the: "assembling" stage, where it points to the first essential step of conducting a structural and relational analysis of the destination network; in the "implementation" stage, where structural and relational characteristics should be aligned to the specific needs of the destination, and the governance trade-offs of "efficiency-inclusiveness", "internal-external legitimacy" and "stability-flexibility" (Beaumont & Dredge, 2010) should be guaranteed.

Collaboration theory (CT) (Gray, 1989) has been adopted in tourism management studies to address a number of issues related to destination governance (Bramwell & Lane, 2000; Bramwell & Sharman, 1999; Jamal & Getz, 1995; Marzano & Scott, 2009; Yuksel & Yuksel, 2005). According to this theory destination competitiveness depends on close cooperation among all local stakeholders and public-private partnerships need to be established for effective destination governance through the achievement of mutual benefits for all actors involved in the collaborative effort and sustainability goals for the destination (Bramwell & Lane, 2000; Buhalis, 2000). In sum, the contribution of CT is related to: the "assembling" stage, where it prescribes the identification of actors to involve in the collaboration and definition of the most appropriate form of partnership; the "ordering" stage, pointing to the importance of ensuring shared goals and building consensus towards sustainability tourism development; the "implementation" stage, where tasks have to be clearly assigned to partners, a DMO is to be established and the decision-making process is to be fixed; in the final stages of "evaluation" and "transformation" CT respectively notes the importance of checking the achievement of planned activities and comparing the achieved results against the targeted objectives, and the need to understand the evolution of relations between stakeholders, and to start specific actions to consolidate them in the future.

Stakeholder Theory (ST) (Freeman, 1984) also shapes the elaboration of a destination governance model, as it results from a critical literature review (Bregoli & Del Chiappa, 2013; Currie *et al.*, 2009; d'Angella & Go, 2009; Sautter & Leisen, 1999; Sheenan & Ritchie, 2005). At the destination level, stakeholders are groups or individuals who are able to influence, or are influenced themselves by the destination performance and, as a result, have to be involved in the destination governance process working together towards a common goal (Silveira, 2005). As revealed by the review of existing tourism research drawing on ST, this theory can be used in the "assembling" stage, when it envisages identifying the stakeholders to be involved in the tourism governance process; in the "ordering" stage, when the actors involved have to set a mission that is consistent with the economic, social and environmental goals and establish a high level of consensus with respect to specific objectives; in the "implementation" stage, ST stresses the key role of the DMO, its functions and activities, but also the nature of the relationships that this body has to establish with the destination actors and related coordination mechanisms. Moreover, stakeholder participation and relations with the DMO should be designed around a business model that clearly expresses the boundaries within which stakeholders are empowered to act and that offers the expected value to tourists; in the "evaluation" and "transformation" stages, ST underlines the need to identify appropriate monitoring systems to assess contributions, rewards and risk trade-offs and to establish appropriate strategies for strengthening/revitalizing the destination governance model.

Infusing "smartness" into the framework: integrating research on smart governance, the smart city and smart tourism destination

Starting from the critical analysis of the main managerial theories on destination governance, this section is aimed at identifying how the smart paradigm, through a number of "smartness" dimensions, can inform the content and actions of the various phases of the conceptual framework reported in

Figure 2 (in Appendix). In this direction the authors drew on and integrated three interrelated research strands, namely smart governance, the smart city and smart tourism destinations.

Within the "assembling" stage of the tourism destination governance model, as for the very early phase of macro-environment analysis, the smart tourism destination literature underlines the enabling role that the "*smart destination context*" (Errichiello & Marasco, 2017; Marasco & Errichiello, 2016) plays in shaping the set-up of any tourism governance model targeting the smart development of a destination. In this respect, as already pointed out in the introduction, the availability and/or development of a technology infrastructure and specific solutions are key requisites for creating a smart tourism destination (Wang *et al.*, 2013; Zhu *et al.*, 2014). However, the set-up of an institutional context that enables technology and market opportunities and fosters partnering with one or more actors to develop suitable technological solutions is not sufficient. Indeed, a variety of complementary contextual conditions have to occur for an overall smart development plan to be implemented also through specific innovation projects. Such conditions, which are institutional, political, socio-economic and cultural, inevitably influence from the beginning the potential trajectory of a given destination towards smartness (Boes *et al.*, 2015). We refer, in particular, to (Errichiello & Marasco, 2017): funding opportunities for financing smart initiatives and projects (e.g. structural funds, private investments, ad hoc destination budgets); technological and market opportunities for business firms; the level of political support from public institutions involved in tourism policy and planning; a regulatory framework for smart destination programmes; previous forms of formal and informal collaboration among different groups of stakeholders; the level of public involvement in decision making processes; the degree of digitalization and technology diffusion at organizational and inter-organizational level. Taken together, this set of conditions influences the smart development journey of the destination (Achaerandio *et al.*, 2011), in terms of level of commitment towards smart initiatives and projects that would directly impact the local tourism industry and destination competitiveness, as well as the level of integration and coordination among such tourism-related smart activities (Abbate *et al.*, 2018). Indeed, a holistic and integrated master plan covering several dimensions of smartness is likely to be set up only in the most developed destinations where a destination management organization is expected to formally exist. By contrast, in the context of less developed destinations, where the organization of the overall tourism supply system usually lacks a formal DMO, collective effort tends to be oriented towards specific smart tourism goals and activities are likely to be organized around more fragmented and isolated initiatives.

