

Socialni kapital in premagovanje gospodarske krize

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Povzetek

Posledice gospodarske krize, iz konca prejšnjega desetletja, so in bodo vidne še v naslednjih letih. Poleg prednosti globalizacije, ki jih je pridobil svetovni gospodarski razvoj, pa se kaže tudi druga stran. Recesija je zajela širše ekonomsko območje vseh močnejše povezanih ekonomij in regij. S tem se je nazadovanje proizvodnje in s tem posledično finančna kriza, prenesla tudi v območje Evropske unije. Državni ukrepi so uperjeni v prvi vrsti v zavarovanje lastnega gospodarstva, tukaj pa se dotaknemo problema brezposelnost in nezadovoljstva med delovno aktivnim prebivalstvom. Pomen socialnega kapitala v takšnem kontekstu pridobi novo razsežnost. V prispevku opišemo definicije in razsežnosti socialnega kapitala in podamo možne oblike uporabe in merjenja le tega. Nezadovoljni zaposleni se povezujejo v drugačnih socialnih omrežjih, prehod iz produkcijske v storitveno ekonomijo, pa sili ljudi k iskanju novih izzivov tudi v prostovoljnih povezovanjih. S tem se tvorijo nova omrežja, kjer poizkušajo povezani najti nove načine za izhod iz krize in ustvarjanje novega socialnega kapitala. V bližnji prihodnosti je to lahko uspešen način reševanja, ali iskanja rešitev predvsem v posameznih

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organizacijah. Iskanje novih modelov v teoriji in praktični uporabi socialnega kapitala, pa daje zaradi vse večjega prepletanja različnih znanstvenih področij pozitivne učinke in odpira nove vidike uporabnega raziskovanja in merjenja socialnega kapitala.

Ključne besede: socialni kapital, recesija, razsežnosti socialnega kapitala, izzivi.

Abstract

The consequences of the economic crisis from the end of last decade are and will be visible in the next few years. In addition to the benefits of globalization, which has gained worldwide economic development, but also shows the other side. The recession has covered the wider economic area of strongly related economies and regions. This is a decline of production and, consequently, the financial crisis also transferred in the territory of the European Union. National measures are directed primarily at insurance of their own holdings, but here we encounter the problem of unemployment and discontent among the working population. The importance of social capital in such a context acquires a new dimension. In this paper we describe the definitions and dimensions of social capital and input possible uses and measurement thereof. Disgruntled employees can connect to other social networks, the transition from production to service economy, and forces people to look for new challenges in the voluntary alliances. This will form the new

network, which linked trying to find new ways for overcoming the crisis and creating new social capital. In the near future this may be an effective way of solving or finding solutions primarily in individual organizations. Search for new models in the theory and practical application of social capital, it gives about the increasing intermingling of different scientific fields positive effects and opens up new aspects of applied research and measurement of social capital.

Keywords: social capital, recession dimensions of social capital challenges.

Introduction

The recession and economic downturn, which we covered in the last few years, have significantly changed the view on global integration and cooperation. The crisis has shown the negative effects of globalization, as it has spread to all economic and political entities have been strongly linked. The so-called "developed", they discovered how to curb the spread of the collapse of economies and how to find new solutions for the orientation of performance indicators up. Fear of emerging economies in the eastern part, which is by the recession only touched, but not exactly help in identifying effective drug. Thus, each country, including within the EU, launched itself, in its own way to deal with incentives to their economies.

The search for new solutions, again note the impact and importance of the microclimate in the individual organizations. This is in connection with the exploration and implementation of new skills is one of the key instruments to deal with problems. Technologically we are already highly developed, so that there will be some great new discoveries, at least as far as production economies. In other areas, the development of conditional large financial investments and investments in social capital. The latter is becoming an important topic of debate, and an important and effective way to increase the performance of companies. Social capital, social networking, networking, networking at the micro level will undoubtedly bring new value-added businesses. Companies in a timely and proper way to recognize these qualities among employees can more effectively compete in the market and thus provide a competitive advantage.

