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THE EMERGING CRUISE SHIPPING INDUSTRY IN THE ARCTIC: Institutional Pressures and Institutional Voids

Giovany CAJAIBA-SANTANA (corresponding author)

Assistant Professor

Kedge Business School - Domaine de Luminy BP 921, 13288 Marseille, France

Tel. : +33 6 03 11 44 54

giovany.cajaiba-santana@kedgebs.com

Olivier FAURY

Assistant Professor

EM Normandie - 30 Rue Richelieu, 76600 Le Havre, France

Tel. : +33 2 32 92 59 91

ofaury@em-normandie.fr

Maarouf RAMADAN

Assistant Professor

Kedge Business School - Domaine de Luminy BP 921, 13288 Marseille, France

Tel. : +33 6 70 50 80 73

maarouf.ramadan@kedgebs.com

Abstract

Arctic cruise shipping is an emerging tourism sector subject to fast growth. Eight countries surround the Arctic, which implies that the governance and policymaking occurs in a complex, and multi-jurisdictional regulatory context. We have an incomplete understanding of how such emerging sector is structured and evolve. Institutional analysis provides a rich theoretical framework to address this gap. According to institutional theory, organizations are embedded in an institutional environment that guides behavior by shaping interactions between organizations, individuals and stakeholders. We analyze the three sources of institutional pressures—*coercive*, *normative*, and *mimetic*—on cruise ship organizations in the Arctic to understand how they influence the way this sector is structured, to identify institutional voids, and to point out implications for governance and policymaking.

Keywords: Arctic tourism; Arctic; Institutional theory; Institutional analysis; Cruise shipping

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INTRODUCTION

The Arctic is undergoing rapid and dynamic change, temperatures have been rising more than twice the world's average temperature since 1980 (Emmerson & Lahn, 2012; Stewart, Howell, Draper, Yackel, & Tivy, 2007; Stewart, Tivy, Howell, Dawson, & Draper, 2010). This has contributed to the reduction of sea ice cover, which has opened new spaces of navigable waters over previously inaccessible areas. As a result, there is sharp rise in shipping activity in the region, particularly cruise shipping (Bystrowska & Dawson, 2017; Dawson, Johnston, & Stewart, 2014; Lasserre & Têtu, 2015; Têtu, Dawson, & Lasserre, 2019).

The unique, remote, and untouched landscapes attract a fast-growing number of tourists interested in wildlife, adventure, and Arctic culture (Dawson et al., 2014; Ghosh & Rubly, 2015; Gyimóthy & Mykletun, 2004; Snepenger & Moore, 1989). We can observe the creation of a new economic space that has the capacity to bring social and economic development to the region (Hall & Saarinen, 2010; Snyder, 2007a), raising critical questions on environmental impact, tourism policies, and governance.

Tourism in the Arctic has attracted great attention in tourism studies, notably after the publication of Hall and Johnston's seminal book on polar tourism (Hall & Johnston, 1995). Nevertheless, little has been said on this new development of cruise shipping in the region and its implications for governance, policymaking, and what is necessary to ensure its evolution in harmony with the region's unique and fragile environment.

The institutional context in which this industry evolves provides a rich field for tourism research. For instance, despite the implementation of the International Code for Ships Operating in Polar Waters ("Polar Code") in 2017, there is no legitimate central authority or institution to govern cruise shipping expansion in the region. This void has raised concerns about issues such as site guidelines for highly visited shore locations, risk and safety procedures, and environmental impact, which continues without regulation. Indeed, in the Arctic, there is no equivalent to the Antarctic's IAATO (International Association of Antarctica Tour Operators); additionally, cooperative organizations such as AECO (Association of Arctic Expedition Cruise Operators) have no regulatory powers and remain confined to the European Arctic. Consequently, governance occurs in a complex, multi-jurisdictional regulatory context (Stewart, Draper, & Johnston, 2005). Moreover, Arctic regions are fragile, hazardous, and inhospitable environments susceptible to change through human activity, which thus present substantial tourism policy and governance challenges as well as research opportunities.

Therefore, how can one analyze this emerging sector from a social science perspective in a way that enables the identification of elements of policy and governance that can explain the structure and the evolution of this industry and avoid bias of descriptive reportage and subjectivity (Kerr, Barron, & Wood, 2001)? Stevenson, Airey, and Miller (2008) suggest macro analysis that integrates institutional dynamics within the industry as elements of the analytical tools. As they suggest, institutional analysis "draws attention to formal rules and traditions, uncovering different conventions and procedures" (p. 733). Institutional approaches acknowledge that public policy and governance evolve within political and public institutions that structure and constrain their nature and contours. In this sense, institutional analysis can provide research, organizations, and tourism policymakers with analytical tools and ideas based on a solid theoretical framework.

In this article, we are interested in analyzing the emerging industry of Arctic cruise shipping tourism from an institutional perspective and proposing new avenues for research and

policymaking. Institutional structures are the formal and informal frameworks that influence the creation, autonomy, authority, internal coherence, and discipline of organizations evolving in an institutional field (Beaumont & Dredge, 2010). According to institutional theory, organizations are embedded in an institutional environment that guides their behavior and governance. Institutions establish boundaries that shape interactions among organizations, individuals, and other stakeholders.

Our purpose is to identify the institutional pressures that shape the Arctic cruise shipping industry as well as the institutional voids, understood as the absence of institutions (Mair, Marti, & Ventresca, 2012) that can be structured by policymakers and key stakeholders. Institutional analysis enables us to identify and assess the impact of the three isomorphic mechanisms that are the sources of institutional pressure over governance of the Arctic cruise shipping organizations and the underlying public policy. DiMaggio and Powell (1983) describe these mechanisms as *coercive* (pressures coming from outside organizations with legal or regulatory powers), *normative* (pressures on the integration of routines based on normative guidelines issued, notably by professional associations), and *mimetic* (pressures that push organizations to adopt similar structures and behaviors of comparable organizations in the same institutional field). The analysis of institutional pressures also will enable us to identify institutional voids that can influence the tourism policymaking of the sector.