As for the second phase of the process framework, i.e. related to destination competitiveness, the literature on smart governance highlights the importance of some factors for the smart city that can be easily extended to the smart destination level. The specific reference is to suitable *city infrastructures* that include many enabling factors for the development of smart cities and that need to be governed (Chourabi *et al.*, 2012). These factors foster collaboration, data exchange, service integration, communication and facilitate governance transparency (Mooij, 2003; Odendaal, 2003, Johnston and Hansen, 2011). At the same time, scholars have highlighted the role of *Resources*, understood as those resources useful for the development of smart cities, including financial resources that are decisive for the prosperity and sustainability of smart cities over time (Kourtit *et al.*, 2014), along with the need for *human assets* (Lombardi *et al.*, 2011), and other immaterial capital, that are decisive for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth (Batangan, 2011). Along the same lines, the literature on smart tourism destinations underlines the importance of a variety of resources required to compete successfully. In this respect, the model developed by the SEGITTUR (Tourism Innovation and Technologies state-owned company) project (Ivars-Baidal *et al.*, 2019) focuses on three types of resources: 1) *strategic relational resources*, that mainly refer to public-private cooperation to ensure sustainable development

and focusing on open innovation; 2) *instrumental resources*, based on a destination information system, digitally connected and essential for the decision-making process; 3) resources at *applied level*, based on intelligent solutions for all destination management functions and able to ensure greater efficiency and enhance the tourist experience. Alongside these, Jovicic (2016) underlined the potential of knowledge resources. Such resources include not only technological knowledge, but also knowledge accumulated through learning activities that include topics such as ethics (Cavalheiro *et al.*, 2019; Stieglitz & Greenwald, 2015). However, destination competitiveness does not depend only on the initial endowment of tangible and intangible resources. The competitive strength of a destination is also a function of the different level of control of such resources by different stakeholders and on the smart tourism destination life cycle stage (Butler, 2006, Kumar, 2016; Vargas-Sánchez, 2016).

Literature on smart governance and smart tourism destinations has significantly contributed to inform the process of destination stakeholder management, aimed at identifying actors to involve in building smart destination governance: a number of scholars in both research traditions have stressed the importance of multi-stakeholder participation. Chourabi *et al.* (2012) showed that governance can be considered smart when it is based on *stakeholder relations*, resulting from the ability of different public and private stakeholders to cooperate and collaborate, also through leadership support, by creating alliances and working together under different jurisdictions (Scholl *et al.*, 2009). In a similar way, Meijer *et al.* (2016) considered "*the interaction between various stakeholders in the city as their defining feature of a smart city*".

As for the fourth phase of the framework, namely destination network analysis and partner selection in smart tourism destinations, from the literature on smart governance it transpires that, among the stakeholders to be involved, citizens play a strategic role in all stages of smart development: design, implementation and post-implementation (Castelnovo *et al.*, 2015). Similarly, Lalic and Önder (2016) considered both tourists and residents to be indispensable in the participatory governance processes of smart tourism destinations. At the same time, as emerged from various smart projects and initiatives documented in the smart city and smart tourism literature (e.g. Errichiello & Marasco, 2017; Marasco & Errichiello, 2016) the implementation of a smart tourism destination necessarily requires the involvement of less traditional stakeholders, namely universities and research centres, mobile network operators, trusted service managers and banks next to the more traditional ones (e.g. tourists, residents, private tourism firms).

Smart tourism destination research has highlighted the need to create the conditions to increase the *commitment of all stakeholders* through incentives to collective participation and collaboration (Gretzel *et al.*, 2016) and to ensure widespread adherence to shared goals and strategic planning. In this respect, destination governance is required to be consistent with the smartness development goals previously identified and there needs to be sufficient commitment on the part of all relevant stakeholders to achieve them through cooperation and collective decision-making. In this regard, the smart governance literature underlines that *investments in the local context* are useful for ensuring maximum community involvement (Chourabi *et al.*, 2012).

