

DISABILITY MANAGEMENT AND 'GLOCALIZATION' FOR AN INCLUSIVE SOCIETY

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Abstract:

Many Nations recently recorded two new phenomena which must be studied in sociology and economics: the glocalization of society and economy and the increase of people with disabilities who require more rights, especially an active role in economy. The "glocal" model mediates characteristics of globalization with those of more deep rooted localism, seems to be flourishing. Governed by its own principles, it is radically changing the logics of social life and business management. Evaluating people with disabilities is not easy, considering that the concept of disability includes a variety of aspects that are differently considered in various countries. Approximately, people with disabilities are about 650 million in the world, 10% of the population, in Europe about 80 million, around 37 in the European Union. Disabled people have developed a common consciousness and rightly demand that their rights of people are respected, even in production processes. This paper wants to answer some of main questions: may the economic and social model defined "glocalized", encourage the disabled people engagement in the economy and may contribute to build participatory and inclusive society? What management models can be used to encourage disabled people acceptance? This objective will be achieved by studying some theoretical considerations, based on literature review conceptualization, and by analyzing some case studies. This paper, therefore, does not propose the results of a specific quantitative or qualitative research, but wants to propose a number of critical considerations taking into account the latest developments, described by the best international bibliography.

Keywords: disability management, glocalization, inclusive society, glocal society, globalization

1. INTRODUCTION AND MOTIVATION: GLOCALIZATION AND DISABILITY

Many Nations recently recorded two new phenomena which must be studied in sociology and economics: the society and economy glocalization and the increase of people with disabilities¹ who require more rights, especially an active role in the economy.

The two phenomena appear very different. It seems that they are not connected. Instead, it is perhaps possible to find elements that join them.

The growing disabled population, in fact, want to have an important role in economic production. The development of ICT, in fact, allows individuals with disabilities to perform productive tasks that were impossible just a few years ago. The increase in life expectancy and medical advances are the main cause of the growth of the disabled population. Many people with disabilities are now excellent professional workers. They have a degree and PhD. Disabled people have developed a common consciousness and rightly demand that their rights of people are respected, even in production processes.

Enterprises, therefore, have to answer this question. Civil society must also consider these issues. The enterprises have to develop an innovative management: the "diversity management" may be the answer and, in particular, the disability management. Enterprises, however, need an economic environment suitable for developing the "disability management".

In fact, enterprises may be defined as an "open economic systems" that interact with their surroundings. Only if the surrounding economic environment is favourable, it can experience alternative forms of management.

In recent years, civil society and the economy seem to have spontaneously adopted an economic model "glocalized". It is a mediation between the models of "localization" and "globalization".

The model "glocal" seems particularly suited to the development of production processes adapted to accommodate people with disabilities because it is based on ethical principles.

This paper wants to answer some questions:

- Disabled people can be inserted in the production processes of modern economies?
- What management models can be used to encourage the acceptance of people with disabilities?
- What economic and social contexts must be developed to support the activities of the disabled people?
- The economic and social model defined "glocalized" may encourage the involvement of disabled people in the economy?

2. AIMS, RESEARCH APPROACH AND PAPER STRUCTURE

This contribution therefore would prove that "glocalization" promote a new vision of disability in a inclusive society and especially in economy. In particular, the objectives of this paper are:

- to emphasize the importance of glocalization in supporting disability management;
- to stress that glocalization is fundamental for education, training and culture of people with disabilities;
- to hope that glocalization can facilitate the work of people with disabilities;
- to spread the diversity and disability management;
- to encourage ethical values to build participatory and inclusive society and economy in which everyone can have productive roles;
- to facilitate this process by switching diversity and disability concepts for an inclusive policy.

This objective will be achieved by studying some theoretical considerations, based on literature review conceptualization, and by analyzing some case studies. The decision to propose conceptualizations

¹ Approximately, people with disabilities are about 650 million in the world, 10% of the population, in Europe about 80 million, around 37 in the European Union (Lucadamo & Simonetti, 2009). It is difficult, however, to quantify people with disabilities, considering that the concept of disability includes a variety of aspects that are differently considered in various countries.

based above on qualitative research proposals from the international literature derives from the social and economic characteristics of the subject that is being analyzed.

This paper, therefore, does not propose the results of a specific quantitative or qualitative research, but wants to propose a number of critical considerations taking into account the latest developments, described by the best international bibliography. It has an interdisciplinary value because it originates from the combination of technical, general economic, managerial, ethical etc. aspects.

In the beginning part, the paper discusses literature review and some notes relating to disability management. Subsequently, it will emphasize the economic, social and ethical features of the "glocal". Furthermore, it will explain, the importance of glocalization model for education, training and culture of people with disabilities. Finally, the paper will reach a successful conclusion: with glocalization model, disabled people life can be improved, allowing them to have a better interaction in society by widening their activities scope.

