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SUSTAINABLE PROSPERITY AND HUMAN POTENTIALS

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ABSTRACT

Sustainable prosperity is a new concept combining various principals such as providing basic needs, dignity, life satisfaction and happiness. It is an indicator used to measure and evaluate social progress among communities. In fact, the purpose behind the aggregation between the terms of sustainability and prosperity is the rehabilitation of the environmental strength and health system while providing an effective comfort and welfare system to the human being. In this paper, we explore the impact of human potential on reaching and achieving a high level of prosperity. We discuss, also, the evolution and automation effect on the improvement of human potentials and driving the "thinking out of the box" concept in the youth and young generations.

INTRODUCTION

Global evolution and sustainable development consist, on a large scale, on human prosperity. The wellbeing and the improvement of life quality are considered an important criterion for achieving a better existence. The term "prosperity" has been the focus of various researchers due to its tight relation with the wellbeing of individuals; the concept has been constantly changing through the years, thus its difficulty to be defined. According to Cowling (2009), prosperity is the state of flourishing, thriving, good fortune or a successful social status [¹]. Traditionally, prosperity is related to wealth and often considered as an economic measurement or as an interpretation of economic growth. But the concept of prosperity should also include other factors related to spiritual satisfaction such as happiness and health.

In a different perspective, prosperity can be measured as the optimal balance between the economic power, health index and happiness or spiritual gratification of a population. According to Gottlieb, Roger S. (2003), human prosperity has different meanings regarding cultural and religious factors. For example, in Buddhism, prosperity is defined as a combination of collectivism and spirituality which is completely different from a capitalist perspective [²].

In general, human prosperity can be considered as multi-criteria defined concept. These criteria are difficult to measure due to their difference in nature and the metric system, in fact, the criteria have different features. Some are quantitative - example: economic growth - and others are qualitative - example: happiness. Moreover, the criteria have conflicting effects on the prosperity. For example, longer hours of work might result in an increase in certain measures of economic prosperity, but at the expense of driving people away from their preferences for shorter work hours.

Recently, prosperity is viewed from a different point of view. In fact, the new formulation is often linked to sustainability or sustainable development. The new concept is known by the name of "sustainable prosperity" which is based on the principal of providing basic needs, dignity, life satisfaction and happiness. The purpose behind this combination is to restore Earth's systems to gain full health and to prevent their degradation in the future.

This new form of considering human prosperity requires a big power and willingness to change; various modifications should be implemented to achieve the aim of sustainability. According to Fritz and Koch (2014), actions concerning economic, social and environmental development should be taken into consideration in form of a hybrid processing system. For example, refracting the global economy, shifting the distribution of wealth, changing the growth-centric system, prioritizing the creation of green jobs, rethink the basic management of vital sectors such as agriculture, transportation and urban planning.

POTENTIALS AND PROSPERITY

Recent research and academic studies regarding ecological economics and social sciences interpret prosperity beyond economic growth. It did even create a designed concept based on a three-dimensional perspective: *ecological sustainability, social inclusion, and the quality of life* [³]. In fact, economic growth and competitive force are not the only

goals perused by organizations. Nowadays, every company is required to follow and respect the international regulations concerning the environment and social development and prosperity. Sustainable development is becoming a reality which raises various questions about the potentials and capacities of organizations and communities to meet a sustainable prosperity.

The first step for an individual to achieve a sustainable lifestyle is to realize his or her potential to make the difference and start the change journey. The biggest problem, in my opinion, preventing humans, organizations and institutions to recognize and grasp the power of their potentials, is the lack of interest in self-discovery. In fact, organizations are always looking for different ways to develop their economic status and thinking about strategies that will help them achieve greater and higher level of success without looking first at their own human power and potentials [4]. The motive behind this search for improvement is often to survive in this fast-growing and dynamic market. But despite their efforts, some organizations lack the true sense of professional and social satisfaction.

In my opinion, there are several factors to consider that prevent and hold people back to realize their potentials. They can vary from financial to confidence problems or even cultural issues. In fact, since his first years of childhood, the human being starts a journey of discovery. The preschool and primary schools are rich environments filled with experiments and search for success and personal potentials but as an adult the spirit of creativity and adventure become absent. The responsibilities, life choices and pressure impact the ability and the curiosity of recognizing new potentials. Moreover, the professional environment, social conventions and cultural environment have a big influence on the way we accept our present state as a final one.