As is the nature of collaborative arrangements, all research streams point to the value of *public-private partnerships (PPPs)* to build network governance that is aligned with a smart approach. On the one hand, private actors offer innovative design, as well as project management skills and know-how in risk management (Nisar, 2013); on the other, public actors provide access to resources and infrastructures of public interest and ensure respect for collective welfare.

Scholars of tourism management have emphasized PPPs as suitable collaborative arrangements for smart effective tourism destination governance (Buhalis & Amaranggana, 2013; Gretzel *et al.*, 2016; Gretzel *et al.*, 2018). PPPs promote efficiency, support creativity and stimulate innovation (Heeley, 2011) and enable the sharing of complementary resources and competences owned by private and public actors so as to increase the knowledge potential of the whole destination (Crouch & Ritchie, 2005).

With regard to the stage of goal definition, several studies view smart governance as a key pillar of a smart city (e.g. Tomor *et al.*, 2019). As such, this stage aims to achieve *sustainable development*, i.e. to produce significant *environmental, economic and socio-cultural impacts* along with the improvement of quality of life and the well-being of all citizens. Contributions on smart tourism destination reinforce the citizen-orientation through embracing a *tourist-centric vision*, which assumes tourists are citizens who live the experience of visiting a specific destination (Fyall, 2011) in a similar way to residents, professionals and workers living in the destination.

Smart tourism destination governance is called upon to create the facilitating conditions and incentives for the development of new or improved services/experiences for a higher satisfaction of tourists and a better quality of life of the local community, thus making destination accessibility more efficient and enhancing the interaction between the tourist and the destination along all the phases of the visiting experience (Vargas-Sánchez, 2016). Moreover, it should promote social cohesion and the qualification of human capital, through enabling knowledge transfer processes and the development of specific, digital and non-digital skills (Boes *et al.*, 2015).

Within the “implementation stage” of the framework, identification of roles and coordination mechanisms is certainly one of the most critical aspects. With regard to roles, building on the literature on smart cities (e.g. European Parliament, 2014; Gimney *et al.*, 2015; Nam & Pardo, 2011), the literature on smart tourism destination underlines the need for a strong and authoritative leadership (i.e. “*smart leadership*”) (Boes *et al.*, 2015). Indeed, leadership skills (e.g. defining priorities, negotiation, conflict resolution, building consensus, etc.) can be considered a significant component of smart destination governance. Smart leadership has been defined as the ability, especially at local level, to “*understand the close interdependence of businesses and communities*” and to “*create and maintain balanced and mutually beneficial relationships across business and community needs in the digital era*”. Boes *et al.* (2015) also emphasized that different leadership styles can be adopted (including top-down and bottom-up approaches) and that leadership can assume a variety of forms (e.g. public, private or joint leadership). In all cases, strong leadership and determination of authorities to deliver smartness are critical for becoming a smart tourism destination since it is only through smartness that destinations can cope with and balance individual and often diverging interests of many stakeholders.

A pivotal role is played by the destination management organization (DMO) (renamed smart DMO) that has a number of functions. According to Gretzel *et al.* (2018), the role of a smart DMO is to “*lobby and maybe even partly sponsor the development of smart tourism infrastructure, to curate and manage smart tourism data, to facilitate development and uptake of smart tourism-related applications within the digital business ecosystem, to support tourists in learning about and consuming smart tourism experiences, and, finally, to link smart tourism with overall quality of life and sustainability development goals*” (p. 201). Baidal *et al.* (2019) emphasized that in a smart tourism destination the creation of a DMO entails more effort as it requires a higher level of coordination and cooperation between local actors. In this sense, in the smart tourism destination context the DMO has to redesign some of its functions especially by reinforcing the abilities to apply new technologies to managing destinations according to a systemic multi-level management approach (i.e. strategic-relational, instrumental and applied).

According to some authors (Alami & Aria, 2016; Sheehan *et al.*, 2015), smart DMOs should work as intelligent agents that favour dynamic interaction among stakeholders, manage knowledge transfer and information about specific stakeholders, sectors and destinations. At the same time, also through leveraging smart technologies, they should improve the co-creation of tourism experiences (Buonincontri & Micera, 2016; Neuhofer *et al.*, 2015).

With regard to mechanisms, contributions on smart governance, smart cities and smart tourism destinations place considerable attention on the decision-making process that can ensure multi-stakeholder participation and has to be set up to manage the trade-offs between a top-down and a bottom up approach. According to this perspective, citizens' needs and institutional settings drive the decision-making process that influences the allocation of resources and hence the generated public value. The degree of public value can influence citizens' needs, creating a continuous improvement process underpinning smart city governance.