A fundamental difference exists between social capital approach and social capital theory. The first one focuses on broadening the vision of economists to include some other intangible resources to what they were used to think about —capital. The second one attempt to articulate a fundamental question in a systemic way: what is social capital? What does a social capital theory offer that is not found in other theories? Social capital approaches introduced in economics the idea that —social matters and proposed a great variety of contributions ranging from micro to macro perspectives. Unfortunately this remarkable amount of contributions did not provide to the concept a full

theoretical status. The new challenge is then to pass from social capital approach to social capital theory. (Lollo,2012)

Definitions off SC

Since the appearance of the term —social capital at the beginning of the twentieth century it became clear that this concept was trying to capture the influence of some intangible resources linked to the sociality of individuals. In the words of Lyda J. Hanifan, who is credited with introducing the concept: —I do not refer to real estate, or to personal property or cold cash, but rather to that in life that tends to make this tangible substances count for most in the daily lives of people: namely good will, fellowship, sympathy, and social intercourse among the individuals and families who make up a social unit, the rural community (Hanifan 1916, 130).

The basic idea of “social capital” is that one’s family, friends, and associates constitute an important asset, one that can be called upon in a crisis, enjoyed for its own sake, and/or leveraged for material gain. What is true for individuals, moreover, also holds for groups. Those communities endowed with a diverse stock of social networks and civic associations will be in a stronger position to confront poverty and vulnerability (Moser 1996; Narayan 1996), resolve disputes (Schafft 1998; Varshney 1999), and/or take advantage of new opportunities. (Woolcock and Narayan,2000).

The letter and spirit of social capital has a long intellectual history in the social sciences (Platteau 1994; Woolcock, 1998), but the sense in which it is used today dates back more than eighty years to the writings of Lyda J. Hanifan, then the superintendent of schools in West Virginia. Writing on the importance of community participation to enhancing school performance, (Hanifan 1916, 130) explained this positive relationship by invoking the concept of social capital, describing it as those tangible substances that count for most in the daily lives of people: namely good will, fellowship, sympathy, and social intercourse among the individuals and families who make up a social unit... If an individual comes into contact with his neighbor, and they with other neighbors, there will be an accumulation of social capital, which may immediately satisfy his social needs and which may bear a social potentiality sufficient to the substantial improvement of living conditions in the whole community. (Woolcock and Narayan, 2000).

The literature on social capital and economic development is expanding rapidly, but it is helpful to trace out the evolution of that literature, and to identify the various perspectives that are emerging. We argue that there are essentially four such perspectives. While each is making an important contribution, we find that one in particular enjoys the strongest empirical support, is in the best position to articulate a coherent multi-disciplinary research agenda, and is able to propose a realistic set of policy recommendations pertaining to poverty reduction. Our analysis updates and extends the perspectives outlined by the

World Bank's interdisciplinary Social Capital Group, first convened in January 1996, which highlighted three general perspectives on social capital (Michael Woolcock and Deepa Narayan, 2000).

Moreover, the use trust and social norms mixes up borders between different aggregation levels. For example when considering social capital as generalized trust (Bjørnskov 2003) we implicitly assume that the accumulation of social capital through social relationships within different groups and levels results in a positive level of generalized trust. Similarly when considering social norms formation and their role in sustaining the pursue of common objectives (Putnam, Leonardi and Nanetti 1993), we ignore that in society contrasting social norms may exist and different groups might be able to turn some of them for their rent seeking purposes (Warren 2008). On the other side the structural perspective focuses on the right level (the individual and the group he belongs to) but skips the step of the identification of social capital dimensions. In this sense we contribute to the structural perspective. We make explicit those dimensions that provide individuals with those intangible resources that enable them to band together to reach common objectives. These intangible resources are social capital, the amount of expectations and obligations linked to being member of a group. The underlying dimensions are then the characteristics of the social relationships of an individual that will shape his set of expectations and obligations and finally influence his capacity for

coordination, cooperation and for engage in any form of exchange (Lollo 2012).

Social capital dimensions identify those characteristics of social relationships that make available to individuals a certain amount of intangible resources, expectations and obligations, necessary to coordinate and reach some benefits. Overviewing social capital literature presented so far and looking for additional contributions from collective action theory and cognitive psychology we selected a minimum amount of characteristics able to perform social capital's functions. These characteristics are frequency, homogeneity, and hierarchy (Lollo 2012).

