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Part I

Research is Development

Research is Development

Multidisciplinary Conference of Ph.D. and Ph.D. Students

5 June 2020

Marco Chiappa

Vice-President Comitato per la Valorizzazione del Dottorato

Theme of the year 2020

The multidisciplinary perspective of research.

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Background, Research gap and Objective

This conference takes up the ambitious challenge of highlighting the positive exchange between scientific knowledge.

Even if the Academy is characterized by disciplinary specialization, only rarely analysis and application developments do not need other forms of knowledge or do not involve other scientifically qualified context.

Have approved both research works developed by multidisciplinary groups and sectoral works that considered further studies, scenarios and application cases with a multidisciplinary development.

Method

The call for the conference was announced on November 2019. The deadline to submit the abstracts was on 31th of January 2020. There have been 8 abstracts approved, each subject to 2 peer reviews. As a consequence of the Sars-CoV-2 emergency, we decided to conduct the conference online, via Facebook and YouTube accounts. Each applicant has prepared a video presentation of their work that was uploaded on YouTube 5 days before the conference which took place on the 5th of June 2020. The conference focused primarily on the debate about the online presentations, with the contributes posted by the followers on Facebook and YouTube. Between the full papers submitted before the conference, 4 have been selected for this specific publication and again subjected to 2 peer reviews.

Full program of the 5th of June 2020 Conference

- Institutional welcome commenced by reading of the letter from the Italian Ministry of the University and Research, prof. Gaetano Manfredi, with Marco Chiappa, Fulvio Musto and Francesca Gasperoni.
- Interview with prof. Marco Simoni, President of Human Technopole Foundation
Moderators: Marco Chiappa and Giulio Formenti
- The multidisciplinary perspectives of scientific thought
 - Raffaele Ariano - Specialization, education and social conversation. What multidisciplinary applies to philosophy, humanities and the arts?
 - Eugenio Petrovich - Uncovering the Social Networks of Scientific Fields by the Analysis of Acknowledgments in Academic Publications

Speakers: Raffaele Ariano and Eugenio Petrovich

Moderator: Leonardo Manfrini

- The multidisciplinary perspectives of inhabited space
 - Emanuele Garda - The dimensions of density: readings and interpretations of a multidisciplinary concept
 - Alessandra Migliore and Chiara Tagliaro - Collaborative spaces: from physical to hybrid. Organizational, spatial and relational crossover for new ways of working

Speakers: Emanuele Garda and Alessandra Migliore

Moderator: Alessio Franconi

- The multidisciplinary perspectives of the food style
 - Barbara Aiolfi - Fresh and cash: how markets change the value of goods. Ethnographic research of the food chain in Tanzania
 - Roberto Pippi and Livia Buratta - An innovative multidisciplinary intervention to prevent and treat child obesity: the EPODE Umbria Region OBesity Intervention Study (EUROBIS)

Speakers: Barbara Aiolfi and Roberto Pippi

Moderator: Paola Di Pietro

- • The multidisciplinary perspectives of the engagement
 - Andrea Ciceri and Giulia Songa - Neuromarketing meets the art of label. How cards and ennobling details affect the purchase of wine
 - Samuele Martinelli - Investigating the role of Word Embeddings in sentiment analysis

Speakers: Andrea Ciceri and Samuele Martinelli

Moderator: Davide Tosi

The main themes emerged

The realm of complexity of the contemporary era needs different approaches in order to be understood and analyzed. For this the multidiscipline should be a tool that a researcher can use whenever necessary to answer their research questions. “I think a social scientist should be guided

by their questions and therefore have as many tools as possible to answer those questions” said Marco Simoni during the conference, and this approach is true for all types of researchers in every discipline. Moreover, the multidiscipline should be an increasingly used organizational model, where many different experts can work together on the same research, each one contributing to improve – with their competences – being the general result. Therefore, if the multidiscipline doesn’t want to become another closed and self-referential discipline, it should first of all be a method.

The work system within and outside universities, repays quicker those who are very specialized and sectorial because it is easier to recognize and evaluate their work contribution, especially in the humanities, and because the scientific journals are organized by disciplines and based on the mentions within that specific scientific community itself, as the analysis of Eugenio Petrovich highlighted. Unfortunately, in this contest, much research doesn’t arise from a real research question but from the limited tools that the researcher possesses, and this sectorial approach for Marco Simoni is one of the main reasons that we have lost public confidence in the experts. However, in many types of research the importance of the multidisciplinary is so essential that it is appreciated also in academy, even if sometimes the multidisciplinary takes the risk of becoming self-referential. In this regard, during the conference it was stressed by Raffaele Ariano the importance of the not academic knowledge (non-disciplinary knowledge) for the researcher and how to distinguish those erudite knowledge - based for example on the peer review and bibliographic analysis – from the non-professional.