As for specific approaches and methodologies to adopt for fostering stakeholder participation, *Living labs* have been widely invoked in the literature on smart cities and smart destinations (e.g. Almirall *et al.*, 2012; Boes *et al.*, 2015; Buhalis & Amaranggana, 2014; Schaffers *et al.*, 2011). The above authors underline the potential of Living Labs to work as real-life test environments for both users (tourists) and tourist service providers who can co-create new tourist services through sharing a common platform that enables real-time collaboration and immediate feedback. Indeed, living labs can be conceived as virtual places shared by tourists and all relevant local stakeholders (e.g. research institutes, universities, firms and citizens) to be involved to provide their ideas, opinions and suggestions to shape and orient the strategic smart development plan of the destination as well as to develop specific smart products, services and solutions for tourists and the local community (Boes *et al.*, 2015). Others (e.g. Bajracharya *et al.*, 2014; Hielkema & Hongisto 2012) pointed out the opportunities offered by *crowdsourcing and crowdfunding* platforms to foster entrepreneurship and attract new investors in specific smart-oriented tourism projects.

Living labs, crowdsourcing and crowdfunding often rely on a technological supportive platform. Broadly speaking, new (smart) technologies are a key building block of the implementation stage within the smart destination governance building process. Governance is smart to the extent that it allows real-time access to information from the city and from citizens through an infrastructure of sensors and open access systems (Tomor *et al.*, 2019). Indeed, the use of smart technologies facilitates the transfer of knowledge among the various actors in the city and makes the management of multilevel governance more effective and efficient.

The literature on smart cities and smart destinations largely considers the existence of technological platforms (such as wi-fi) as enabling factors along with the availability of specific software and/or applications aimed at ensuring the involvement of all stakeholders in the decision-making process related to urban strategies and policies. Moreover, ICT systems enable all citizens to access official documents and information (transparency) through the open data repository (e-democracy). In a nutshell, through e-governance citizens are at the centre of the decision-making process and all related initiatives, and the use of ICTs is oriented at improving citizens' quality of life.

At the governance level, an ICT-oriented approach facilitates the management of stakeholder relations, making the governance process more efficient, effective and transparent (Pereira *et al.*, 2016). Technological tools help to solve problems created by interdependencies and coordination requirements, ensure an equal distribution of value among actors, thus reducing social and political

complexity and forestalling potential conflict. As highlighted in many contributions in the field of smart governance and smart tourism destination (Bolívar, 2018; Chourabi *et al.*, 2012; Fernández-Anez *et al.*, 2018; Gretzel, 2018), transparency, openness, accountability, collaboration, innovation and efficiency are common elements used to describe smart city governance.

With regard to technology, the destination governance process meets the smart paradigm when the traditional destination management system is able to evolve towards a more advanced smart tourism system, which integrates the technological pillars of smart cities (i.e. cloud services, IoT and end-user service internet) (Zhang *et al.*, 2012; Zhu *et al.*, 2014). This system has to manage, at the centralized level, stakeholder data, ensuring real-time access to citizens through open access systems, while effectively dealing with the confidentiality of such data (Reischl, 2013; Zygiaris, 2013). Indeed, smart technologies are ubiquitous and embedded in the destination such that their use and further development should be part of any destination governance process. Smart tourism destination is characterized by a technological platform able to intensify the use of knowledge, enhancing, on the one hand, the tourist's experience and, on the other, assisting the decision-making process of the actors of the tourist system. According to this interpretation, technology is only a means which, as argued by Cacho *et al.* (2016), can “enable demand and supply to co-create value, pleasure, and experiences for the tourist and wealth, profit, and benefits for the organizations and the destination”. Finally, a suitable monitoring system should be used to assess the achievement of the planned goals of smartness (Buhalis, Amaranggana, 2014; European Parliament, 2014), also in terms of increased tourism destination competitiveness.

Another essential tool on which any model of smart tourism governance should rely, irrespective of its specific structures and mechanisms, is the formulation of a *formal smart tourism strategic plan*, to be set up in the “ordering” stage, where all strategies, policies and actions needed for the smart development process are clearly and expressly defined and communicated to all parties involved in the governance process (European Parliament, 2014).

Cavalheiro *et al.* (2020) developed the smart tourism destination development model (STDDM), which provides strategic steps to transform a destination into a smart tourism destination and which considers, in addition to the technological infrastructure, the need to define initiatives including regeneration projects and social innovation actions aimed at an inclusive vision of the whole destination community.