In our understanding social capital is accumulated through social relationships. The first characteristic that plays a role in this accumulation process is the frequency of contacts between two individuals or between an individual and the group he belongs to. Frequency raises social capital because the repetition of interactions is the funding element of reciprocity among individuals. Expectations and obligations will build up and evolve together with interaction and the highest is frequency the clearest is the set of expectations and obligations between two individuals. A part from the interaction between two selected individuals in the group, also the frequency of interactions within the whole group raises the accumulation of social capital because it enhances closure. When group members are well-

connected one each other information flows efficiently and monitoring is less expensive (Lollo 2012).

A second characteristic has been extensively cited in social capital literature: homogeneity. Homogeneity means that individuals share some common value or interest. In reference to groups it is possible to make a distinction between homogenous groups, in which membership is exclusive for those people representing a certain value or interest, and heterogeneous groups, in which people gather together to perform an action or reach an objective that is not linked to their values or interests. Homogeneity raises social capital accumulation but not through the mechanism of repetition. Because people belonging to the same group feel that they share some common values they do not need to interact to define their respective expectations and obligations. Information asymmetries are automatically reduced and monitoring is applied through social sanctioning.

The last characteristic completing the picture is hierarchy that can be defined as the degree of concentration of contacts around a single individual within a group. Hierarchy raises social capital accumulation because it makes the allocation of expectations and obligations clearer. In formal organizations, with well-defined hierarchy, information flows and decisions are effective because rules and roles are clear and monitoring is well-structured. Considering social capital accumulation it is important to consider not only the hierarchization of the entire group

but also the relative position of the individual within this structure. In fact, if the individual is positioned at the very top of the hierarchy he will probably profit of a higher amount of expectations in comparison to the obligations towards other group members, and vice versa at the bottom he will be constrained by a higher amount of obligations (Lollo 2012).

Social capital types: identifying, linking, bridging, and bonding social capital

Social capital literature already proposed social capital types to explain the variety of characteristics, functions and outcomes associated to the social functioning of the economic structure. Especially network analysis and the structural perspective categorized different groups recognizing that they specifically contributed to the capacity of individuals to gather together and to the outcomes of cooperation. We briefly illustrate the contribution proposed by Sabatini that we consider as reference point for the development of our contribution. In his words, social capital, that is identified with social networks, is composed by: —informal networks of strong families ties (bonding social capital), informal networks of weak bridging ties connecting friends and acquaintances (bridging social capital), formal networks connecting members of voluntary organizations (linking social capital) and formal networks of activists in political parties (Sabatini 2006).

Identifying social capital results from the predominance of homogeneity and hierarchy. These characteristics describe all those social relationships developed in formal groups whose identity and function is linked to some common value or interest shared among participants. We may think to political or religious affiliations. Frequency might be also a characteristic of this type of social relationship but it is not the principal one. Ties and the resulting expectations and obligations are developed because of some similarity among individuals not because of frequent activities. The hierarchization of the group clearly defines in-versus out-group identity that is reinforced also by the homogeneity of individuals. Members monitor one another through social sanction and at the same time the group structure provides some individual with a larger amount of expectations (we may think to the political or religious leader) that can be used to reinforce his control over the group (Lollo 2012).

Linking social capital is defined by the combination of hierarchy and frequency. This implies that we still refer to those social relationships developed within formal organizations, that are by definition hierarchized, but whose ties are strengthened by frequency of interaction instead of homogeneity among individuals. These relationships are found for example among co-workers. The characteristics of linking social capital raises the efficiency of the actions performed because of the good coordination and interdependence among actors due to the well-definition of roles within the group and the repetition of

interactions that enhances reciprocity between actors. Moreover the absence of homogeneity implies that the identity of the group and its objectives are tasks oriented instead of value oriented, concentrating the efforts towards productive activities.