In another perspective, human prosperity can be imagined differently according to the cultural and financial background of each individual. For example, a person coming from a modest financial environment considers a job with a steady salary enough to reach satisfaction. There is always a comparison exercise between each generation regarding the quality of life. This index is usually the icebreaker that makes the human being decide if he/she should work harder to discover new potentials or to accept his/her current state.

The lack of a creative environment is also a huge barrier holding people from realizing their potentials. Many big companies that are now ruling the world did start with a couple of dreamers experimenting their hidden potentials. Hewlett-Packard Company (Created by engineers), Starbucks coffee chain store (Created by two professors), Facebook, Amazon, etc are products of ambition and creativity of their owners. This courage and perseverance is an outcome of a cultural spirit of research and development and also a state of mind accepting failure as a possibility and not the dead end of a path.

Other factors can be described as specific aspects of each case. The characteristics of an environment reflect on the wiliness of a human being as a subject to self-discovery and potential searching. In Morocco, for example, laziness is one of the factors impacting the discovery of potentials. The comfort of a stable salary is very appreciated in the society and it is even an index of success in life on both social and economic levels. There is a lack of desire for innovation and entrepreneurship spirit.

There are also other factors contributing in this recess and laziness such as lack of *confidence; Support and Justice; Financial aid; Guidance and good management; Planning and forecasting; Decision making.*

EVOLUTION, DEVELOPMENT AND THINKING OUT OF THE BOX

There is a noticeable difference between millennials (GenY) and other generation. Nowadays we observe a difference in the way of thinking. New technology has played a huge difference in the improvement and the evolution of the concept of prosperity versus quality of life and development. Various criteria have changed, creativity is becoming a source of wealth and success. Jobs such as Youtubers, Bloggers and Travelers, Community managers, App developers are becoming not only a reliable source of income but also a different way to practice a hobby as a job. This new way of business represents the perfect balance between economic success and happiness.

Of course, there is a difference between developed countries like European countries and USA and mid and low-income countries where the human force is still appreciated as the main base of economic growth. But the digital open source characteristic of the new way to do business is erasing boundaries between the two worlds. A community is no longer defined by race or geographical position but with a common interest and shared curiosity.

Technology and, more precisely, automation can also be considered a contributor to the degradation of prosperity due to its important role in causing job loss. In fact, the majority of the great inventions in the last centuries were created and designed to reduce and replace the expensive and inconsistent human labor [⁵]. For example, in agriculture industry, tractors were designed to reduce mechanical work of employees; in manufacturing, assembly lines aimed to enhance the irregularity of human handwork by introducing the perfection of algorithmic processing and in logistics, computer programmed processing (ERP software) has been deployed to cut costs and improve time management [⁶]. These inventions did get a huge success; organizations are no longer imagining work without an automated workplace. But, despite the rise of this new digital and automated era, the fraction of employment in the labor market is higher now compared with the rates in 1890 where the manufacturing was based only on human handwork. These two facts are creating a paradox situation, machines are increasingly eliminating handwork jobs but the employment index is still in good shape. According to Autor (2016), the atomization has generated the reduction of human labor. For example, the new arrival of ATM (Automated Teller Machines) did reduce the employment of human tellers, but in the other hand, banks realized that is cheaper to open new branches to reach more customers which did have a positive influence on the labor force. In fact, the nature of the job has altered from simple money exchanges to a specialized customer care and commercial services. This change influenced the economic value of the tellers' jobs and made it a crucial link to both sides: the bank and the customer. As a result, the implementation of the automation and the use of digital technology did enhance the importance of the human being as an expert, judge and a creative entity.

The automation generates the "thinking out of the box" principal. The effect of job loss urges the people to improve their skills and knowledge to be always in a superior state in comparison with the machine.

On a national level, the economic environment is divided into types of regimes. In general, the transition to an advanced a complete automation is not yet a reality. The cheap labor force and the local policy are still quality criteria and a steady factor influencing the national and the multi-national companies to invest in Morocco. The high price of machines and maintenance costs are still a barrier preventing small and medium organization to switch to fully automated process.

CONCLUSION

The fast-changing world has definitely an impact on human prosperity. The concept itself is a dynamic aspect constantly changing to adapt to the new needs and requirements of the market, the community and the society. Each generation has its own idea of prosperity and the meaning of life quality. The advancement of science and increased use of robots will definitely have an impact on the way we live and view happiness. It is a double-edged sword that may result in making human workforce obsolete.

In order to reach a decent life quality, humans are required to think out of the box and search for new ways to be productive and discover their hidden potentials.

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