We structure the article as follows: first, we explain the importance of studying this industry; second, we present the relationship between institutional theory and tourism research, which is then followed by a more granular analysis of institutional pressures. We then present an institutional analysis of cruise shipping in the Arctic, including the three types of institutional pressures and related institutional voids. The last section offers conclusions and directions for future research.

1. CRUISE SHIPPING TOURISM IN THE ARCTIC

1.1 Overview

Climate change and the consequent rising in temperature more rapidly than anywhere else on the planet are resulting in unprecedented disruptive evolutions in the Arctic, causing a reduction in the ice coverage of the region (Emmerson & Lahn, 2012; Stewart et al., 2010). This reduction has been the most influential factor leading to the expansion of cruise shipping tourism because it has opened up access to previously unnavigable waters and is also lengthening the cruise season (Stewart & Dawson, 2011; Stewart et al., 2007). Other determining factors for this increase are the greater availability of ice-strengthened vessels, the attractiveness of a remote “last frontier” with its unique landscape and wildlife experiences, and the growing base of retired baby boomers possessing the means and willingness for tourism experiences (Dawson et al., 2014).

Pizzolato et al. (2013) have identified four vessel categories that show an increase in navigating Arctic waters: government vessels and icebreakers, pleasure crafts, passenger vessels (including cruise ships), and bulk carriers. The number of cruise vessels shows some variability, but we can identify a clear upward trend, notably on previous uncharted waters: the itineraries of cruise ships has more than doubled between 2011 and 2017. Têtu et al. (2019) provide an overview of the expansion of cruise shipping in the Arctic between 2000 and 2017 (Figure 1). In 2000 there were only three zones that attracted cruisers (Canada, Greenland, and Russia); in 2017, there were ten.

Insert Figure 1 about here

1.2 Delineating the Field

Although the term *Arctic tourism* has been present in tourism research, its definition has often been assumed, which is problematic because, as Viken (2013) notes, “the Arctic is not one destination” (p. 41) but represents a wide range of landscapes, ecosystems, peoples, and cultures that offer various types of tourism activities (Saarinen & Varnajot, 2019). In this sense, Maher (2007, p. 2) suggests that a single definition for Arctic tourism is “virtually impossible,” although he agrees that having a conceptual definition of the dimensions and meaning of Arctic tourism is important for policymaking and research. Thus, if we need a working definition of Arctic tourism we have to be content with an unsophisticated definition, such as “Arctic tourism is tourism that occurs in the Arctic” (Maher, 2007, p. 1). We note as well the appearance and active promotion in public opinion of “Arctic tourism” as a brand and its growth as an economy sector, affecting the social, economic, and environmental development of the target regions (Lukin, 2016; Maher et al., 2014; Saarinen & Varnajot, 2019).

Therefore, to understand tourism in the Arctic, we need to delineate geographically what the Arctic actually is. There is considerable confusion caused by the use of terms such as *Arctic*, *circumpolar north*, *northern regions*, or simply *the North*. The Arctic is an enormous area comprising more than 30 million square kilometers and twenty-four time zones. It has a population of about four million, with more than thirty different indigenous peoples and dozens of languages.

We follow Stewart et al. (2005) and consider the Arctic to comprise Alaska, northern Canada (Labrador, northern Quebec, northern Manitoba, Nunavut, Northwest Territories, and Yukon Territory), Greenland, Iceland, northern Fennoscandia (Norway, Sweden, and Finland), and northern Russia. Eight sovereign nations surround the Arctic: Canada, Denmark (including Greenland and the Faroe Islands), Finland, Iceland, Norway, Russia, Sweden, and the United States. These nations govern the lands and offshore waters within their jurisdictional boundaries according to Article 234 of the United Nations Convention of Law of the Sea (UNCLOS hereafter). Article 234 grants to each coastal state the right to manage navigation in their exclusive economic zone (EEZ) (200 nautical miles from the coast).

Cruise ship tourism in the Arctic is based on the “expedition” model of Arctic cruising (Pashkevich, Dawson, & Stewart, 2015; Stewart et al., 2010). Cruise vessels transport fare-paying passengers to view landscapes at close range. This may involve accessing shore locations, viewing wildlife, and visiting local communities. Despite the fact that expedition cruise navigation is regulated by international conventions, laws, and regulations applying to all types of shipping activity in the Arctic, there are important particularities that imply the need for a focused, sector-specific management regime (Dawson et al., 2014; Pashkevich et al., 2015). In this article, we are interested in a specific kind of tourism—cruise shipping—in a specific polar region—the Arctic.

1.3 Evolution of Cruise Shipping in the Arctic

Tourism activity to the Arctic began in the early 1800s (Snyder & Stonehouse, 2007). The first tourists were mostly adventurers attracted to remote regions and exotic environments. Some of these explorers published their travel journals, which became popular travel guides,

describing their adventures as well as the discovery of new cultures and unique landscapes (Conway, 1897; Williams, 1859). By the end of the 19th century, a mass tourism market had been established alongside the development of transportation networks of steamships and railroads (Dufferin, 1859).

Cruise travel for pleasure in the Arctic began in the Canadian Arctic about 1880. However, the first cruise ship's transit of the Northwest Passage by the *MS Explorer* did not occur until 1984 (Dawson et al., 2014). The growing development of cruise ship tourism from the late 1990s onward is directly related to the collapse of the Soviet Union, which increased the availability of ice-breaking ships retrofitted for part of the year for Arctic leisure travel. An example is the cruise ship operator Quark Expeditions, which provides travel for tourists onboard Russian nuclear icebreakers (Lamers & Pashkevich, 2015). The first large cruise ship (the *Crystal Serenity*) to navigate the once impassable Northwest Passage completed its journey from Alaska to New York in September 2016 with a ticket price ranging from \$22,000 to \$120,000 (Nijhuis, 2017; Nunez, 2016). Although it was the first it is highly unlikely to be the last.

The lack of research on Arctic cruise shipping is probably linked to the sector's relative youth, the remoteness of the area, and the quite high expense associated with travel (Marquez & Eagles, 2007). This lack of research and assessment data on the impacts of such activity makes policy creation difficult to achieve. To better understand how the cruise shipping sector has evolved and is structured around policies and governance, we analyze it through the lens of institutional pressures that act on the industry.

