Land Use Policy 79 (2018) 20–29

Contents lists available at ScienceDirect

Land Use Policy

journal homepage: www.elsevier.com/locate/landusepol

Co-creating value in urban public policy contexts: A different approach☆

Federica Fotino*, Mario Calabrese, Mattia Lettieri

La Sapienza University of Roma, Via del Castro Laurenziano 9, 00161, Roma, Italy

ARTICLE INFO

Keywords:
Sustainability
Value co-creation
Viable systems approach
Consonance
Urban and territory development
Public policy

ABSTRACT

Urban areas face daunting economic challenges that have increased in scope in recent years. At the same time, cities provide for opportunities for growth and value creation. The interplay of these challenges and opportunities represents an area of intervention for policymakers and researchers.

However, traditional approaches to urban policy deriving from managerial and economic policy theories present difficulties mainly related to capacities to counterbalance the interests and expectations of a multitude of stakeholders participating in the value co-creation process and to allow different components to synergically contribute to the sustainability of a system.

The author proposes an innovative approach to urban public policy that involves adopting the theoretical corpus of the viable systems approach ("VSA"). Urban planning is particularly analyzed as systemic components of urban areas with the aim of investigating decision-making processes that support an integrated, efficient, effective and sustainable management of territories as multidimensional, multisectoral and multi-stakeholder entities.

By recovering different settings, the VSA is designed for the co-creation of value as the capacity for viable systems to increase their chances of survival in their own contexts. Value derives first from strategic decisions made to find both dyadic and context consonance. Through its strategic decisions, the governing body of the territory develops a specific system as an overall synthesis of all possible systems organized within a specific area, identifying patterns of development agreed upon by the several stakeholders of the given territory. In the dynamics of value co-creation in systemic multi-subjective organizations where levels of complexity are particularly high, research on consonance among different stakeholders is particularly important to achieve the most value for a territory. In this respect, the VSA may constitute a valid tool for finding necessary capacities to imagine evolutionary paths toward new competencies.

1. Introduction

Urban areas face daunting economic challenges that have increased in scope in recent years. At the same time, cities provide for opportunities for growth and value creation. The interplay of these challenges and opportunities represents an area of intervention for policymakers and researchers.

Public policy issues within urban, social and environmental domains have been dealt with by many scholars, policy makers and practitioners and particularly in regarding to programs and policies related to smart and sustainable communities. However, the traditional approach to urban policy derived from managerial and economic policy theories presents difficulties mainly related to the capacity to counterbalance the interests and expectations of a multitude of stakeholders participating in the value co-creation process and to having different components synergically contribute to the sustainability of the system.

The author proposes an innovative approach to urban public policy that involves adopting the theoretical corpus of the viable systems approach ("VSA"). Such an approach is considered particularly suited to the case of complex problems, as decision makers must consider diverse points of view and to contemporary analyze different contexts. In this paper, urban planning (including real estate assets, mobility, energy and accessibility) is analyzed as systemic components of urban areas to investigate decision-making processes that support an integrated, efficient, effective and sustainable management of a given territory as a multidimensional, multisectoral and multi-stakeholder entity. Territory is thus studied in its systemic dimension while abandoning the concept of territory as a stationary space empty and absent of evolutionary

☆ This paper results from the joint reflection of the authors. However, paragraph I has been personally written by Mario Calabrese, paragraphs II and III by Federica Fotino and paragraph IV by Mattia Lettieri.

* Corresponding author.
E-mail addresses: federica.fotino@uniroma1.it (F. Fotino), mario.calaberese@uniroma1.it (M. Calabrese), mattia.lettieri@uniroma1.it (M. Lettieri).

https://doi.org/10.1016/j.landusepol.2018.06.010
Received 22 April 2018; Received in revised form 8 June 2018; Accepted 8 June 2018
0264-8377/ © 2018 Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.

paths and while considering it a dynamic system that nourishes the growth of generative high-value knowledge and that becomes a platform for networks outwardly projected.

By recovering different settings, the VSA is designed for the creation of value as the capacity of a viable system to increase its chances of survival in its own environment through the selection of the context created by the governing body (Barile and Gatti, 2007). Consequently, value derives first from strategic decisions (decision making) aimed at finding both dyadic (with different supra-systems) and context consonance (Golinelli et al., 2012). Under the VSA perspective, the creation of value for territorial areas mainly occurs through the creation of value for relevant supra-systems (citizens, businesses, not-for-profit organizations, etc.) found within these areas.

Through its strategic decisions, the governing body of a territory develops a specific system as the overall synthesis of all possible systems organized within a specific area, identifying patterns of development agreed upon by the several stakeholders of a given territory (Barile, 2012).

It is worth noting that in the case of territories, not only the system but also the governing body is characterized by a multitude of stakeholders, thus making less stable and cohesive the decision making process adopted to address choices made concerning the development of the system. This is why from a systemic point of view and in the case of cities, it is more appropriate to speak about governance (as a systemic dynamic of government) rather than of government/management.