In order to define an effective and efficient governance model, it is important to include a stage devoted to the Analysis of Results. On this topic, research contributions on smart governance, the smart city and smart tourism destination converge. The Cohen Wheel represents one of the first tools that includes indicators that may be used to assess the level of smartness of a city and also includes a specific part dedicated to smart governance (Cohen, 2013). La Rocca (2014) provided a list of elements to monitor smart tourism governance: engage in open data initiatives; coordinate among administrative levels; activate public-private partnerships; represent and foster integration of tourism in urban governance processes; safeguard and promote heritage and culture; promote active involvement of the residential population; provide network infrastructures; plan a sensor network for tourist purposes; develop platforms that facilitate tourism-related exchanges; control energy and resources consumption.

In this area, specific tourism-related indicators can be identified to measure the contribution of decision-making processes and communication to the sustainable management of the destination (*destination management core indicators*), the economic impact generated by tourism (*economic value*

core indicators), the socio-cultural and environmental tourism impact (*social and cultural impact core indicators and environment impact core indicators*).

The last phase of the framework concerns partnership evolution. In this respect, the literature underlined the key role of public actors that should foster cooperation, building a growing, sustainable and progressive dynamics among stakeholders, including citizens (Fuchs & Baggio, 2017; Stieglitz & Greenwald, 2015). The involvement of a variety of actors would make the destination a fertile environment for *open innovation processes*, aimed at developing new products and services along with improving existing ones, attracting new investment and entrepreneurial initiatives, and, finally, involving new stakeholders. In particular, the synergy between technologies and appropriate collaborative models generates opportunities for internal *re-engineering of business processes*, in line with the customization needs of tourists, supporting destinations to gain a competitive advantage and adopt sustainable development paths (Ammirato *et al.*, 2018).

Through the integration of insights emerging from the contribution of management theories to understanding the issue of destination governance and some key dimensions required for building the smart tourism destination concept, a framework for the smart tourism destination governance process can be elaborated (Figure 3). The framework identifies a set of rules, organizational mechanisms and coordination arrangements that are aligned with an overall development strategy aimed at infusing smartness within destinations through leveraging governance structures and mechanisms, thus adding new knowledge on the nascent issue of smart tourism destination governance.

The framework is the result of a bridge between destination governance and the smart paradigm, as expressed in a number of related research strands, i.e. smart city, smart tourism destinations and smart governance, and destination governance. This framework can represent a roadmap for understanding the evolutionary path of a complex process of setting up and implementing tourism destination governance, although some insights are included with regard to its maintenance over time. Moreover, it clearly highlights the need to consider the local context under examination in order to draw up specific actions to take in each step.

Conclusion

Among tourism scholars and practitioners, the application of smart technologies is increasingly recognized as a relevant opportunity to enhance the competitive position of tourist destinations. Indeed, advanced technological solutions could potentially support tourism businesses and destinations in achieving greater efficiency, enriching the tourist experience along with pursuing sustainability goals at environmental, social and economic level. However, technological innovation should be considered as a complement to other forms of change, including organizational and social innovation. The paper embraces this position and starts from the assumption that the integrated planning and implementation of smart technologies is the enabling platform of a complex organization of tourism that functions in a coordinated and inclusive manner. In this direction, it requires a suitable governance structure based on the coordination and integration of a number of stakeholders, including businesses, government and community. Indeed, all these actors need to be part of a collaborative environment and work together towards the smart development of the destination.

This paper aims at integrating the recent smart approach with the destination governance theory to develop a Smart Tourism Destination Governance process framework. In detail, this framework explains how the smart approach can inform the planning and implementation of smart development goals, and specifically how smartness principles, tools and methods can inform the sustainable competitiveness of

the destination beyond the mere technology dimension, making explicit the role of collaborative structures, user-driven service, social innovation and local community involvement.

At the theoretical level, the proposed framework adopts an integrated perspective for analysing the phenomenon of smart tourism destination governance which is in line with the new interpretation of the tourist as co-producer, the need for greater integration between various tourism stakeholders, the use of a technological infrastructure able to create digital environments that promote the transfer and sharing of knowledge, and the need to begin sustainable and participated development paths.

Besides its contribution to the theory of smart tourism and smart tourism destination governance, the framework also has value for practitioners, notably destination managers and stakeholders involved as leaders in smart tourism destination plans and initiatives. It offers indications about how to steer through a systematic process geared to building smart governance of destinations. It provides some points of reference regarding the specific issues to address and the variables to consider in the decision-making process of destination managers and key stakeholders in all the stages required to build up smart-oriented governance. In this respect, it is worth stressing that the framework is a flexible tool whose use can be adapted to the specific context of analysis or application. This means that the implementation path will be chosen by taking account of previous achievements arising from smart-oriented initiatives and projects, but also the current structure of the destination intended as a network of relationships and interactions among a variety of stakeholders, the related level of trust, collaboration and partnerships along with the specific role played by institutional factors, e.g. in terms of political support and market and technological opportunities.