2. INSTITUTIONAL THEORY AND TOURISM RESEARCH

Institutional theory has proved to be an effective theoretical tool for tourism studies. Scholars have applied the theory in different fields of tourism research such as ecotourism (Grimstad, 2011; Riquel-Ligero, 2011; Rivera, 2004; Shah, 2011; Strambach & Surmeier, 2013; Vargas-Sánchez & Riquel-Ligero, 2012); cultural tourism (McCarthy, 2012); entrepreneurship (Iakovleva, Bay-Larsen, Kharitonova, & Didyk, 2012; Roxas & Chadee, 2013); institutional arrangements (Wilke & Rodrigues, 2013); governance (Lapeyre, 2010), and public policy (Dredge, 2001; Urbano, Toledano, & Ribeiro, 2010; Wang & Ap, 2013). As previous research has demonstrated, institutional theory has a set of well-defined abstract concepts and a well-specified relationship among those concepts, which enables holistic inquiries.

In their review of the application of institutional theory in tourism studies, Lavandoski, Albino Silva, and Vargas-Sánchez (2014) make a critical review of some studies that empirically analyze the influence of institutional pressures over tourism practices and research. Urbano et al. (2010), for instance, identify the way in which formal and informal institutions influence the conception and implementation of supporting policies for tourism companies. Lapeyre (2010) uses the concepts of power and governance to understand why and how tourism organizations mobilize specific institutionalized structures of governance to operate tourism activities. In environmental tourism research, institutional analysis demonstrates a larger influence of the coercive pressures despite the normative and mimetic pressures on the adoption of environmental practices (Rivera, 2004; Vargas-Sánchez & Riquel-Ligero, 2012).

Institutional theory provides us with the opportunity to combine an encompassing theory with grounding empirical analysis and therefore open new possibilities for tourism research as proposed by Dann, Nash, and Pearce (1988). Institutional analysis tackles the question of how

organizations in a field (an industry, a geographic region, or a group of competing organizations) gain legitimacy pushed by institutional pressures. This kind of question is highly relevant in a nascent industry facing institutional voids in a highly complex institutional environment, as is the case in the cruise shipping sector in the Arctic. It also enables researchers to take into account the implications of different stakeholders involved in tourism activities, which also responds to previous calls for stakeholder analysis in tourism research (Hardy, 2005).

2.1 Institutions and Legitimacy

North (1990, p. 3) defines institutions as “the rules of the game in a society,” including “formal” rules, such as constitutions and laws, and “informal” constraints, such as “codes of conduct, norms of behavior, and conventions” (p. 36). From an organizational point of view, Barley and Tolbert (1997) define institutions based on rules and “typifications” shared by social actors that constrain and enable behavior and relationships. Scott (2008) later adds that organizations must legitimize an institution in order to have a socially shared understanding of what an institution means and represents.

Modern organizational theory depicts organizations as cultural and social systems. As such, the institutional context in which the organization evolves directly influences the way an organization is structured, makes decisions, and behaves (Greenwood, Oliver, Suddaby, & Sahlin, 2008). In this sense, institutional theory puts forward the idea that external pressures placed on organizations define what it means to be rational and to have appropriate and meaningful behavior, that is, to have institutional conformity that will influence the way organizations are governed (Fiss, 2008).

Another central concept of institutional theory is the concept of an “institutional field,” which stands for a group of actors and organizations who share the same meaning system, set of rules, and norms (Scott, 2008). For the purpose of this article, we identify the cruise shipping industry in the Arctic with its norms, rules, and participants as an institutional field. Because all the organizations evolving in the same institutional field are subjected to the same institutional pressures, these organizations will be pushed to adopt similar behavior in order to gain legitimacy within the institutional context in which they evolve (Barley & Tolbert, 1997; Scott, 2008; Suchman, 1995).

Institutional theory is built on the concept of legitimacy instead of efficiency as the main organizational goal. Suchman (1995) defines organizational legitimacy as a “generalized perception or assumption that the actions of an entity are desirable, proper, or appropriate within socially constructed system of norms, values, beliefs and definitions” (p. 574). The practices and processes interpreted as legitimized by social actors in an institutional field determine how an organization is structured, how it behaves, and how other social actors perceive and evaluate it (Dawley, Hoffman, & Lamont, 2002; Hrebiniak & Joyce, 1985; Marlin, Lamont, & Hoffman, 1994; Suchman, 1995).

From an institutional point of view, legitimacy is the means by which organizations obtain resources, access to markets, and long-term survival (Brown, 1998; Oliver, 1991). Organizations attain legitimacy by conforming to the systemic norms, beliefs, and rules created and accepted in a given institutional context (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Tolbert & Zucker, 1983). Institutional theory also suggests that organizations have to convince specific publics that they are legitimate entities worthy of support (Meyer & Rowan, 1977), and by doing so they “demonstrate [their] worthiness and acceptability” (Oliver, 1991, p. 158).

We can hence analyze cruise shipping organizations in the Arctic as an institutional field evolving under institutional pressures and struggling to attain institutional legitimacy. Moreover, these organizations must also face institutional voids that need to be filled by institutions, norms, or organizations to be created by policymakers or other stakeholders involved in the Arctic tourism industry, as our analysis will show (Mair et al., 2012).

2.2 Institutional Isomorphic Pressures

Conformance to institutional norms leads us to another pivotal concept of institutional analysis: isomorphism. DiMaggio and Powell (1983) put forward the concept of “institutional isomorphism,” which “is a constraining process that forces one unit in a population to resemble other units that face the same set of environmental conditions” (p. 149). The concept of isomorphism is based on the idea that organizations operating in the same context will face similar challenges and will eventually comply with institutional pressures by adopting behaviors similar to other organizations operating in the same environment (Deephouse, 1996).

To gain legitimacy from their stakeholders, organizations are compelled to adopt structural features similar to other organizations established in the same institutional field. This process of becoming recognizable and being in conformity with what other organizations resemble is nurtured by what DiMaggio and Powell call *isomorphic pressures*, which impel organizations to adapt their practices to become compatible with their environment. DiMaggio and Powell (1983) identified three mechanisms that lead organizations to become isomorphic: coercive, normative, and mimetic pressures. These three interactional mechanisms influence the different ways organizations become isomorphic to attain legitimacy.