Bridging social capital results from the combination of frequency and homogeneity. We refer here to informal groups. We may think to those relationships developed among friends or within leisure groups. Hierarchy is absent or it is not the dominant characteristic as people gather together motivated by similarity and without a clear productive purpose. The group is characterized by open access and expectations and obligations evolve together with the repetition of contacts. Because of these characteristics individuals highly trust one another and feel that they share some common value.

The last social capital type is the combination of all the three characteristics. Relationships characterized by frequency, hierarchy and homogeneity shape strong ties between individuals and clearly define in versus out-group identity. The perfect example of bonding social capital is found in family networks in which roles are defined, individuals feel that they share a common identity and they meet frequently, thus reinforcing the strength of expectations and obligations among them (Lollo 2012).

We recognize the same recurrent idea when examining major definitions proposed during the seventies (Loury 1977), the eighties (Bourdieu 1980; Coleman 1988), the nineties (Burt 1997; Fukuyama 1999; Knack and Keefer 1997; Putnam, Leonardi and Nanetti 1993) and the last decade (Dasgupta 2005; Esser 2008; Fafchamps 2006; Sen 2003; Woolcock and Narayan 2000). We resume this idea saying that social capital refers to embeddedness (Granovetter 1985).

How to deal with this diversity? The main problem underlined in this study is that social capital dimensions proposed by the existing literature focus either on input and output of social capital accumulation or on the structure in which the mechanism of accumulation happens. On the first side, trust and social norms are fundamental preconditions and outcomes of the process but not dimensions. As we will argue later on this article, social capital raises the possibility, do not guarantee, that individuals trust one another (Ahn and Ostrom 2008; Dasgupta 2005).

How does social capital affect economic development

Several recent innovative studies have attempted to quantify social capital and its contribution to economic development. As indicated above, social capital scholarship is so rich in part because it draws on a variety of methodological approaches, all of which have an important role to play in interpreting, challenging, and refining each other's findings (Tarrow 1995). In order to arrive at more concrete policy

recommendations, however, there is a need for more comparative research using precise measures of social capital to examine within-country and across-country variations in poverty reduction, government performance, ethnic conflict and economic growth. In this section, we examine some of the measures that have been employed to date, evaluating their usefulness and their limitations for development theory and policy.

Measuring social capital may be difficult, but several excellent studies—using different types and combinations of qualitative and quantitative research methodologies—have nonetheless identified useful measures of and proxies for social capital. We review briefly some of the studies which have attempted to quantify social capital for the purposes of deriving measures that can be aggregated beyond the community level (Woolcock and Narayan, 2000).

Another manifestation of social capital includes norms and values which facilitate exchanges, lower transaction costs, reduce the cost of information, permit trade in the absence of contracts, encourage responsible citizenship, and the collective management of resources (Fukuyama 1995). Ronald Inglehart's (1997) work on the World Values Survey (WVS) is the most comprehensive work in this area. With economists being drawn into the social capital issue, the most used questions from the World Values Survey have become the questions on generalized trust (e.g., "Generally speaking, would you say that most

people can be trusted or that you can't be too careful in dealing with people?"). Knack and Keefer (1997), for example, use WVS trust data from 29 countries to show the positive relationship between trust and levels of investment in a country. (Woolcock and Narayan,2000).

Four recent studies attempt to develop indices of social capital at the national or subnational levels. In the US, spurred by Robert Putnam's "Bowling Alone" thesis (Putnam 1995, 2000), several new surveys of civic engagement have been conducted, in addition to the mining of data already collected in surveys conducted by the private sector to measure consumer preferences and changes in lifestyles (Woolcock and Narayan,2000).

Because the forms of social capital are society-specific and change over time, such a social capital instrument must focus on a range of dimensions of social capital, assuming that different forms and combinations of dimensions of social capital will be important in different societies. Such instruments have recently been piloted in Ghana and Uganda (Narayan 1998), and by the World Bank's Social Capital Initiative¹³ in Panama and India (Krishna and Shrader 1999). Both instruments include a variety of questionnaires and open-ended methods to collect data at the household and community level (Woolcock and Narayan 2000).

In this section, we consider some of the implications of social capital research for development theory and policy. We stress that these implications are necessarily preliminary, and invite others to refine, correct, or expand upon them.