Regarding implications for future research, the paper underlines the need to create a path that, albeit complex, takes into account all the key factors (actors, mechanisms, responsibilities, tools, etc.) that identify a good governance model for a destination that intends to become a smart tourism destination. This requires the application of technologies that can support the sharing of a vision, value proposition, innovative processes and activities to be implemented to consolidate the new smart tourism destination paradigm.

At the same time, case study research carried out in different tourism destinations could be valuable to fine-tune the framework and verify its consistency and validity across contexts. It would be important to select destinations that are in a different stage of smart development in order to analyse and compare their strategies and choices with regard to the various stages of development towards smartness and smart destination governance. In carrying out such an analysis the key assumption is that governance structures are not static variables. Indeed, the framework would support in-depth understanding about how different governance structures emerge as a result of specific choices shaped by the constraints and opportunities of a given destination.

End Notes:

'a. Cloud services are designed to provide convenient and scalable access (e.g. measurable for payment per use) to applications, software and data through web browsers.

b. The Internet of Things (IoT) refers to "the pervasive presence around us of a variety of things or objects".

c. The end-user internet service system refers to the applications and equipment support of cloud services and the Internet of Things at various levels of end-users (Huang & Li, 2011).

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Appendices

Table 1. *Comparative analysis of theoretical approaches to destination governance*

Theory	Assumptions	Drivers	Governance Model	Main Characteristics	Main authors
Resource-based Theory and Industrial Organization Economics	The Destination's competitive advantage depends on bundles of resources and activities configuration	- activities and resources configuration	<i>Corporate</i>	- one or few leading companies that control and manage destination resources, activities, facilities and infrastructure - strong orientation to marketing and customer loyalty - DMO is managed by the major firm that has specific aims of efficiency and profitability	Bieger (1996; 1998) Flagestad and Hope (2001)
			<i>Community</i>	- independent firms, that have some resources and are specialized in a particular activity - there is no specific firm that assumes a dominant position. All firms work in a decentralized way - the influence of a public actor is strong, since it controls the local resources and it is oriented to satisfying all stakeholders' expectations - DMO has a strategic and operational role for regional planning and tourism marketing initiatives	
Corporate Governance Theories (Microtheories)	According to PRT the property rights allocation generates externalities for the destination. Agency Theory considers on the one hand the people and public bodies, as a principal; on the other hand companies, such as agents that use local resources, perceived as common goods. The goal of TCE is to identify the governance model that minimizes transaction costs and reduces the risk of opportunism. NT studies the configurations and relational mechanisms that characterize the social networks	- transaction costs - power asymmetries - interdependencies - trust/control - knowledge management - personal relationships	<i>Corporate</i>	- few transaction costs that occur in dyadic relations between the dominant firm and its partners - coordination mechanisms characterized by a high power concentration of the dominant firm - many activity interdependencies between the dominant firm and the public actor - trust is ensured by control mechanisms and contracts - knowledge management is an important factor for defining business strategies and for drafting contracts by the dominant firm - low diffusion of informal relationships, except among a small number of partners	Beritelli, Bieger and Laesser (2007)
			<i>Community</i>	- transaction costs increase if the number of actors/institutions involved in relationships increases - power asymmetries vary according to the ability to propose partnerships - many interdependencies between network actors - high level of trust between actors is essential for taking strategic decisions and the definition of operational actions - trust between actors is influenced by the history of the destination, its evolution and the current socio-economic and political context - widespread strategic knowledge in the relations between actors and between actors and territory - many personal relationships are linked to the degree of integration of services and the heterogeneity of the target markets - governance mechanisms define the degree of autonomy with which private businesses, public bodies and DMO should operate - culturally formed local communities, where there is greater need to preserve the balance of power	
Transaction Cost Economics	Governance models can be placed on a continuum whose extremes are represented	- transaction costs - risk of opportunism	<i>Market Governance</i>	- it is based on contractual relations between actors of the destination - "price" is the main coordination mechanism - there is a high degree of flexibility among the actors involved - the actors may decide to cooperate only if they receive specific benefits	Wang and Xiang (2007) Haugland <i>et al.</i> (2011)