3. LITERATURE REVIEW (NOTES)

The topic of this paper is not in the main databases. No author has matched the principles of glocalism with the needs of disabled population. There are only a few studies that analyze the relationship between globalization and disability (Stienstra, 2002; Barnartt, 2010).

It is therefore necessary to stimulate reflections in international scientific reality. The ideas of the scholars can also help governments of Nations to act thus promoting an inclusive society.

In the main databases you can find many references distinguishing glocalization by disability. It is very difficult to propose a comprehensive literature review in a few pages of these two arguments. It is possible, instead, to present only some recent studies related to disability and to glocalism.

3.1. Literature review about disability and economy

The theme of disability is interdisciplinary and can be approached in different perspectives: this paper focuses on the economic approach that is underdeveloped.

Studies relating to the relationship between disability and cost management can be divided into two types: macroeconomic approaches and business approaches.

- a) *macroeconomic approaches*. Some Italian studies highlight the economic impact of disability on the system, emphasizing the costs to the community, but also the benefits that could be obtained by including disabled people (Scarpato, 1984 & 1987; Migliaccio, 2007, 2009¹ & 2014; Metallo, Ricci & Migliaccio, 2009). O'Brien (2013) demonstrates instead, that macroeconomic conditions may influence disability: employed persons are more likely to report a disability if they reside in a local area with higher unemployment rates. Findings have implications for understanding how macroeconomic downturns influence perceptions of disability and how structural conditions shape individual identity more broadly. There are also specialist studies related to specific industrial sectors, such as the green economy and job creation for disabled people (Bruyère & Filiberto, 2013). There are, finally, studies on the relationship between disability and economy of individual Nations or particular geographic areas (Mehrotra, 2013; Twigg, 2005; Shang, 2000);
- b) *business approaches*. The main international literature is related to *diversity management*. There are many articles. Among the most recent: Lu, Chen, Huang, & Chien, 2015; Oberfield, 2014; Burns, Euske & Malina, 2014; Sabharwal, 2014; Janssens & Zanoni, 2014. There are also a number of papers that illustrate the experiences of particular sectors or production of certain Nations: too numerous to mention! The books and articles related to the contribution of people with disabilities to the production companies are few. Among them: Scarpato, 1984 & 1987; Metallo, Ricci & Migliaccio, 2009; Kulkarni & Gopakumar, 2014; Angeloni, 2010, 2011 & 2013; Gensby, Labriola, Irvin, Amick III & Lund, 2014. Sometimes, but not always, studies relating to the inclusion of disabled people in the work of the companies is called "disability management". Unfortunately, this term hasn't a clear meaning, and it is used every time you need to manage a disability. Therefore, the colloquial expression "disability management" has always an economic meaning.

3.2. Literature review about glocalization

Also the theme of glocalization is interdisciplinary and can be approached in different perspectives: sociological, political, psychological, economic. Many writings are necessarily interdisciplinary and then combine the different perspectives of analysis. Glocalization or Glocal is a neologism coined in the eighties in Japan; later, the term was imported into the English language by British sociologist Roland Robertson (1995), and then extensively developed by Zygmunt Bauman (2005) to mediate the demands of globalization with those of local realities.

In subsequent years, careful observation of societies and economies have led to deepen the topic, with many studies, also in particular business cases. Among the general most recent studies you have to read: Roudometof, 2014; Vizureanu, 2013; Migliaccio, 2009²; Valdivieso, 2013; Matusitz & Lord, 2013.

Marketing scholars are the most interested in characteristics of glocal society (Fabris, 2008; Levitt, 1983 & 2006; Onkvisit & Shaw, 2002; Champy, 1997).

In the “glocalized world”, it is necessary to elaborate standardized international products that, however, can be adapted to local needs.

Other literature will be cited in the next text.

4. DISABILITY, ECONOMY, DIVERSITY AND DISABILITY MANAGEMENT

Diversity is a prominent aspect of daily life. Environments, company, production factors and, therefore, people are ordinarily different.

Economy has also to consider differences as a system’s structural element from which to draw all possible conveniences.

Does a strict application of economic logic exclude the notion of ‘limited’ resources?

Do ‘handicapped’ productive inputs affect efficiency and effectiveness of production processes?
In the “optimal mix”, is each element fully functional?

It seems at first that a ‘handicapped’ input can only be accepted if the reduced productivity is somehow compensated by economies related to the ‘acquisition’ or the ‘employment’ of the factor itself.

Therefore, there could be a bias against disabled people, in terms of their participation in the economic process, due the disability, that could reduce their productivity.

A more careful analysis is necessary to understand charges that, certainly, need to be supported, and to understand benefits, that are often overlooked.

