Innovation Models and Rural Regions

Policy and Research in Community Investment

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Introduction

- Three models of innovation:
  - Regional Innovation Systems
  - Triple Helix
  - Social Fields

- Case study approach on the Northern Peninsula of Newfoundland
  - 22 interviews of government, industry and community representatives
  - Previous study on Social Network Analysis

- Investment Implications
New Regionalism

- Integration
- Place-based development
- Rural-urban interdependence
- Multi-level collaborative governance
- Innovation and knowledge flows
Models: Regional Innovation Systems

- Emerges out of National Innovation Systems (Lundvall)
- Importance of region based on:
  - Tacit knowledge
  - Social capital
  - Right scale for innovation policy

Source: Centre for Urban and Regional Development Studies 2012
Models: Triple Helix

- Neo-corporatist compatible with neo-liberalism
- Political, scientific and economic (power, truth and money)
- Interaction of knowledge, market forces and the state
Tri-lateral networks and hybrid organizations

Source: www.leydesdorff.net
Methodology

- 22 in-depth semi-structured interviews
- Government, College, NGO’s and businesses
- Action Research approach
Models: Social Fields

- Innovation as a relational phenomena
- Networks of actors, knowledge flows and interconnectivity
- Need for context sensitive models
- Social Fields highlights innovation in cultural, social and territorial contexts
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Criteria</th>
<th>Triple Helix</th>
<th>Social Fields</th>
<th>Regional Innovation Systems</th>
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<td>Relationships</td>
<td>Neo-corporatist</td>
<td>Multi-field Social relations</td>
<td>Dualistic System</td>
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<tr>
<td>Key Players</td>
<td>1. Government</td>
<td>Context driven Social Field specific</td>
<td>Knowledge Support System; Production system</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2. Industry</td>
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<td>3. University</td>
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<td>Spatial Scale</td>
<td>Non-spatial: Cluster/Sector Regional/National</td>
<td>Relational Turn local and global</td>
<td>Regional Focus Global Pipelines</td>
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<td>Investments/Points of Intervention</td>
<td>Knowledge generation upsets equilibrium</td>
<td>Social Field or network building focus at multiple scales</td>
<td>Invest in KP related to local production Alignment</td>
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Findings – New Ideas

- Where do ideas come from?
  - Over reliance on local ideas
  - But some connections externally

- Exposure to new ideas seen as critical
  - Connections to marketplace – (e.g. tourism operators understand world class sites through travel; fisheries connection to Japanese markets)

- Mixed in terms of connections to knowledge support infrastructure
Our Network – where we look for ideas

Legend

- Eddies Cove East to Castors River South
- Eddies Cove West to River of Ponds
- Goose Cove East to North Boat Harbour
- External
- Main Brook to Englee
- Other/No Response

Innovation network

Core

Periphery < 3-5 times number in core
Findings: What is needed to foster innovation?

- Reach out to external knowledge support
- Attract educated young people with new ideas
- Define innovation as new to the region
- Improved regulatory environment
- Access to private capital
- Better collaboration and networking (coffee shops, meeting places)
- Stronger municipal government
- Better transportation networks
- Better alignment of programs and research to community/business needs
Findings: Collaboration

- Generally perceived as good
- However “collaboration of facilitators and not doers”
- Models: Right players not at the table together
  - Post-secondary, industry and government
Government CED NGO's

Academia

Industry

Skogseid and Strand (2011)
Knowledge Flows and Learning

• Most self describe as learning organizations
• However not much in training budgets except in government
• Often informal learning from experience
• Survival mode limits formal evaluation
• Evaluation is a centralized function in governments
Findings: Investments

- Broadband and cell coverage
- Financing: private capital
- Training and skills development
- Research into new products
- Building better points of intersection and networks
Models and the Periphery (1)

- Social fields offers promise for understanding periphery
  - Takes relationships seriously (e.g. family, community and external dimensions)

- RIS and triple helix: heuristics for empirical research
  - But weaker on the social dimensions
  - Systems approach misses agency
  - Both stress that the importance of networks
Models and the Periphery (2)

- Research in the region is very limited
- Looking for more knowledge infusion
- External connections beyond the region are critical
- Leaning and knowledge flows often neglected
Some Next steps

- Incent government, industry and university/college to form trilateral networks
- Fisheries, forestry and tourism collaboratives
  - Starting point: discussion groups and events
  - Social Network Analysis and network weaving
- Reach out to knowledge support infrastructure external to the region
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