Theory	Assumptions	Drivers	Governance Model	Main Characteristics	Main authors
	by the Market and the Hierarchy	- process of defining strategic alliances at destination level	<i>Hierarchy Governance</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the presence of an authority or a supervisory structure which allows specific routines to be defined - coordination is carried out through administrative penalties, the exercise of power and influence on relations - no risks or problems related to cooperation 	
			<i>Network Governance</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It is based on the need for an integrated supply system - the interdependencies are managed thanks to the trust, loyalty and reciprocity between network actors - interdependencies can be expressed in various forms: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • conventional or individualistic form: in which each actor works individually and the coordination takes place with respect to the individual projects to be undertaken from time to time; • administered form, according to which the actors work together voluntarily and informally and implement jointly some activity by the DMO • contractual form, characterized by a greater degree of coordination between the actors, since it is often regulated by formal contracts • corporate form, in which there is an actor - pivot that aggregates a number of local actors in order to plan for the destination development strategies • plural form, combining efficiently the four forms of governance described above 	
Network Theory	Destination success depends on the coordination and the integration degree of resources, products and services of single firms.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - network relations among stakeholders - coordination mechanisms - integration degree of resources, products and services of single firms - social network analysis and its indicators - mutual trust - legitimacy - knowledge transfer 	<i>Leading Organization Network.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Characterize the vertical relationships between buyers and suppliers, when there is a large strong actor (the buyer, the supplier, the lender) and several weaker small beneficiary enterprises - The "strong " actor takes on the coordination and has the task of managing the network and supports the activities of its members - The environment is considered as a resource and an attractive factor that can serve network aims - Lack of attention to environmental and social issues 	Saxena (1994) Scott (2000) Macneil and Campbell (2001) Pavlocich (2003) Saxena (2005) Dredge (2006); Shih (2006) Provan and Kenis (2007); Scott <i>et al.</i> (2008); Baggio and Cooper, (2008) Law (2008) Timur and Getz (2008) Yeoman (2008) Breukel and Go (2009) Cooper <i>et al.</i> (2009) Baggio <i>et al.</i> (2010) Beaumont and Dredge (2010) Del Chiappa and Bregoli (2012) Del Chiappa and Presenza (2013)
			<i>Participant-Governed Networks</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - each of the network components is responsible for relationship management and network activities - the power of each component in the network is symmetrical - the planning is shared among all network components and is highly decentralized - the objectives focus on achieving economic, environmental and social results 	
			<i>Network Administrative Organization (NAO Model).</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - foundation of an actor (government agency or non-profit) specifically created to govern the network - the funding actor stimulates the growth of the network by targeted funding and facilitates the network's activities in order to ensure the achievement of specific objectives - the government entity may be an individual or a structured organization established by an Executive Director, staff members and an operating committee - template extremely suitable governance to foster economic development objectives and focused on sustainability both at the network level or an individual component 	

Theory	Assumptions	Drivers	Governance Model	Main Characteristics	Main authors
Collaboration Theory	The collaboration enables stakeholders to integrate their resources with those available to others, in order to start a process of tourist destination development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - management of interdependencies between stakeholders - sharing resources and risks - mutual learning - development of innovative policies - response capacity in a dynamic environment - planning and coordination of tourism at the local level - distribution and mode of exercising power 	<i>Collaborative Model</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - pursuing heterogeneity objectives both locally and globally - the configurations of the agreements may be local, regional, national or international - different ways of formalization: the cases of legally binding agreements, or otherwise, of less structured and very informal verbal agreements - greater protection of available resources, both natural and man-made - involvement of stakeholders, including those from different sectors of activity - fair distribution of the benefits and associated costs (linked to the number of stakeholders involved) - increased democratization of processes and empowerment of participants - destination is considered an "open system" of interdependent stakeholders - infrastructure and leisure services, are shared by its inhabitants, visitors and other players in the system - the development of tourism takes on the characteristics of a public and social good 	<p>Trist (1983) Benveniste (1989) Gray (1989) Brown (1991) Roberts and Bradley (1991) Wood and Grey (1991) McGinnis (1992) Oaks (1992) Ritchie (1993) Gill and Williams (1994) Lane (1994) Jamal and Getz (1995, 1996) Selin and Chavez (1995) O'Toole (1997) Reed (1997) Thomas and Thomas (1998) Bramwell and Sharman (1999) Butler (1999) Bramwell and Lane (2000) Booher and Innes (2002) Andriof <i>et al.</i> (2003) Aas <i>et al.</i> (2005) Yuksel and Yuksel (2005) Jamal <i>et al.</i> (2007) Jamal and Stronza (2009) Marzano and Scott (2009) Shaw and Williams (2009)</p>
Stakeholder Theory	Sustainable tourism development requires governance based on the principles of involvement, participation and interaction among stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - harmonization and coordination among stakeholders - triple bottom line (economic, environmental and social) - Participatory, inclusive and collaborative approach during the destination planning process 	<i>Collaborative Community Model</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the destination is considered an open social system consisting of multiple interdependent stakeholders - the ability to renegotiate the objectives of the actors taking part in the preparation of the territorial tourist offer system - implementation of policies aimed at sustainability - governance as "solid and flexible" - expansion of the stakeholder range to consider, critically exploring their ability to influence the target goals - Involvement and cooperation based on consensus - the DMO is the only organization able to coordinate all stakeholders - the success of the partnership depends on the perception of businesses and DMO about the trade-off grants / awards -higher attention to social capital (trust, communication flows and willingness to exchange ideas), intellectual capital (mutual understanding) and the political capital (agreements and creation of formal or informal projects) 	<p>Gill and Williams (1994) Jamal and Getz (1995) Healey (1996) Getz <i>et al.</i> (1998) Mandell (1999) Bramwell and Sharman (1999) Bramwell and Lane (2000) Ladkin and Bertramini (2002) Pforr (2006)</p>

