

TITLE

Data integration for modelling cultural consumption and sustainable local growth

BRIEF INTRODUCTION AND STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In the last decades, the interest of policy coordinators and territorial governance on citizens' economic and living conditions has rapidly increased. One of the aspects of an inclusive and sustainable valorization of territories for local development and socio-economic growth is represented by cultural heritage.

The topic is particularly important within a "post-covid scenario" in which recovery and resilience can well pass through these specific channels. In fact, cultural heritage can generate socio-economic growth through (cultural) tourism, which has long been considered as the main traditional channel through which cultural heritage can be translated into local economic development. However, how can this mechanism be made more efficient and sustainable from a socio-economic perspective? And, in more details, is there a way of valorizing local cultural heritage to favor a model of sustainable local development?

Although cultural heritage has gained substantial institutional and academic attention as a contributor to local economic development, the empirical evidence on this topic is still scant. The impact of cultural heritage on tourism has been studied, but the subsequent link with local development needs some additional and deeper reflections. One of the limitations in pursuing these objectives is represented by some differences in the granularity, the spatial detail and the temporal availability of the datasets collecting the information needed for the purposes by Official Bureaus of Statistics but only within different statistical surveys.

Then, the main steps of this project are: i) construction of a data-base on Income, Consumption, Leisure and Cultural expenditure capturing potential spatio-temporal dynamics; ii) statistical analysis of the determinants of individual living standards, with a specific focus on the role of leisure and cultural choices, regional disparities and subjective well-being; iii) statistical analysis of the determinants of local sustainable economic growth, with a specific focus on the role of leisure and cultural heritage.

RESEARCH QUESTION OR HYPOTHESIS, AIM, OBJECTIVES AND DELIVERIES

We have three primary research objectives that are closely connected both methodologically and in terms of socioeconomic implications. The key aspects of each objective are outlined below:

Research Aim 1: The first goal of this study is to compile an extensive dataset on Consumption, Leisure time and Cultural activities. This entails gathering data on the economic status of Italian citizens (including income, wealth, consumption, etc.) as well as their living conditions. The scholarly community widely agrees on a comprehensive definition of living standards, encompassing not only indicators of personal quality of life, but also details about leisure activities and subjective well-being. According to the relationship between leisure, tourism and cultural activities, the first aim concerns reconciling the different official datasets, separately

collecting the information useful for the analysis. Information is available from various sources, such as the Household Budget Survey (HBS) conducted by ISTAT and the Bank of Italy (It's worth noting that since 2014, the Survey of Italian Holidays and Trips has been incorporated into the ISTAT HBS). Additional sources include EU-SILC (Statistics on Income and Living Conditions, ISTAT), ADL (Aspects of Daily Life, a multipurpose survey by ISTAT), and ITS (International Tourism Survey, Bank of Italy). All this data will be integrated into the database through statistical matching and model-based imputation techniques (refer to, among others, Conti et al., 2015; Harron et al., 2016).

Research Aim 2: The second objective is to investigate the connections between individuals' choices regarding consumption, leisure and cultural activities. Specifically, the study will examine how demographic factors (e.g., population aging), economic circumstances (e.g., income, wealth, etc.), and well-being influence the decision-making processes of Italian citizens. Having a comprehensive database on Income, Consumption, Leisure and Cultural activities also enables us to analyze consumption and living conditions from a spatial perspective, allowing for the assessment of potential regional disparities. Furthermore, the availability of integrated information on income, consumption, and leisure and cultural habits over an extended period of time will facilitate the evaluation of the impact of shocks of different nature on individual decision-making, and whether resilience patterns emerge across different regions and household segments.

Research Aim 3: The third objective pertains to the analysis of the role of tourism and cultural heritage in the process of local sustainable economic growth. There is a growing concern about the existence of efficient and inefficient mechanisms in the process of economic development at local territorial level. Although the importance of culture, history, religion, and identity in the potential of any territory to develop is now generally accepted, studying the temporal and spatial dynamics characterizing the relationship between will serve as a valuable source of evidence for simulating the effects of different policy interventions, such as the implementation of policies supporting both cultural- and income-support mechanisms.

The researcher is expected to gain a thorough understanding of the pertinent aspects related to creating and managing large databases, as well as the statistical techniques necessary for matching and probabilistic record-linkage procedures. Additionally, they are encouraged to propose innovative solutions to the research questions outlined above.