



Extended abstract

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Title: What factors matter to explain marketing innovation in clusters: a relational perspective

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Abstract: *(minimum 1500 words)*

The marketing innovations are crucial for the evolution of industries (Chen, 2006; Mothe and Nguyen, 2010, 2012; Schmidt and Rammer, 2007). Marketing innovation can be understood as the implementation of a new marketing method involving significant changes in product design and/or packaging, product placement, product promoting or pricing” (OECD, 2005, p. 60).

In spite of this relevancy there is a lack of research on the topic, even though its effects differ from innovations in other areas (Geldes & Felzensztein, 2013). In fact, most explanations for innovation literature concentrate on sources and advantages and drawbacks of such as products and processes innovations (Bonanno and Haworth 1998; Lambertini and Mantovani 2009). Thus, confirming that non-technological innovations are usually not taken into account.

Marketing innovation not only presents distinctive features respect other categories of innovation but also differ in causes and effects according to the context where is generated. This is the case of the industrial clusters (Porter, 1990, 1998), the case in which we focussed. Industrial clusters have received an important attention by previous research that is described by regional perspectives as competitive and innovative industrial environments. have been identified as network as they are populated by firms,



institutions, research centres, administration entities and labour resources in constant interaction (Boschma & Ter Wal, 2007; Branston, Rubini, Sugden, & Wilson, 2005; John & Poudier, 2006; van Dijk & Rabellotti, 2005). Most of the authors within this literature have remarked the importance of the role of the inter-firm relationships and knowledge exchanges have in these contexts (Breschi & Lissoni, 2001; Cooke, 2002; Maskell & Malmberg, 1999; Saxenian, 1991)

In the context of the clusters, based on the relevancy of knowledge exchanges as the source of the innovation process, a number of factors, at different levels, were considered as determinants of the clustered firm innovation, such as networking positioning, internal attributes (absorptive capacity) and ties with supporting organizations (Belso-Martínez, Molina-Morales, & Martínez-Cháfer, 2015; Giuliani & Bell, 2005; Morrison, 2008) and etc.

In view of the above, the objective of the present paper is to analyze what are the internal and external factors and interactions that lead cluster companies to innovate in marketing. Our study of the Spanish ceramic tile cluster provides evidence that innovations vary between the industrial sectors and territories (Asheim and Gertler, 2006; Feldman and Kogler, 2010).

To develop above objective we use a complex causality (Meyer, Tsui, & Hinings, 1993) approach using the Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA) technique (Ragin, 2008; Woodside, 2016). We applied to a sample of 166 companies representing the population of companies of the Spanish ceramic tile cluster. This territorial agglomeration is dedicated to the manufacture of wall and floor tiles together with other related activities like machinery, technical assistance or raw material production and has been identified previously within the specific cluster literature (Boix & Galletto, 2006; Molina-Morales & Martínez-Cháfer, 2016; Ybarra, 1991).

The Spanish ceramic tile industry has been widely analysed by different authors under a cluster perspective (Albors-Garrigos & Hervas-Oliver, 2013; Expósito-Langa, Molina-Morales, & Capó-Vicedo, 2011; Molina-Morales, 2002; Molina-Morales & Martínez-Fernández, 2009; Reig-Otero, Edwards-Schachter, Feliú-Mingarro, & Fernández-de-Lucio, 2014; Russo, 1985). Academic literature identifies different factors such as highly skilled human resources, existence of a specific cluster technological knowledge, strong sectorial identity and cohesion, a common perception of markets, strong support of private and public institutions, high dynamism and competitiveness with frequent



technological advances and an intensity in knowledge transmission (through different types of mechanisms such as constant creation of firms, human resources mobility, informal channels of communication) as key factors related to the cluster characterization.

The paper has been structured as follows: First, we develop and justify the theoretical propositions. Then we describe the empirical setting and the QCA analysis performed together with the main results. Finally, we discuss the results and depict the main conclusions and their main implications for policy and practice.



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