4.1. Disability in the economic system

The economic system maintains considerable burden for disability.

The Government expenditure covers every kind of costs related to disabled people: hospitalization, tackling diseases (using drugs, prostheses, and rehabilitative assistance), education and training (for support teachers, specific educational technologies), public infrastructure projects designed and built to improve accessibility, etc.

There are also distortions deriving from the application of legislation aimed at facilitating the employment of disabled people: this could lead to the paradox that disabled resources might be used more than ‘healthy’ ones ...

But ... give employment to disabled people in the production cycle, could be useful.

First of all, it brings back into use resources which otherwise would remain unproductive. The employment of the disabled releases members of their families, who can work.

Individual and family incomes will increase, boosting the demand of goods and services. Triggering a virtuous circle will also bring an increase in tax revenues.

4.2. Disability in the corporate dimension

Disability, in this case, could have a significant effect on corporate organization.

First of all, there is the investment in appropriate facilities in order to overcome obstacles. Innovation favours a new culture, that could prevent obsolescence.

Training and updating policies could become more complex and expensive.

Also, you have to consider healthcare needs, related both prevention and assistance, and much more, absences due to the disability. Opportunities are analysed through the “diversity management” conceptual framework (Lu, Chen, Huang, & Chien, 2015; Oberfield, 2014; Burns, Euske & Malina, 2014; Sabharwal, 2014; Janssens & Zanoni, 2014) and its derivative, as “disability management” (Scarpato, 1984 & 1987; Metallo, Ricci & Migliaccio, 2009¹; Kulkarni & Gopakumar, 2014; Angeloni, 2010, 2011 & 2013; Gensby, Labriola, Irvin, Amick III & Lund, 2014).

The first introduced a new notion of diversity, which is no longer considered a threat due to the conflicts it may cause, but it is instead viewed as a stimulus towards the enrichment of the working environment and the overall increase in productivity, thanks to the tolerance and respect existing among the different players involved.

“Diversity management” has become necessary when the work-force are multiethnic, and the amalgamation multicultural. It is likely that its implementation should first go through a review of the values and culture affecting the management style and the existing human relations.

“Disability management” studies ‘workplace’ – both of the physical space and of the set of tasks to be performed - and relations to the disabled person.

Above all, to remove architectural barriers by building structures and tools suitable to the disabled person’s needs.

Disability management also deals with the different arrangements regarding the tasks to be performed, taking into account flexible hours, redistribution of job titles, training, etc.

It will also seek to level the perception of disability within the company.

Any productivity measurement regarding disabled people, should also consider contributions and public funding that could compensate company’s expenses or lost opportunities. In this way, it could be possible to boost the economic and financial dynamic.

5. GLOCALIZATION FOR A NEW SOCIETY AND A NEW ECONOMY

5.1. What is “glocalization”?

Faced with globalization, the economic system is located between two virtual extremes (Migliaccio, 2009², pp. 1087-1088).

On the one hand, the hypothesis of a standardization of lifestyles and thus productive assets. Conversely the ability to exalt the differences of customs and therefore logical processes.

Actually many economic systems show a model of production and consumption that seems to fall between the extremes described: they mediate the characteristics of globalization and localization. This è “glocalization”.

Glocalization or Glocal is neologism coined by British sociologist Roland Robertson (1995), and then extensively developed by Zygmunt Bauman (2005) to mediate the demands of globalization with those of local realities².

In this new economic system it is necessary to produce goods and services designed for a global market, but adapted to local laws: think global, act local (Onkvisit & Shaw, 2002; Champy, 1997; Fabris, 2008).

In such a complex context, companies need to devise managerial perspectives and competence that are totally different compared to those applied in local or international scenarios, or on the contrary, typically international contexts³.

Current views, therefore (Valdivieso, 2013), have recognized that globalization does not result in similar consumption patterns for every product around the world, but rather in the adaptation of global products to local markets, in other words, localization.

The concept of glocalization describes this later trend, in which the multinationals' global strategies have been incorporating localization practices as the natural path of evolution for global multinationals; in essence, a shift from a mindset of offering standardized products into a world of localized acting within the firm's global thinking.

The global and the local thus may well cohabit.

5.2. "Glocalization": principles and ethical values

Glocalization is founded on principles and ethical values that are listed in a Glocalist Manifesto (2008)⁴.

Proponents of glocalism observe some features of the current society and the economy: technology changes the ideas of time and space, and has unified the world. Innovation facilitates the encounter between knowledge: new opportunities but also threats.

Mobility dominates the permanence, so it develops independent reports from the territories: the global penetrates all *loci* and each *locus* (every place) is a part of global dimension.

New glocal institutions must be able to mediate global economy and local partnerships. It is necessary a new statehood in which individuals, ethnicities, different Nations can live together in equality.