We argue that cruise shipping companies operating in the Arctic will demonstrate increasing isomorphic behavior to conform to the institutional norms set in their institutional field. To address the reasons undergirding governance and tourism policy in a specific institutional field, it is crucial to identify which types of institutional pressures are placed on these organizations. The identification and analysis of the three institutional pressures provide a foundation to understand the evolution of cruise shipping in the Arctic and to propose institutional policies needed in this particular case.

3. INSTITUTIONAL ANALYSIS OF CRUISE SHIPPING IN THE ARCTIC

Through our analyses, we seek to bring out the influence of institutional pressures and institutional voids on governance arrangements and public policy. Extensive literature has indicated the interdependency of organizational governance and public policy (Beaumont & Dredge, 2010; Göymen, 2000; Hall, 2011; Kerr et al., 2001; Yüksel, Bramwell, & Yüksel, 2005). These works suggest that the relationship between both concepts should be analyzed as a duality in which they co-evolve, influencing each other and subjected to institutional pressures that may determine this co-evolution. Hall (2011), for instance, analyzes how public policymaking frames different constructs of governance, and Dredge (2001) describes how governance influences policy and institutional structures and practices.

Beaumont and Dredge (2010) propose the use of the term *governance* in the context of tourism to denote “all forms of organization relationships” (p. 8) because the rhetorical use of the term is associated with the dynamics and interdependencies among public policies, politics, and stakeholders. They claim that the effectiveness of tourism governance in achieving the goals of its stakeholders depends on the effectiveness of institutional structures and processes

in which the tourism organizations evolve. The institutional approach also suggests that governance arrangements are culturally embedded and reflect political process (Fiss, 2008).

According to Hall (2011), understanding the influence of institutional arrangements on governance is important because they determine the way in which the state acts in the tourism policy arena and therefore select instruments and indicators that are used to achieve policy goals. Dawson et al. (2014) have shown that the current governance system for tourism cruises in the Arctic is characterized by its institutional complexity, insufficient capacity, and lack of dedicated authority to oversee the management and development of guidelines and best practices. Stewart et al. (2010) explain that the Arctic cruise tourism sector is evolving and effective governance is essential to enable the growth of this economic activity. Good governance of the sector will also help to establish desired economic development pathways motivated by all stakeholders. Therefore, our analysis of isomorphic institutional pressures aims first to elaborate a snapshot of the actual institutional structure of the field, including the institutional voids, and second to delineate the impacts of this structure on the public policy and governance of organizations in the field.

3.1 Coercive Pressures

Coercive mechanisms are based on institutional pressures prescribed by organizations often possessing regulatory powers that dictate the legitimate behavior in a given institutional field. Compliance with coercive mechanisms is a conscious behavior that implies obedience to regulated norms in the field (Oliver, 1991). As Matheson (1987) suggests, institutional organizations acting as coercive agents need supervision and accountability powers to enact pressure that is usually manifested by regulatory powers. Coercive pressures are salient in institutional fields in which regulatory bodies, trade unions, professional associations, or governments establish norms and rules that must be followed by organizations evolving in the field in order to gain legitimacy via legal and social approval.

Cruise shipping navigation is subjected to international navigation rules, which is governed by three main conventions: safety of life (SOLAS: International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea), protection of the maritime environment (MARPOL: International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships), and the training of crewmembers (STCW: International Convention on Standards of Training Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers). None of these three conventions integrates the specificities of the polar environment.

Aware of this shortage and of existing risks for vessels and on the fragile polar environment, the IMO (International Maritime Organization) drafted a mandatory instrument called the Polar Code, which entered into force on January 1, 2017. Divided into two parts, the first part deals with the technical elements of vessels and crew competency and requires vessels intending to navigate polar waters to own a polar certificate, which classifies ships in three categories—A, B, C (A being the highest class and C the lowest one)—depending on their engine power and their ability to resist the various hazards that they may encounter in polar areas. In addition, a polar water operational manual is required to determine the strength of the vessels and notably the various procedures in the event of incidents. The second part of the Polar Code concerns environmental impact issues because addressing risks to the environment is part of the MARPOL Convention.

Before the Polar Code, there was no uniform, international standard for ice navigators, Arctic safety, or the survival of seafarers in polar conditions. Neither were there specifically

tailored, mandatory environmental standards for vessels operating in Arctic waters (Fedi & Faury, 2016; Pashkevich et al., 2015). These coercive institutional arrangements structure at least in part a formal governance of cruise ships regardless of the national flag of the vessels. However, despite the implementations of the Polar Code, some institutional voids still exist concerning cruise shipping activity in the Arctic. Dawson et al. (2014), for instance, highlight inconsistencies related to the multi-jurisdictional and transnational operating context: because cruise vessels travel between national and international jurisdictions, they are subject to each jurisdiction's set of regulatory systems as well as to the guidelines associated with the country in which the vessel is registered. In a comparative case study between Russian and Canadian cruise tourism in the Arctic, Pashkevich et al. (2015) describe governance systems as overly complex and inefficient. Multiple government institutions operate at different levels with overlapping responsibilities, which, according to the authors, "undermines the development of the sector" (p. 234). These authors advocate the need for Arctic states to work closely to facilitate the governance of Arctic shipping—notably cruise shipping—because decisions regarding jurisdictional boundaries and sovereign powers are pivotal for the allowance of Arctic tourism exploration.

Another institutional void relates to the lack of precise and specific guidelines for cruise liners operating throughout the Arctic. There is no central authority for the governance of the cruise shipping sector, which should include management plans, specific development strategies, and operational guidelines. The sector is governed by a decentralized management that evolves into a complex and sometimes redundant institutional context (Dawson et al., 2014). Despite the creation of AECO (Association of Arctic Expedition Cruise Operators) in 2003, the Arctic has no equivalent to IAATO (International Association of Antarctica Tour Operators) regarding the numbers of members and effectiveness of its guidelines. IAATO has until now provided specific guidelines for cruise shipping in Antarctica that spans national boundaries. Scholars and other stakeholders have suggested the need for such an institution in the Arctic; nevertheless, such an outcome remains an institutional void (Dawson et al., 2014; Spletstoesser, 2000).