The first implication for development theory is that the concept of social capital offers a way to bridge sociological and economic perspectives, thereby providing potentially richer and better explanations of economic development. In a world beset with ethnic conflict, political tensions, and financial crisis, no single discipline (if ever it could) can hope to provide either a full accounting of these problems or realistic prescriptions for change. Dialogue across disciplinary, sectoral, and professional lines alike is crucial for both conceptual and operational advancement.

A second implication is that economic growth is shaped by the nature and extent of social interactions between communities and institutions. This has important implications for development policy, in which attention to the embeddedness of economic life in the social and political environment has until recently been largely absent. Similarly, our review affirms that understanding how “outside” agencies can facilitate sustainable poverty alleviation in diverse (and often poorly understood) communities remains one of the great challenges of development.

Having a project that is technically and financially sound is a necessary but insufficient condition for its acceptance by poor communities (Woolcock and Narayan 2000).

While it is too soon to announce the arrival of a new development “paradigm”, it is not unreasonable to claim that there is a remarkable, if often unacknowledged, consensus emerging

about the importance of social relations in development. In unpacking the literature on social capital and development, we have sought to convey a recurring message that social relations are key in mobilizing other growth-enhancing resources (Woolcock and Narayan 2000).

In many respects we are still in the early stages of research on social capital and development, but we cannot wait until we know all there is to know about social capital before acting. Rather, to foster further our knowledge and understanding of social capital, we should adopt a learning-by-doing stance. For the World Bank and the development community at large, this implies more rigorous evaluations of project and policy impact on social capital; greater work on unbundling the mechanisms through which social capital works; and understanding the determinants of social capital itself (Woolcock and Narayan 2000).

Benefits and drawbacks of SC

The effects of social capital are felt both by individuals when the wider society - community. (Adler and Kwon 2000, 104-105) separating:

a) The individual: access to more information at a lower cost, which makes it easier to gain new skills, greater mobility and similar, power and influence, solidarity (closed networks, trust, norms, beliefs), which reduces the need for formal control (for example, credit associations).

b) Community: diversification and transfer information between independent units (eg multinational company), to facilitate the execution of tasks to facilitate control, civil and civic duty foster cooperation for the common benefit, leading to greater confidence.

Social capital can sometimes be dysfunctional and unproductive, excessive investment in social capital can be an additional restriction and obligation. The risks and negative effects of social capital can be divided by individuals on the one hand and the wider community on the other side (Adler, Kwon 2000, 106-109):

a) The individual: the cost of building and maintaining relationships, too many links or strict norms can reduce access to information and innovation, increase the vulnerability of networks hamper

entrepreneurship and restrict the freedom of individuals, the exclusion of individuals from the community.

b) Community: excessive intermediation individuals can hinder innovation in the broad levels, where the effectiveness depends on the sharing of information, too much identification with a group can lead to social fragmentation (dissatisfied individuals conspiracy against the common interest) denied access to resources and knowledge of certain groups, down restrictive norms.

We know that the social capital of trust, networking, reciprocity, tool or way to achieve and increase competitive advantage. Before stating the reasons for the emphasis on the value of social capital in the microclimate of the company, two's definition, competitive advantages, which are topical today. Cater (2001) Competitive advantage is defined as a unique and lasting advantageous position, which makes it a company created in relation to other companies in the industry and on the surface it looks like a long-term advantage in the market. Rusjan (2000) define as a fundamental objective of the company profitability as a result of a competitive advantage and as such, the purpose of long-term and short-term business planning.

Entrepreneurship is a social activity where the resources for the establishment of new organizations obtained through a combination of relationships in community structure (Freeman 1999). Increases trade

enables more efficient use of resources, promote the creation, dissemination and application of innovative ideas, affects the number, growth or development of new enterprises and thus employment opportunities.

Social capital at the organizational level (Lesser 2000, 23-24) has a significant impact on entrepreneurship through:

- Confidence, commitment and expectations, reducing uncertainty and promoting an organization acquisition of new knowledge;
- information flows, which increase the capacity of companies to absorb and transfer of information;
- norms and effective sanctions, distributing entrepreneurial risk.