It is necessary a new citizenship based on multi-membership and a new cosmopolitan governance to ensure, in a glocal world, environment, peace, rights, justice.

The first look easy way to get to the complex and believes the central person and his group, the local heritage material and immaterial, and the local community, the interaction of individuals in the community, "subsystems" of organization complex.

The end of nationalism does not mean the end of ethnic and regional cultural identities.

² Other interesting definitions and reflections are proposed in Vizureanu, 2013: his study is aimed to scan the explanatory relevance of the concept of glocalization in some seminal works of George Ritzer.

³ Also part of Italian culture is sensitive to the socio-economic phenomenon, considering also the actual involvement of many firms (Vaciago, 2003; Sedda, 2004, Amato Mangiameli, 2006). Among the many American studies, it should be noted, however, the qualitative analysis by Matusitz & Lord (2013) that examines Wal-Mart managers' perspectives of the strategies that the US corporation has implemented to increase its sales. Two theoretical paradigms were specifically used: glocalization and globalization. Throughout the data reduction process, three key themes surfaced as the most relevant to two initial research questions: (1) Awareness of Glocalization as Key to Success; (2) Globalization Strategies Implemented; and (3) Centralization as a Pattern of Globalization. This study has revealed that part of Wal-Mart's phenomenal success is to be both globalizing and glocalizing.

⁴ The Glocalist Manifesto was approved in Milan, 7 January 2008. It is signed by Piero Bassetti who is the President of "Globus et Locus". The mission of "Globus et Locus" is to help the ruling classes to meet the challenges of glocalization with a political culture and a new value system updated to reality glocal.

The new world will be the glocal world and will characterize the peoples destiny.

6. CONCLUSION: 'GLOCALIZATION' AND DISABILITY MANAGEMENT FOR AN INCLUSIVE SOCIETY

Glocalism creates an economic and social context where the logic of diversity and disability management can spread.

In the Glocalist Manifesto there is no explicit reference to disability. However there are several principles that can be considered useful to develop a culture of inclusion in society and also in companies.

Its principles, which do not standardization and standardization to a single model of society, economy and people (Glocalist Manifesto, 2008, n. 8). This, of course, favours the culture acceptance of diversity.

Similar aims indirectly are obtained when the Glocalist Manifesto calls for a new statehood in which individuals, ethnic groups, Nations can live together in equality (Glocalist Manifesto, 2008, n. 23).

Still, the acceptance of diversity emerges indirectly to the principle n. 25 reiterates that claim, for each person, to feel together cosmopolitan, Italic, European, Catholic, Muslim, liberals, socialists, etc., without losing its sense of politics identity.

Glocalism also wants an economic and social environment favourable to the enterprise. The Manifesto explicitly proclaims (Glocalist Manifesto, 2008, n. 16): "The enterprise constitutes the central form of mediation between coexistence and economy".

The enterprise is regulated by global markets (Glocalist Manifesto, 2008, n. 17) and the populations of enterprises within these global markets operate on a global scale through logically interwoven networks of functions (Glocalist Manifesto, 2008, n. 18).

The central role of the enterprise in the economy does not exclude the necessary role of public institutions. They, however, have to change their mission: new glocal institutions must be capable of tying together global enterprises and local enterprise populations. They must be in a position to mediate between the global economy and the local forms of coexistence (Glocalist Manifesto, 2008, n. 21).

Glocalism claims a new form of statehood in which diverse individuals, ethnicities and Nations can coexist on equal terms, where territorial communities and communities of practice can interweave their interests and functions (Glocalist Manifesto, 2008, n. 23).

All these principles are fully compatible with an inclusive society.

They also create favourable conditions to spread diversity and disability management.

Due to multiethnic work-force and multicultural integration, diversity management has become necessary: in a glocal and inclusive society the work-force are often multiethnic and multicultural!

The culture of acceptance of diversity also promotes the inclusion of people with disabilities and therefore the disability management in enterprises.

No more cultural prejudices toward the disabled population which, however, may give his contribution to the processes of production, provided that businesses adapt the structures and the governance to their specific needs.

Opportunities arising from disabled employees seem to be often overlooked, but are nonetheless significant and often able to compensate for the additional costs: it is instead viewed as a stimulus towards the enrichment of the working environment and the overall increase in productivity, thanks to the tolerance and respect existing among the different players involved.

Greater attention to human resources, regardless of their features, leads to a creative, motivating and empowering environment, this way maximizing the overall result.

The employment of the disabled releases members of their families, who can work. Family incomes will increase, boosting the demand of goods and services, triggering a virtuous circle.

Glocalism, diversity and disability management work together, so, in a more equitable society in which it can be realized in practice the ethical principle of the principle of universal destination of resources, could only reaffirm the subordination of the economy to life values.

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