AECO proposes operational guidelines outlining appropriate behavior for tourists and cruise ship operators. However, AECO membership is voluntary and many operators do not see the full benefits of being part of AECO, which limits the organization's ability to dictate governance norms for the region. The organization includes approximately thirty international companies that operate about sixty vessels in Svalbard, Greenland, Canada, and the Russian Arctic (Jørgensen, 2015). Knowing that hundreds of vessels operate in these regions, AECO has little influence over the industry. The increasing number of cruise vessels has pushed scholars to question the self-regulatory nature of polar cruise tourism associations, such as IAATO and AECO, and to propose institutions with regulatory powers (Haase, Lamers, & Amelung, 2009).

We have also identified critical institutional voids in environment-related issues. Nowadays, climate and ecological concerns provide the main points for international discussions regarding international policy covering tourism in the Arctic (Grimwood, 2015; Horejsova & Paris, 2013; Lemelin, Dawson, Stewart, Maher, & Lueck, 2010; Saarinen & Varnajot, 2019; Snyder, 2007b). Few studies point out that cruise shipping tourism should follow the principles of sustainable tourism, including wildlife conservation and social impact on local communities (Dawson, Maher, & Slocombe, 2007; Marquez & Eagles, 2007; Stewart & Draper, 2006). The main concerns regard the increasing number of cruise ships in the region include oil spills, ship strikes on marine mammals, disruption of animals' migratory patterns, and the introduction of

alien species. Accidents such as oil spills are not more likely to happen in the Arctic than in other extreme regions. However, the environmental consequences due to the difficulty of access and cost to clean up could be considerably high and have implications for the governments, local communities, organizations, and insurers (Emmerson & Lahn, 2012). In terms of environmental safety, the Polar Code fails to ban the use of heavy fuel oil (HFO) in the Arctic, although its use is forbidden in Antarctica. HFO is the most polluting marine fuel and causes the greatest damage in the event of a spill. Instead, the Polar Code recommends only voluntary compliance by avoiding the use of HFO in Arctic waters.

Another coercive institutional void concerns regulation for accessing shore locations and visiting local communities. Stewart et al. (2010) verify increased land-based tourism activities related to arts, crafts, and Inuit culture. This brings to the fore the importance of educating visitors concerning their influence on aboriginal lives in the Arctic (Grimwood, 2015; Kaján, 2014; Notzke, 1999). To date, there are no regulated visit guidelines in relation to the interaction with local communities. This void was recently evoked in 2018 when a polar bear was shot and killed by a cruise ship guide who took visitors to an Arctic archipelago (Joseph, 2018). The WWF criticized the fact that during the elaboration of the Polar Code the IMO had not undertaken any consultation with coastal Arctic communities (Nesseth, 2016). As more ships visit these regions, it is time for focused research and policy attention (Dawson et al., 2014).

3.2 Normative Pressures

Normative pressures have a direct influence on the governance of organizations and manifest themselves often because they are passed through norms of legitimate conduct behavior established by educational institutions or associations with professional networks. DiMaggio and Powell (1983) define professionalism based on the way professionals set the norms and behaviors that articulate the appropriate way to act in a particular profession. These normative pressures appear as standards of expected behavior set in place mostly by professional associations (Mizruchi & Fein, 1999) but also through the involvement that organizations have with universities, professional education organizations, or trade reviews (Galaskiewicz & Wasserman, 1989). Organizations adapt their structures to specific standards of practice to be in conformity with normative pressures and institutional expectations (Slack & Hinings, 1994). In our case, normative pressures manifest themselves, for instance, in cruise shipping professional activity through the integration of routines that are based on normative guidelines issued notably by professional associations.

The Polar Code has generated a key normative pressure by imposing specific professional training and behavioral standards for seafarers working on cruise ships. Nevertheless, some gaps still need to be filled. For instance, one of the most prevalent normative pressures for professional behavior in Arctic tourism is guide licensing. Tourism agencies in all Arctic nations have established guide licensing programs (Snyder & Stonehouse, 2007). Despite the fact that licensing requirements vary considerably among Arctic jurisdictions, globally they require knowledge of specific locations, technical skills, safe recreation systems, waste removal, emergency systems, and detailed reporting of activities and observations. Most Arctic jurisdictions establish an evolutionary process from apprentice to master status (Snyder & Stonehouse, 2007).

The Polar Code is mandatory but not sufficient to address all the situations that cruise shipping in the Arctic might face. An example was the sinking of the cruise ship *MS Explorer*

in November 2007 in Antarctica. The ASOC (Antarctic and Southern Ocean Coalition) pointed out that the ship's master fulfilled IMO guidelines by being trained for operations in Baltic ice conditions; however, he had no experience operating in Antarctic ice conditions (Schuler, 2009; Stewart & Draper, 2008). Each of the eight Arctic nations has specific training programs for Arctic navigation, but there are no widely accepted standards or external accreditation for these training programs (as proposed by the Arctic Council in its Arctic Marine Shipping Assessment 2009 Report), which also represents a normative institutional void.

3.3 Mimetic Pressures

Mimetic pressures come from the urge for organizations to mimic the behavior of other legitimized organizations in order to reduce uncertainty and anxiety. Mizruchi and Fein (1999) assert that organizations, when faced with ambiguous situations, will choose to mimetically model established organizations as a means of gaining legitimacy. Hence, mimetic pressures push organizations to adopt, voluntarily and consciously, similar structures and behaviors of comparable organizations in the same institutional field (Ivanova & Castellano, 2011). Uncertainty is also a powerful influence insofar as it encourages organizations to become uniform. The advantages of mimetic behavior are considerable because organizations tend to model themselves after similar organizations in their field that they perceive to be more legitimate or successful.

One of the indicators of mimetic pressure is prevalence: the number of similar individuals or organizations exhibiting a given form or practice (Scott, 2008). According to Sven-Olof Lindblad, CEO of a cruise ship operator in Iceland, "tourists are coming in a big wave. Companies follow each other" (Nilsen, 2016). The governance manifested in management, best practices, and choice of routes and sites has been adopted by mimicry across the Arctic cruise shipping industry. For example, vessels currently under construction are more luxurious following the success of the *Crystal Serenity*. They will use hybrid propulsion, although the Polar Code suggests using only less-polluting fuel (Nilsen, 2016).

