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Developed Welfare

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Synonyms

[Institutional involvement](#); [New social state](#); [Social innovation](#)

Definition

The task of addressing past and current needs, without delegating to either the market alone or the action of the public administration, enables new forms of collaboration, involving various parties, creating other modes of action between public and private cooperation.

Introduction

Within the last few decades, the concept of “social” needs has been changing. This concept has now broadened dramatically both having the effect of establishing an “interventionist” state culture (e.g., Krugman 2009) and the objective expansion of social inequalities (e.g., Atkinson 2015) which has, very recently

and quite unpredictably, brought about new needs; one needs only to think of the effects from significant immigration or that which is connected to the early expulsion from the production sector with millions of people still without a possibility of pension subsidies (Mazzoleni 2013). As a result of the continuing financial cuts in welfare systems, redefining measures in social security has become a key requirement (e.g., Hulst and van Montfort 2012). Together with this, there are two other aspects to consider; the ongoing difficulty in providing solutions to centralized monetary payments focusing on direct payments (pensions, various subsidies, citizens’ income, etc.) and the inadequacies of the Italian welfare system (and in some rare exceptions, those also found elsewhere in continental Europe) that have become obvious in recent years following the level of services offered (Lippi Bruni et al. 2012). It is becoming increasingly clear that there is a need to move beyond the idea of delegating responsibilities of welfare to the state alone, in the same way that social (and economic) ineffectiveness leads to imagining these same delegations being put to the market alone. For this reason, in recent years, there has been a growing interest with respect to innovative ways of structuring and delivering services of a high social content. Above all, new ways of engagement which lead businesses that work alongside regional authorities, lenders alongside trade

unions, nonprofit businesses alongside organizations not only to deliver, but also to design services for the individual.

The Paradigm of “Evolving Welfare”

The role of welfare seems relevant irrespective of the various ideologies and governments that have contributed to it over the last 200 years (e.g., Spicher 2000). Over time, there has been a shift from delegating this role only to the people to favoring a vision whereby both state and market attempt to share responsibilities. The exponential growth of needs, coupled with the difficulty of addressing them through traditional methods and the explosion of economic burdens generated by interventions, slowly led to the need of “new” approaches and new organizational and governmental solutions (Giacomini et al. 2015, 2017). Besides the specific debate between those who advocate either a greater or lesser involvement of the state (or, vice versa, of the market) to address this kind of problem and acknowledging the need not to neglect the effects of underestimating what can be achieved, socially, and economically, without intervening on the increasing needs of this kind, the different stakeholders who are, in turn, confronted with this situation, have begun to think of new pathways which can tackle the issue. The principle values of solidarity which the majority of countries are founded upon, that have in the past paid close attention to the subject of welfare, form the “ideological” basis on which the “developed welfare” model develops. The practice of managing “common goods” (e.g., Demsetz 1967) sets the basis on which to build this new model. The model is based upon on the intent to aggregate individuals, associations, public administration, lenders, enterprises, employers, and trade union organizations to address social, environmental, and other contextual issues. This cooperative effort between the aforementioned parties leads to addressing the subject of welfare through applying a unified solidary vision, strongly orientated toward problem solving. This guiding idea has allowed us to find

participatory and effective solutions to otherwise unsolvable problems, thus representing a first pillar on which to build a new behavioral model that has started addressing broader social issues alongside existing welfare issues. Ultimately, the model of developed welfare begins from the assumption that social, environmental, and other contextual issues can be addressed with some of the following assumptions: micro or “territorial” issues should be separated from those which are “macro,” focusing on the former, since those which are considered “macro” can only be addressed through policies made at a national or supranational level.

In search of solutions, the “micro” approach must be coupled with the so-called globalization model. More specifically, having general measures and a logical framework in order to apply and adapt in accordance with local specifications (e.g., Dirlik 1996). Micro-level solutions can only be effectively identified by involving all the different stakeholders that work within the concerned area. With these assumptions in mind, the model requires a first stage, an engagement between stakeholders which allows for sharing methods and approaches. Secondly, the challenge lies in arriving at a prioritization of issues that need to be addressed. This is approached by the direct involvement between various stakeholders. There is a need to see past the problems during the analysis stage and encourage the different parties to evaluate themselves both in terms of their influence on the economic and social balance, and also in relation to the ability to intervene as problem solvers. This establishes clear modes of action and generates operational responsibilities of the different parties in sight of various issues. At the same time, this collaboration helps to empower individual parties to work “systematically.” That is to say that they are not only responsible for actions directly related to their areas of intervention, but they are also required to carry out their work respecting the principles on which this approach is based; those of shared participation and shared responsibility. Another of the prerequisites for action is encouraging those in charge of projects to define the general effects in a concrete

and objective manner by means of data which is not only qualitative, subdividing the planning by outlining the timings for action.

Once the priorities and operational responsibilities have been defined, the model provides for a continuation of the established processes leading to:

- A systematic monitoring of the actions taken
- Results being systematically recorded and verified throughout the various planning stages
- Sharing the obtained results among stakeholders, through a possible relaunch and redefinition of methods that can be adapted to a “feedforward” logic
- A verification of the obtained results and the congruency of the outcomes expected to be useful throughout the new phases of the project

The model therefore requires, first of all, a strong ability to select mechanisms designed to identify activities that are able to mediate between urgency and feasibility. Secondly, out of the need to share the model’s validity and effectiveness, the model requires the need to operate with methods of involvement and shared responsibility in accordance with parties and institutions called to work with systematic approaches. Also, it requires an explicit willingness to “question the status quo” and agreeing to operate through highly flexible approaches. From an operating point of view, the model requires two “critical” figures to be entrusted with the responsibility of directing, guiding, and verifying. The first being a methodological presidium officially entrusted with planning and initiating the project. The second is the “play maker” of the project, the director and facilitator of the operational activities. The first figure should be considered as a critical element from a professional point of view, while the second one is fundamental in order to exercise its role in social, institutional, and behavioral guidance.

Conclusion

The developed welfare model brings with it certain elements of discontinuity with the past that, if implemented, can present important opportunities, the first and foremost being a collaborative work ethic between “parties” and “institutions.” The need to adopt new paradigms demonstrates the first element of criticality and, at the same time, the potentiality of the model.

The criticism arises from the fact that, with respect to both the parties and when considering the methods of involvement, a new, unconventionally explored method is being realized. Culturally, it represents a significant challenge when envisaging parties collaborating “around a table,” often contributing a difference in ideas, direction, implementation, and verification. At the same time, creating approaches that would lead these parties to “get involved” in new ways offers the opportunity to obtain unconventional ideas and develop methods which can, in their innovativeness, effectively solve issues that would otherwise not find an adequate solution. A second potential element is one which is related to the need of addressing problems, being sure to look thoroughly at their analysis in order to assess the effect which they specifically have and to give an indication to the real solving potential that the new approach brings with it.

A mix between the pragmatic nature of “doing” paired with the necessary ability to criticality choose the different areas to be faced, obliges the involved parties to overcome the learned hypotheses that often lead to suggesting sufficient solutions which are proven to run up against unforeseen or undervalued difficulties. Therefore, new procedures and paradigms end up with generating multiplier effects allowing to hypothesize useful methods and approaches (also from a cultural point of view) in order to deal with a reality facing a steep and unpredictable transformation.

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