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Public–private collaboration in the tourism sector: balancing legitimacy and effectiveness in local tourism partnerships. The Spanish case

María José Zapata & C. Michael Hall

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Abstract

Using a new institutional theories perspective this paper focuses on public–private collaboration processes in local tourism public–private partnerships (PPP). Research was conducted via a national survey and case studies of the organisational characteristics of local tourism partnerships in Spain. The emergence of hybrid quasi-public and quasi-private partnerships, and the general dependence on public funding, named the process of publicness, stand out as the main findings of the national survey. The institutional processes behind the evolution of local tourism partnerships in Spain are analysed through two case studies of hybrid emergent quasi-public and quasi-private partnerships. The organisational evolution of both partnerships is the result of the

institutionalisation of the tourism organisational fields and the simultaneous processes of company-isation and politicisation. The inconsistencies and tensions in these hybrid organisations were the result of the organisational hypocrisy whereby discourse was decoupled from action, and partnerships' continuity and survival were guaranteed by strategies of publicness.

Resumen

Este artículo analiza los procesos de colaboración en los partenariados público-privados (PPP – public–private partenerships) turísticos locales desde la perspectiva de las teorías neoinstitucionales. La investigación se realizó mediante una encuesta nacional a partenariados turísticos locales en España y dos estudios de caso. La encuesta destaca como principales resultados la emergencia de partenariados híbridos quasi-públicos y quasi-privados y la dependencia general de financiación pública, denominada publicness. Los procesos institucionales detrás de la evolución de los partenariados turísticos locales en España son analizados a través de dos estudios de caso de partenariados híbridos emergentes quasi-públicos y quasi-privado. La evolución organizativa de ambos partenariados es el resultado de la institucionalización del sector turístico como campo organizacional y de los procesos simultáneos de empresa-ización y politización. Las inconsistencias y tensiones entre estas organizaciones híbridas son el resultado de la hipocresía organizacional por la cual el discurso era disociado de la acción; y la continuidad y supervivencia de estos partenariados era garantizada mediante estrategias de publicness.

Résumé

S'appuyant sur une nouvelle perspective des théories institutionnelles, cet article s'intéresse aux modes de collaborations public–privé dans les partenariats publics-privés dans le tourisme local. La recherche a été menée à travers une étude nationale et des cas d'étude portant sur les caractéristiques organisationnelles des partenariats touristiques locaux en Espagne. L'émergence de partenariats publics-privés et la forte dépendance aux fonds publics, apparaissent comme les résultats principaux de l'étude nationale. Les processus institutionnels qui soutendent l'évolution des partenariats touristiques locaux en Espagne sont analysés à travers deux cas d'études de partenariats mi-public mi-privé naissants. L'évolution organisationnelle des deux partenariats est le résultat de l'institutionnalisation des champs du tourisme organisationnel et des processus concomitants assimilant la structure à une entreprise et la politisant. Les incohérences et tensions dans ces organisations hybrides sont les

résultats de l'hypocrisie institutionnelle qui prévoit une séparation entre le discours et l'action et les permanence et maintien des partenariats garantis par les stratégies publiques.

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[illegible]

Keywords:

governance | public–private partnership | public administration | institutional theories | collaboration | hybrid organisation

Palabras claves:

gobernanza | partenariado público-privado | administración pública | teorías institucionales | colaboración | organización híbrida

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