Previous research has also identified mimetic behavior in the cruise ship industry in the Arctic. In their study of cruise ships in the Russian Arctic, Lamers and Pashkevich (2015) suggest that in the context of institutional voids, cruise tourism governance is shaped by previous practices and by the alignment of best practices resulting from the interactions of different actors and institutions. They demonstrate that entrepreneurs are capable of producing activities and itineraries for cruise tourists despite the presence of inconsistencies, lack of predictability, and structural constraints (Pashkevich et al., 2015). Other competitors follow the same steps, copying and adapting these activities in a mimetic way. However, the lack of an organization with the same impact range as IAATO in Antarctica makes it difficult to implement a platform for sharing best practices.

Another mimetic pressure comes from the type (ice class) and size of vessels under construction for the coming years. After the successful trip of the *Crystal Silver*, the largest cruise ship (capacity of 1,070 passengers, 250 m, and 68 GT) ever to navigate the North West Passage (from Alaska to New York), new entrants were pushed to order vessels under Category B of the Polar Code with capacities of more than 800 passengers. Up to then the average capacity of cruise ships had been 150 passengers (Cross, 2017).

We can also observe a particular mimetic pressure on the North West Passage linked to charting. Vessels operating in the Arctic face a high risk of grounding because the passages

opened after ice melting are uncharted and include moving sand banks (Faury, 2015; Molenaar, 2009). This has led cruise shipping companies to follow routes already navigated by other cruise vessels. Charting issues were one of the main causes of the incident involving the passenger vessel *Clipper Adventurer* that grounded on underwater cliffs in August 2010. Because of the size of the region, and the fact that the vessel was in uncharted waters, it took two full days for the closest vessel to rescue the passengers (Stewart & Dawson, 2011).

Insurance companies are essential stakeholders in cruise shipping navigation in the Arctic and are especially subject to mimetic pressures. Faury (2015) analyzes how insurance underwriters face uncertainty of risk assessment for vessels operating in the Arctic. His analysis shows that underwriters must deal with the lack of available data concerning causalities and risks in the region. To compensate for this, they refer to classification companies as advisors and to coercive pressures (IMO regulations) specific to vessels operating in the region in order to calculate adequate premiums for the Arctic.

4. IMPLICATION FOR RESEARCH AND POLICYMAKING

In Table 1, we summarize our analysis by displaying the institutional pressures and related institutional voids identified in the Arctic cruise ship industry.

Insert Table 1 about here

Identification of the institutional pressures provides us with an integrated and holistic understanding of this new industry. It enables us to identify the pressures that face all organizations involved in cruise shipping activities from a governance and public policy point of view and to bring to the fore issues related to the evolution of the sector, barriers to new entrants, and institutional voids. Our analysis is arguably the first to propose an institutional analysis of this industry, which opens the way to establishing a new research agenda for Arctic tourism. We also follow Hall (2011), who suggests that “conceptual frameworks, such as images, models and theories, are fundamental to the development of understanding public and private institutions and the relationships between them” (p. 438). The three isomorphic institutional pressures are represented in Figure 2, which summarizes the interplay influencing organizational governance and public policy in the Arctic cruise shipping sector.

Insert Figure 2 about here

An institutional view supports the use of quantitative and qualitative research methods, which enables a focus on evolutionary dynamics and process variables. This is particularly important because institutions and their effects on governance and public policy are dynamic and evolve over time. Thus, any description of these elements is a snapshot at a given moment, and their analyses demand longitudinal inquiries and process research. We therefore encourage scholars to embrace key themes related to the interplay between institutions and organizations and frame their research using not only institutional theory but also other theoretical views relevant to the development of Arctic tourism research.

As Hall (2011, p. 438) suggests, “by exploring different conceptual frameworks and images, it is possible to identify the ways in which theory influences how the world is analyzed, understood and acted upon with respect to policymaking.” Hence, to bridge the gap between our current understanding of Arctic tourism and enhanced knowledge that can guide research and foster this emerging field, we propose the following research themes based on our analyses presented in Table 1.

First, the field of Arctic tourism needs new research endeavors to understand how organizations respond strategically and tactically to institutional pressures. The identification of institutional pressures does not imply that we can anticipate organizational behavior. We suggest scholars build on previous research using case study methodology, as done by Lamers and Pashkevich (2015). Such contributions are valuable in the early stages of field inquiry to develop and refine theory (Eisenhardt, 1989). Case studies enable a fine understanding of specific organizational behaviors and their causes and effects on organizational life.

Second, we still do not know the weight of different institutional pressures on organizational dimensions, such as strategy, communication, organizational culture, or organizational behavior. Previous research such as Rivera (2004) and Vargas-Sánchez and Riquel-Ligero (2012) identify coercive pressures as more prevalent in influencing tourism governance to adopt environmental practices. Based only on the theory, we can hypothesize that coercive pressures will be more prevalent in fields with strong jurisdictional institutions and mimetic pressures will be more prevalent in fields with weak jurisdictional institutions.

Third, we believe that to take Arctic tourism research to another level we need to incorporate large sample empirical tests. Nevertheless, the operationalization of institutional pressures remains the most important challenge for quantitative hypothesis testing studies. Once we find, with due caution, the appropriate proxies for institutional pressures, its causes and effects, we can analyze their prevalence and their effects on Arctic cruise shipping organizations and on the whole industry.

Fourth, we need research to understand how value is created and shared through the cruise shipping value chain. The arrival of cruise ships creates demands for catering, ship services, onshore excursions, and specialized business-to-business services (Huijbens, 2015). In their seminal article covering the economic significance of cruise ships, Dwyer and Forsyth (1998) separate the demand created by cruise ship arrivals into three categories: the demand for passengers and crew, the demand for the ship, and the demand for the shipping company. These three categories are sources of revenues for the port of call but can only be absorbed with the creation of infrastructures, which makes the question of creating and sharing value quite important.