In dynamics of value co-creation in systemic multi-subjective organizations (such as territories) where the level of complexity is particularly significant, research on consonance among different stakeholders is particularly central to achieving the most value for a given territory. In this respect, the VSA may constitute a valid tool for identifying necessary capacities to imagine evolutionary paths toward new competencies (Barile, 2009b).

2. The conceptual framework: the VSA for urban and territorial development

2.1. The fundamental VSA paradigm

Before dwelling on the analysis that is the focus of this paper, it seems appropriate to briefly recall a fundamental proposition to be made on a prioritized basis of the theoretical corpus used for the purpose of the study: the Viable systems Approach.

Two paradigms are particularly important and must be premised at our discourse in distinguishing between:

- the ‘structure’ and ‘system’,
- the ‘environment’ and ‘context’,
- ‘consonance’ and ‘resonance’.

According to the VSA, ‘structure’ denotes the composition of related elements and is characterized by: i) the possibility of identifying a physical boundary between what belongs to it and what is foreign; ii) the possibility of attributing a specific function to each component; iii) the stability of direct or indirect connections between components; and iv) the overall capacity of the structure in behavioral dynamics, within which it is *pro tempore* focused on a complex of “related” components. The ‘system’ emerges from the structure and is characterized by: i) the inconsistency of physical boundaries as qualifying characteristics of the system due to the inclusion of the bound itself into the system as the governing body takes it into account; ii) shifts from functions to roles defined by the strategy developed by the decision maker (government body) and oriented toward achieving a final objective, and iii) an emphasis on relationships and even on multiple components.

The distinction from environment to context is realized by the governing body, which interprets the surrounding environment and derives a context from which the system can emerge and survive. In such a way, the governing body drives an organization through an evolutionary path that gradually reduces the emphasis on single components to form an overall entity capable of concretely addressing cross-cutting and specific issues that cannot be approached beforehand (Barile, 2011). The governing body selects from the environment those systems that it considers prior (supra-systems) and, therefore, ‘relevant’, according to their importance and influence. It is worth noting that according to the VSA, ‘subsystems’ and ‘suprasystems’ exist only in the moment when the system collapses on the structure (i.e., when the system is observed as a phenomenon by a third thinking subject that interprets reality through information in possession and that understands the system, fixing it in a given moment). To offer an example, this is similar to a cartoon sticker that suspends an image of our hero (the system) in time on paper: we destroy it on structures. When the governing body thinks strategically, he abstracts himself from the system, observing it as a third party. Whenever he reflects on potential outcomes of a given situation such an exercise of conscience causes the observer to escape the system that, as it is observed, collapses on the structure. In an abstraction exercise, the observer can identify supra-systems and subsystems. Supra- and sub-systems are recognized under both a structural and systemic perspective by observed what renders them ‘relevant.’ ‘Intersystemic relevance’ is defined as the ability of a supra-system to condition the decision maker, his decisions and his behavior and therefore its prospects for survival in a given context. Determining the degree of relevance is the result of a judgment of value delivered by the decision maker with reference to the ability and probability of a supra-system to influence, impede or facilitate the development of an intersystemic relationship in so far as it affects the resolution of a problem or the achievement of a goal identified by the decision maker. According to such a definition, relevance is qualified by two main attributes: the criticality of the resource held and supplied by the supra-system and the influence exercised or exercisable (Palermo and Ponzini, 2010). The ‘criticality’ of a resource refers to its ‘structure’ and is given by specific characteristics that attribute to a certain resource provided by a given supra-system the connotation of a need for the implementation of a decision made by the system (Barile et al., 2006); it is derived from the assessment of the intensity of the use of a particular resource within processes underlying the implementation of the decision proposed (under how many specific structures is the resource needed?). ‘Influence’ instead refers to the ‘system’ and expresses the ability of a super-system to affect degrees of freedom of the decision maker by projecting expectations and pressures. This is rooted in characteristics attributed to the super-system and to the activation and evolution of the intersystemic relationship at a certain point in action (i.e., are there rules, constraints, control and sanctions that characterize a certain relation? How relevant is the cost of the opportunity to interrupt the relation?).

To enhance its chances of survival, the governing body will place a particular focus on those supra-systems which he/she considers relevant by interpreting the needs of individual organizations and by pursuing the synergy of their evolutionary patterns. In other words, he/she will search for what the VSA defines as ‘systemic consonance’: potential compatibility between systems given from the difference between their information varieties in the presence of the same amount of information.[1] The viable system emerges from the activation of relationships with supra-systems which realize through interacting one another dynamics of the operational processes. According to the VSA, the context is no longer statically defined as a predetermined background on which the system is based, but rather it emerges from the hermeneutical and self-determination process carried out by the governing body as a painter who, by filtering the world through his eyes, pours it on canvas. From the same environment, therefore, several

[1] It can be expressed as: $C = (V_1 - V_2)/i$.

Download English Version:

https://daneshyari.com/en/article/6545973

Download Persian Version:

https://daneshyari.com/article/6545973

Daneshyari.com