The Relevance of Systemic Approaches in Business Sciences: Last Words on the Special Issue for the 2nd B.S.Lab Symposium, Rome 2014

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Our times are characterized by intense changes in the viable logics of markets and, generally speaking, of business systems. Business scenarios today are typified by connectivity, dynamism, nonlinearity, and emergent behaviors - in other words by “complexity” (Dominici, 2012). Reductionist models are unable to completely depict, or to allow us to totally understand the new business scenarios. Today, more than ever, it is necessary to recognize the need for a paradigm shift that can carry science beyond the analytical reductionist approach, and towards a more comprehensive systemic perspective.

Systems thinking can be critical to unlock new perspectives and enhance holistic views for a better understanding of the dynamics of social and business systems. In the last decades we have witnessed a paradigm shift in the managerial approach from the whole/part model to the systemic-environmental approach. This shift initiated the epistemological shift in social sciences in the fields of sociology, management and economics (Pitasi & Dominici, 2012).

The concept of alleged stability of the business context, has proved to be a fake illusion by the evidence of continuous rapid changes in society, organisations and markets (Dominici & Palumbo, 2013). This, does not mean totally rejecting all the breakthroughs that the reductionist approach has brought to business science, but it does mean going ahead and being conscious that the analytic method alone is not sufficient for obtaining a deeper insight on complex trends.

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