Fifth, because the cruise shipping industry is an emerging field, we can count on institutional analysis to depict the stage to which organizations will evolve, and we can identify elements that will constrain and enable social actions, their strengths, and their boundaries. However, we cannot predict organizational tourism management in terms of social processes because they are not only institutionally dependent but also intrinsically linked to values and culture (Kerr et al., 2001). Thus, we need research that analyzes the evolution of actors and corporations as deeply embedded in systems of norms and relations that are culturally and socio-politically constructed as well as network-dependent.

Sixth, debates about Arctic tourism have integrated issues of sustainability, cultural development, community well-being, and qualitative development of communities (Beaumont

& Dredge, 2010; Fuchs, Abadzhiev, Svensson, Höpken, & Lexhagen, 2013). We still need to know how these debates have been structured and incorporated into policy and governance as result of how stakeholders' perceptions, knowledge, values, and power relations are negotiated, prioritized, and promoted (Beaumont & Dredge, 2010). We suggest identifying via process-oriented methods the multiple ways in which institutional actors interact with the development of sustainable tourism policy and governance.

Seventh, navigating within the Arctic implies facing numerous risks, notably for the environment and passengers. Moreover, the sinking of a cruise ship within the Arctic region is the worst scenario underwriters would face (Fedi, Faury, & Gritsenko, 2018). Hence, it would be relevant, based on interviews, to look at the way different stakeholders interact to mitigate the risk.

Finally, institutionalization is a process that is innately political, reflecting the relative power and interests of the coalitions of actors. Therefore, the process of institutionalization implies conflict and calls for research designs that integrate the analysis of mechanisms of obedience and resistance to power. Future research should draw further attention to the ways in which governance models hide and promote power relations as they become increasingly taken for granted and hidden behind a veil of neutrality and inevitability.

CONCLUSION

Tourism in the Arctic has been under the scrutiny of research for more than thirty years. Since about 2010, a new field of tourism research and economic opportunity has gained momentum in the region: the cruise shipping industry. Its emergence is highly correlated with the rise of temperatures in the region, mainly due to global warming. This has contributed to the reduction of sea ice cover, which has opened new spaces of navigable waters in previously inaccessible areas. The unique and fragile ecosystems and cultural environments are increasingly exposed to tourism development. This fact raises important questions related to institutional arrangements that shape the industry, its organizations, and the way tourism is conceived, perceived, and explored.

Our contribution seeks to take the discussion to an institutional level and suggests unexplored paths of reflection to research and policymaking for cruise shipping activity in the Arctic. Institutional analysis questions the rational and deterministic approaches that conceive tourism organization governance based only on the minimization of costs and optimization of returns (Stevenson et al., 2008; Treuren & Lane, 2003).

Our work provides conceptual contributions based on institutional theory that integrate isomorphic institutional pressures, namely, coercive, normative, and mimetic. Our analysis shows how cruise shipping in the Arctic has evolved as an institutional field and how institutional pressures can mold the organizations present in this field in their quest for legitimacy. They also enable us to understand the types of pressures new entrants will face and how the industry may evolve. An institutional analysis also identifies institutional voids that stakeholders and policymakers need to fulfill in such an evolving context.

Our analysis confirms, for instance, the prevalent role of coercive pressures as suggested by previous research (Riquel-Ligero, 2011; Rivera, 2004). We emphasize the importance of coercive pressures related to the ecosystemic environment of the region. Issues related to global warming put the whole natural system of the Arctic in danger to the point that some scholars have suggested its classification as "vanishing destinations" (Lemelin et al., 2010). This

observation relates to the institutional void regarding the Polar Code and its weak environmental regulation. Coercive voids also suggest that the current legal and regulatory framework lacks legitimized authority and scope to influence governance to minimize the increasing environmental and social risks associated with the development of cruise shipping activity in the region. The identification of normative pressures enables us to analyze, for instance, how licensing practices are perceived as universally accepted but are constrained by the institutional void of shared standards among Arctic countries. The analysis of mimetic pressures helps us, for example, to understand how and why organizations adopt similar best practices despite the lack of dedicated and legitimized organizations for the centralization and dissipation of best practices.

Therefore, our analyses provides elements for understanding how organizations are subjected to isomorphic pressures and how they adopt certain practices of governance for gaining legitimacy in the institutional field of Arctic cruise shipping. They also enable the identification of institutional voids that will influence future policymaking and governance of established organizations and new entrants to ensure an institutional stability for the industry. Despite the complexity of the industry, research on cruise shipping tourism in the Arctic remains an emerging field, leaving space for future empirical and theoretical endeavors. Thus, we present some propositions for future research that can push our comprehension of the field to another level.

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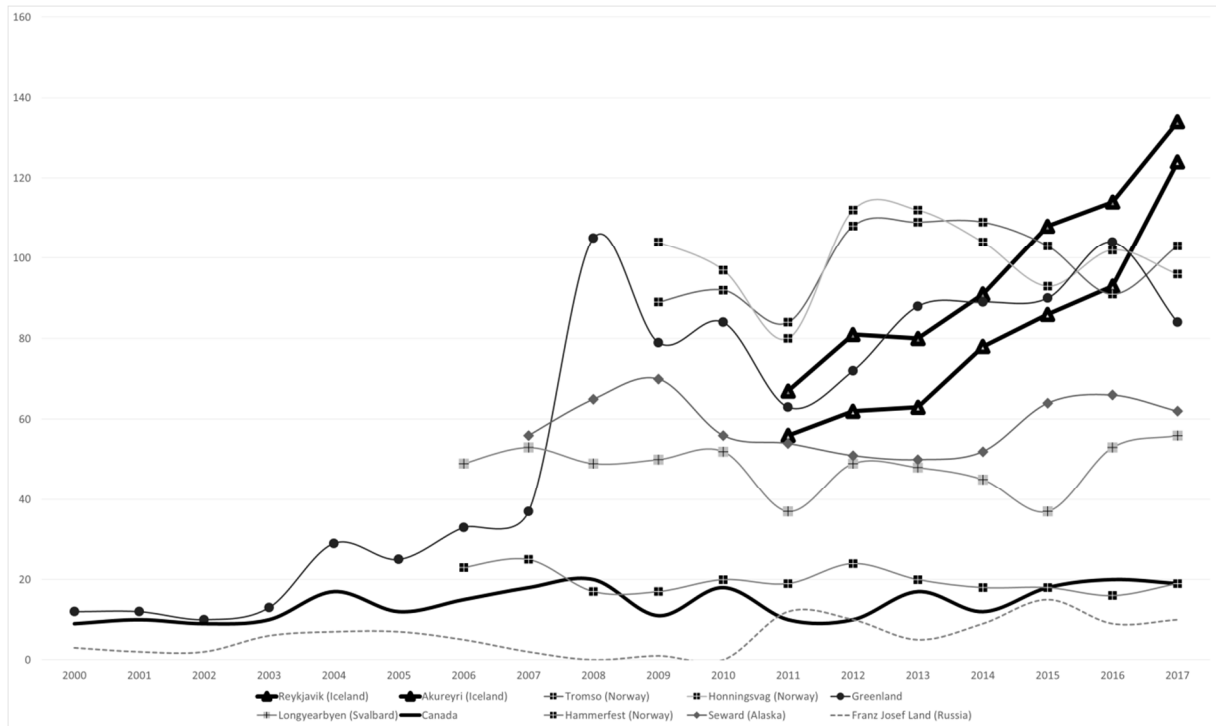
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Figure 1: Estimated Number of Cruise Ships Operating in the Arctic, 2000–2017