The discussion was definitely multidisciplinary in the conference, when debating on the concept of density, also applied to new collaborative spaces which, due to the pandemic, have become central also in the public debate. As the pandemic induced lockdown has made clear to everyone, the space in which we live and work has impacted on different aspects of our life. For this reason it is necessary for us to embrace a multidisciplinary perspective to answer questions about the impact that changes to our relationship with space will have on our work, on our creativity, on our social and private life, on our physical and psychological health. In her article “Collaborative spaces: from physical to hybrid. Organizational, spatial and relational crossover for new ways of working” Alessandra Migliore and Chiara Tagliaro suggest a multidisciplinary literature exploration as interpretive scheme of the collaborative spaces, which can be useful in various research and professional fields. Smart-working transforms our home into a collaborative space, and to analyze the impact factor of this change on the people, their work and their relationship it is necessary to adopt a multidisciplinary approach. This also applies to public space and with respect to density both inside and outside the cities: as Emanuele Garda said during the conference, the longer the pandemic lasts, the more we will change our relationship with space.

The pandemic has demonstrated the importance of the multidisciplinary in many other sectors, starting with the health sector. To contrast the diffusion of SARS-CoV-2 has seen the collaboration of experts from various sectors: doctors of different specializations, data scientists, communication and political scientists, economists, sociologists, psychologists, etc. Therefore, it is not surprising that the debate at the conference adapted the themes of discussions in a new way.

The limits of individual and sectorial approach about the health were evident also before the pandemic, but now this awareness is certainly more widespread. In their article “An innovative multidisciplinary intervention to prevent and treat child obesity: the Epode Umbria Region OBesity Intervention Study (EUROBIS)”, Roberto Pippi and Livia Buratta explain the positive effectiveness of a multidisciplinary équipe able to consider medical, nutritional, motor, and psychological aspects to prevent and contrast the childhood obesity. It is an approach that helps us consider health as something that goes beyond medical and individual aspects. During the conference, the debate on the multidisciplinary approach to correct food habits was developed also by Barbara Aiolfi about the particular situation in Tanzania. In Africa, she said, the problem of the nutrient is connected with the urbanization of the city, because the commerce of the food is really

unstable and the main products are not always available everywhere, especially in the big cities. Sustaining local and traditional food habits with the support of agronomists, anthropologists, sociologists and linguists can help the people to conserve a more regular and healthier nutrition rather than encouraging the diffusion of western products and of centralized distribution. Moreover, it would require support from urbanologists and economists to reorganize the distributions to the people and of the food commerce.

How to redirect economic behavior of the food commerce was also debated by Andrea Ciceri and Giulia Songa, in a completely different context. In the article “Exploring role of wine label adopting the neuromarketing method” they analyze the behavior of consumer reactions to wine bottle labels. Using instruments of neuromarketing it is possible to discover also unconscious behavior of consumers, complimenting information collected by traditional studies of economists, psychologists and sociologists. The role of technical instruments to analyze and to understand the behavior of people and the level of their engagement is exposed in the research of Samuele Martinelli: “Investigating the role of Word Embeddings in sentiment analysis”. In this article the role of the multidisciplinary is fundamental, particularly because the techniques of sentiment analysis can be used to analyze conversations on social networks with varied points of view and with an interesting range of topics and discipline. It would be possible, for example, to recognize automatically a bullying conversation, misleading advertising, positive conversations about sustainable food or fake news on the SARS-CoV-2.

Full papers selected for this publication

- Alessandra Migliore and Chiara Tagliaro - Collaborative spaces: from physical to hybrid. Organizational, spatial and relational crossover for new ways of working
- Roberto Pippi and Livia Buratta - An innovative multidisciplinary intervention to prevent and treat child obesity: the Epode Umbria Region OBesity Intervention Study (EUROBIS)
- Andrea Ciceri and Giulia Songa - Exploring role of wine label adopting the neuromarketing method
- Samuele Martinelli - Investigating the role of Word Embeddings in sentiment analysis

Final remarks

How the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic has demonstrated, and in order to analyze complex phenomena adopt a multidisciplinary approach is essential. Most researchers say that the multidisciplinary mustn't become another disciplinary and it should first of all be a method. However, to preserve the multidisciplinary against the risk of becoming closed and self-referential as a new discipline – with a self-referential bibliography and their experts –, it is important that researcher consider it not only a method, but a fluid dimension of space and time, where different subjects, knowledge and instruments are continually free to alternate among them to answer the questions that the analysis of constantly changing and concatenating complex phenomena requires.

Through following this approach this conference was born and will continue to convene in the future. Research is development, and both are multidisciplinary.

Research is Development – Full Conference

The single contributions of the authors and the discussions at the conference are available online at this address

<https://www.comitatodottorato.org/eventi/ricercaesviluppo/>

or on Youtube channel of the Committee

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC9DBKRcy326AmPScbvdvuw>

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