

SOCIAL CAPITAL, TERRITORIAL DEVELOPMENT AND PUBLIC ACTIONS



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ABSTRACT

For a better understanding and evaluation of public actions aimed at territorial development, it is essential to understand the concept of social capital and trust that sustain the relationships between individuals for the pursuit of a common interest. Different visions of territorial development that generate different forms of analysis in this area, and an approach to public actions aimed at the social, political and economic development of different communities. This text aims to bring elements that contribute to the understanding of the relationship between these topics, focusing on authors who make use of varied approaches on the subject.

Keywords: Social Capital. Territorial Development. Public Actions.

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INTRODUCTION

This article discusses the concepts of trust, social capital and territorial development, uniting them in a holistic conception of public actions aimed at development and which has been establishing itself as very influential, to the point of becoming the foundation of a new public policy proposal aimed at social development.

The analysis of various concepts on the topics in question allows us to analyze the relationship between them in a more comprehensive way. This relationship allows communities to establish bonds of trust, aiming at a specific development of a territory, influenced by the ways of working, the quality of life, in general, enriching a network of relationships that is established in a society.

Evaluating and analyzing policies implemented by a government, it is possible to highlight that factors of different nature and determination are important. In the case of public policies, these factors can be considered as guiding territorial development, as the power of the state is directly linked to this development.

To this end, this article makes approaches that open discussions about the influence of the state in the process of territorial development and the way in which social capital is analyzed, always seeking the relationship with possible public actions.

SOCIAL CAPITAL AND TRUST

The term social capital began to appear to show that individuals do not act alone, or with selfishness, but the opposite, they form a large network of relationships between their actions and their objectives, thus demonstrating the need for a relationship between them, and that these relationships generate a type of profit, called social capital, this idea can be confirmed by Fukuyama (1999, p.1), who defines social capital as "[...] an informal instantiated norm that promotes cooperation between two or more individuals", being further reinforced when Coleman (1990, p.302 apud Abramovay, 2000, p.4) teaches that:

Social capital is not a single entity, but a variety of different entities that have two characteristics in common: they consist of some aspect of a social structure and facilitate some actions of the individuals who are within this structure.

These theories show us that social capital is profitable, because it is perceived that objectives are achieved when there is a relationship between individuals, and that the opposite would happen if they acted individually, thus generating a need for cooperation, better illustrated by Abramovay (2000).

When, for example, farmers form a guarantee fund that allows them access to bank resources that, individually, would be denied to them, the relationships of trust between them and with the banks themselves can be considered as a social asset capable of providing income generation. (ABRAMOVAY, 2000, p.4)

Analyzing such definitions, it is necessary to understand that the key point of social capital is the relationship capacity between the members of companies, and their private interests, which due to being equal, become a mutual interest.

From this point of view, it is noted that the term social capital goes hand in hand with the concept of trust, that is, an individual to be able to share his interests with others in a society, he must establish bonds of trust and cooperativism, in order to establish the relationship of social capital. This idea is reinforced by Putnam (1996 apud CUNHA, 2000, p.51) when he considers that trust is a basic component of social capital.

It should also be taken into account that, according to Giddens, there are different environments of trust in pre-modern and modern cultures, thus showing a historical perspective of the concept.

[...] in pre-modern cultures, trust is excessively localized, and in environments of trust, the fundamental issues are kinship relations, the local community, religious cosmologies, and tradition. Whereas, in modern culture, environments of trust have as their general context abstract systems disconnected. Specifically, personal relationships, these abstract systems and future-oriented counterfactual thinking stand out. (GIDDENS, 1991, p.104 apud CUNHA, 2000, p.51-52)

Therefore, social capital is a resource for societies to use on a large scale, making it easier for them to discover new economic and social relationships. Putnam (1993/1996, p.178-179 apud ABRAMOVAY 2000, p.6) also points out that social capital serves as a kind of guarantee for those who do not have physical assets, with this, the participants commit their social relations, and is then used to expand the credit services available in the communities and also increase the efficiency with which the markets operate there.

TERRITORIAL DEVELOPMENT

The scope of territory is changing over time, what was previously analyzed only as geographic space, currently has much broader dimensions, such as culture, society, economy, politics, among others. The term territorial development is also no longer specific to an urban or rural area, and deals with the region as a whole, covering production processes and other relationships.

According to Delgado, Bonnal and Leite (2007, p.22):

[...] The discussion of territorial development involves the methodological consideration of three fundamental components: (1) the economic, social, political and cultural dynamics endogenous to the territory; (2) the predominant institutional architecture – the existence and conformation of state agencies and arenas and public spheres – and their influence on the way public policies affect the territory; and (3) the social processes and institutional mechanisms through which the territory relates to the "outside the territory", to the "rest of the world".

In most cases, development is directly linked to the territory itself, thus forming a process of dependence, that is, an activity only works if it is in the most favorable place for its practice.