Source: Têtu et al. (2019).

Figure 2: Schema of Institutional Pressures on the Arctic Cruise Shipping Industry

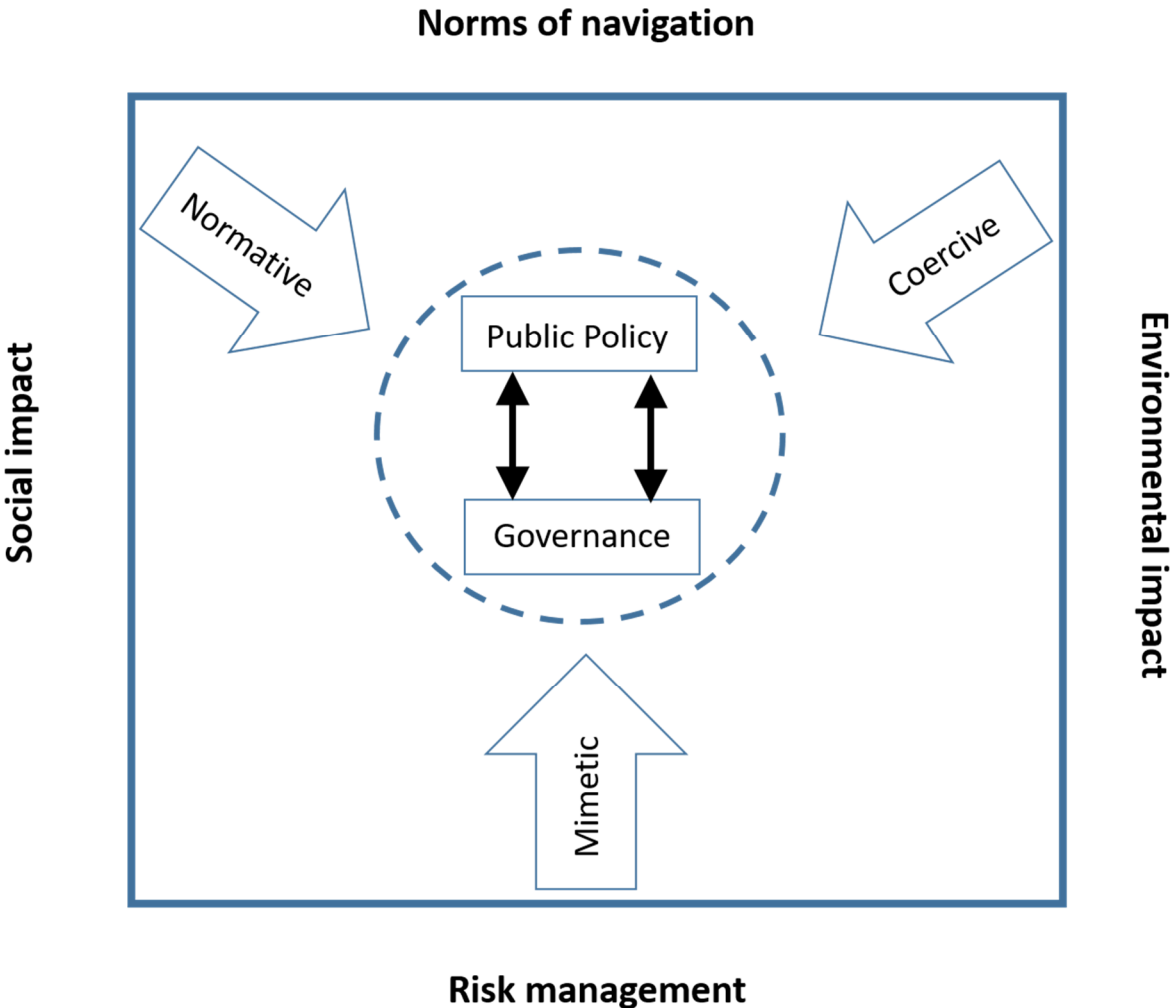


Table 1: Institutional Pressures and Related Institutional Voids in the Arctic Cruise Shipping Industry

Institutional pressures		Institutional voids
Coercive	Polar Code	Inconsistencies associated with the multi-transnational jurisdiction
		Low environmental regulation
	Jurisdiction	Lack of guidelines for accessing shore locations and visiting local communities
		Lack of a central authority for the governance of the sector
AECO	Lack of regulatory power	
Normative	Licensing	Shared standards for licensing training
	Polar Code training requirements	Training on Arctic sea fauna
		STCW equivalent for polar waters
		Shared training standards for all Arctic sovereign countries
		External accreditation for training
Mimetic	Best practices	Legitimate forum for sharing best practices
	Using waterways previously navigated	Chartering of uncharted waters
	Use of classification companies for risk assessment	Lack of models for insurance risk assessment
	Ice class and size of new vessels	Lack of successful models to copy