NAVIGATING AGENCY IN TIMES OF SOCIETAL CHANGE: HOW INDIVIDUALS DEFINE THEIR SPHERE OF ACTION

GIUSEPPE CATENAZZO
GLION INSTITUTE OF HIGHER EDUCATION

ROCHAT DENIS
UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES AND ARTS WESTERN SWITZERLAND (HES-SO)

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Study purpose
To explore how individuals facing societal transformations define their perceived sphere of action and locate meaningful possibilities for action across personal, collective and institutional levels.

Relevance / originality
Integrates established agency and behavioural perspectives to explore how individuals delimit their own sphere of action and locate meaningful action across different actors and levels.

Methodology / approach
Retrospective cross-study synthesis of five qualitative studies comprising 292 semi-structured interviews, using thematic re-analysis to identify recurring patterns and variations across different contexts of societal change.

Main results
Individuals appear to define a perceived sphere of action based on capacity, expected effectiveness and willingness, while locating meaningful action across personal, collective, organisational and institutional levels.

Theoretical / methodological contributions
Proposes an integrative perspective linking established agency and behavioural constructs, introducing perceived sphere of action and, tentatively, agency allocation through a cross-study qualitative synthesis.

Social / management contributions
Highlights how individuals distribute perceived possibilities for action across personal, collective and institutional levels, with implications for designing policies, organisational responses and change-management initiatives

Keywords: Societal Change, Agency allocation, Perceived efficacity, Adaptation, Qualitative study