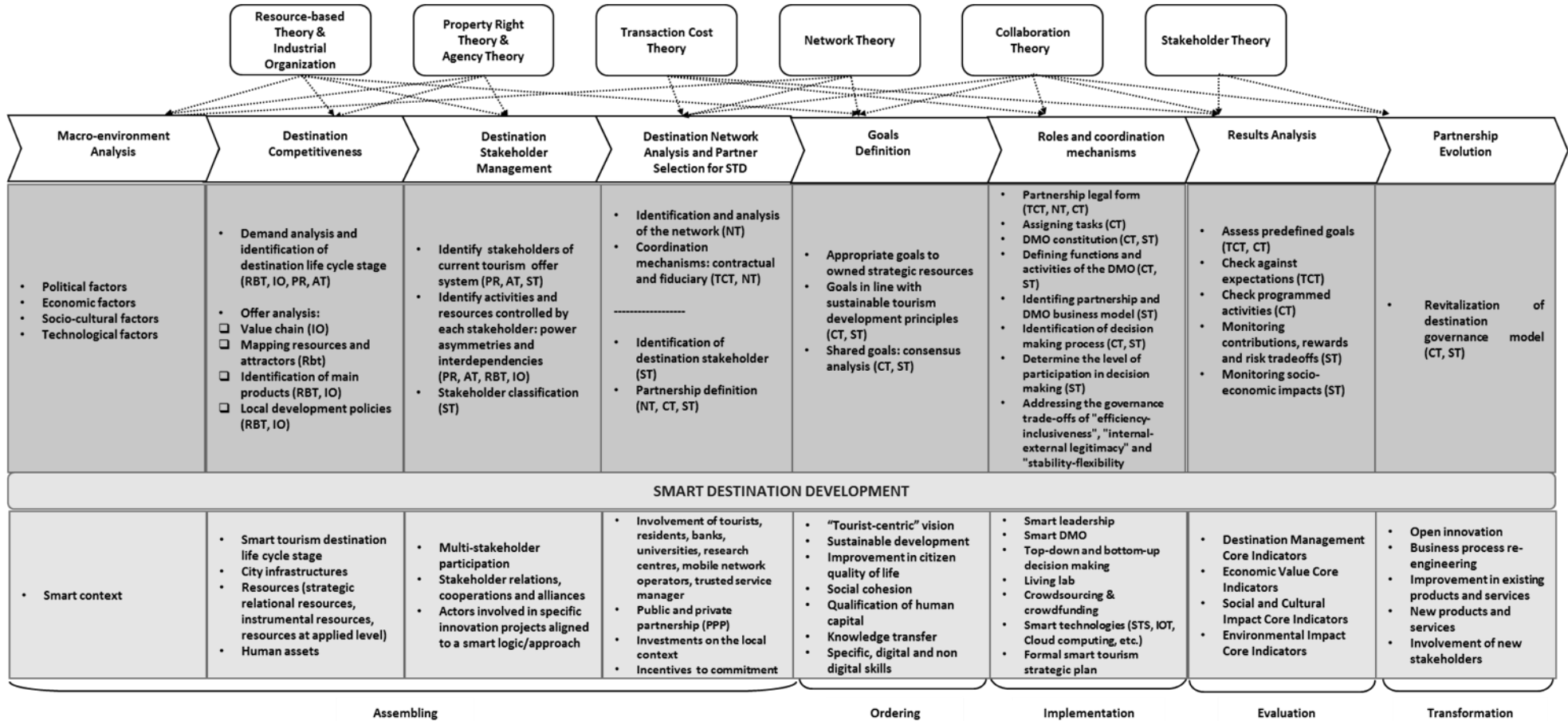


Figure 2. Smart tourism destination governance process framework