The company is not an isolated innovative agent. It is part of the environment that makes it act. The past of the territories, their organization, their collective behaviors, the consensus that structures them are major components of innovation. Therefore, innovative behaviors are not national, but depend on variables defined at the local or regional level. (MAILLOT, 1996, p.256 apud ABRAMOVAY, 2000, p.7)

Still reinforcing this idea, Abramovay (2000, p.7) uses Silicon Valley on the North American West Coast as an example of technological innovation with a territorial character, and cites that this example "demystifies the idea that for technological innovation in the information age, location is unimportant" (CASTELLS, 1996, p.58 apud ABRAMOVAY, 2000, p.7).

The relevant understanding of these points is not only about verifying the results achieved in a quick analysis, but also about evaluating as a whole, the process of functioning of social relations that are achieved when there are several enterprises installed in the same region and with the same objective. This mutuality can be seen positively, because due to this, there is an exchange of information, appreciation of the territory, cooperative environments, mutual concerns and interests, and also the emergence of actions and services that are indispensable to the quality of life in the region in question, forming a secure basis for the development process.

Abu-El-Haj (1999, p. 68 apud CUNHA, 2000, p.53) says that:

The optimization of physical-economic capital and human capital is achieved to the extent that relationships of trust and reciprocity increase in the community. In other words, in two or more communities in which the educational level of the people and the material resources offered are constant, what distinguishes the performance of its members is the established trust, which allows collective mobilization and maximization of existing individual resources. The capacity for action is increased in situations where trust permeates a collectivity (or association), facilitating the optimization of the use of available socio-economic and human resources.

Therefore, the relationship between territorial development and social capital can be perceived. The forms of relationship between organizations are similar to those of social capital, that is, in both cases there is a union of particular forces for a common good.

PUBLIC ACTIONS, TERRITORIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL CAPITAL

When the expression public action is used, it should be remembered that it is about actions carried out by social actors and also by the State, in this case, public policies, in this sense, Höfling (2001, p.31) says that:

[...] public policies are understood here as those that are the responsibility of the State – as to the implementation and maintenance based on a decision-making process that involves public agencies and different organisms and agents of society related to the implemented policy. In this sense, public policies cannot be reduced to state policies.

From the moment the topic of social capital arises, it can be considered that it refers to a type of public action, as a social grouping is necessary to effectively configure a social capital. The state comes as a regulator of this grouping, defining its focus.

With regard to public policies, they establish the creation of external conditions on which the development of the territory depends, such as access to technologies and technical assistance to local producers, provision of public services (health and sanitation), adequate supply of transport and energy infrastructure, as well as quality public schools nearby. We then have what configures a type of relationship between the terms cited.

For example, in the case of an INCRA (National Institute of Colonization and Agrarian Reform) Settlement Project, where a territorial extension suitable for banana production is defined. INCRA needs a number of families to join the Project, these families form an association of producers, to obtain greater power of persuasion when resorting to the agency for better incentives. There is a formation of social capital to resort to mutual interest, in this case, better incentives for banana planting, it is also perceived that the area where the Project is located is conducive to the cultivation of bananas, therefore, it tends to become a center of banana production, developing specific techniques for this plantation, cooperation between farmers for better use of production, that is, a characteristic environment is created for territorial development. The fact that the workers organized themselves and an association also characterizes a public action, as it is aimed at a common development, while INCRA acts as a public body regulating the procedures related to that Project, such as incentives, land regularization and inspection of the

cultivation activity, and can also encourage communication between different Settlement Projects, thus establishing a network of relationships that can expand territorial development and also use other types of production, thus forming new bonds of trust and cooperation between economic sectors.

Abramovay (1998, p.13 apud CUNHA, 2000, p.57) states that "development projects will have a greater chance of success the more they are able to extrapolate a single professional sector". And he also says that territorial development "is based, above all, on the formation of a network of actors working to enhance the attributes of a certain region" (ABRAMOVAY, 1998, p.13 apud CUNHA, 2000, p.57).

Abramovay (2000, p.11) states that "territorial development is based, above all, on the formation of a network of actors working to enhance the attributes of a certain region". It is precisely this network of actors that seeks to achieve the objectives of a community inherent to development, it is no use forming an association that waits for external investments, but an association that seeks these investments, which will generate external interests in local productions.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Therefore, based on a systemic analysis of the aspects mentioned in the text, the relationship between social capital, territorial development and public actions is necessary when the objective is to obtain homogeneous development. It was possible to verify that regional or territorial diversity influences the levels of trust and therefore influences the social capital generated by the community in question.

It is important to emphasize that the article dealt with the relationships between the terms, because if we were to analyze this development more deeply, then we would realize that the different development processes could generate a much wider range of interests, and that these would overlap the initial interests, thus generating a variety of different cases subject to specific analysis. which is not the objective of this study.

Public policies have a role of great importance in territorial development, but they cannot be seen as being the main agents of this development, their role is restricted to creating mechanisms that facilitate the quality of life in societies and also that strengthen the territorial networks formed, such as the definition of a development project for certain territories with multiple direct management actions and focused on a certain beneficiary,

the creation of new markets that highlight regional capacity, thus forming more comprehensive networks of relations.

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