At the interorganizational level distinguish between two forms of social capital and related business strategy, which represent the different ways in which entrepreneurs have access to resources in the structure of social relations (Baker, Obstfeld 1999):

- structural holes and discontinuities strategy, which emphasizes the use of structural holes between unrelated entrepreneurs;
- valency and social cohesion strategy that emphasizes creating value by linking unrelated entrepreneurs.

More and more empirical results demonstrate the desirability of various forms of employee participation, since it had a positive impact on economic efficiency. Kanjuo Mrčela (2002), used the concept of social capital in the analysis of the privatization process in Slovenia to

demonstrate the relationship between the existence of employee ownership and social capital.

At the organizational level, the importance of social capital for innovation in the structure changes organizations, enabling innovation, and in the revised Accession business owners and employees who are willing to invest in innovation. The form of organization has been changed in parallel with technological changes, connections previously unrelated actors and increasingly scarce economic resources, from large, centralized, hierarchical, bureaucratic in small, horizontal organizations which are based on teamwork, cooperation and shared tasks in the organization. Because companies understand the importance of social capital at the organizational level, increase their competitive advantage (Cigula 2010).

Contributions proposed so far were developed along two main axes. First, we illustrated a conceptual clarification of the definition of social capital identifying social capital dimensions. Second, we developed a descriptive theory to explain how the combination of social capital dimensions results in different types of social capital. These two original contributions provide new insights on different functions of social capital supporting a general evolution from social capital approach to social capital theory.

Two principal directions must be developed by future research. First it is necessary to explain the model dynamics. It is in fact assumed that all social capital types tend to evolve towards bonding social capital because of the self-reinforcing relationship between social capital dimensions (hierarchy, homogeneity and frequency). Also, it is important to understand how each characteristic contribute to social capital accumulation and which are the effects of each social capital type concerning in-group and out-group outcomes. We already made some reference to different effect on information flows, levels of reciprocity, efficiency within the group, trust among individuals. It is therefore necessary to systematize and empirically investigate these relationships. Second, it is also necessary to operationalize social capital dimensions and types to build up a social capital index. This will not be an easy task as we know all the limits previous empirical studies dealt with. However we think that once a coherent theoretical framework is provided, it should be easier to deal with methodological questions and limits in the availability of data. This is of course a fundamental step also for the investigation of model's dynamics (Lollo 2012).

Conclusion

Social capital is an important factor in the competitive advantages of business organizations with the proper handling increases the efficiency of operations and whose absence prevents the long-term development of enterprises. An important feature of social capital is primarily

complementarity and coordination of other forms of capital, as other already established forms of capital does not take into account the interaction between economic actors. Social capital to be measured directly, but we have to make do with approximate indicators, such as confidence and the prevalence of NGOs. Social capital can exist in various forms, as well as its different sources, so the definition of social capital is difficult (many definitions). In the information-technological era is becoming the most important right connections or relationships between people based on mutual trust, social capital is one that promotes the formation of such relations.

Existing theories of competitive advantages mentioning some of the resources that are related to social capital, no it does not mention social capital directly. In the article I showed direct relevance of social capital for the competitiveness of enterprises. Social capital represents a competitive advantage through the organizations affected by a variety of factors. Social capital affects the knowledge, because it facilitates the development, transfer and sharing of knowledge and learning process (through the interaction of individuals, groups and institutions) as well as the impact on the efficiency and ability to implement successful changes in the organization. The primary factor (source and impact) of social capital is trust, which can be interpersonal, inter-organizational or systematically (trust in institutions and the system). Social capital promotes cooperation between individuals, between companies and other institutions, which means higher productivity and quality of work,

access to additional information, knowledge and resources and the sharing of costs. Investments in high-quality human resources, education, information technology, good relations and bring other financial and social benefits, encouraging progress, help prevent the negative consequences of a variable environment and thus enhance social capital, while social capital to encourage investment. The job search process and internal recruitment is linked to social capital, as the use of informal methods (social contacts, recommendations, acquaintances) gives businesses additional information and increases the chances for a better job with higher returns. Social capital promotes innovation, dissemination and absorption of innovation, enabling effective partnerships (between firms, industry, research institutes), based on trust and cooperation.

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