
Reflections on BRICKS Research

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Social Innovation: Trajectory



- Social Entrepreneurship
 - Micro-Level
 - Individual 'Hero' focus
- Social Enterprise
 - Mezo-Level (hybrid markets)
 - Organization focus
- Social Innovation
 - Macro-Level
 - Multi-level mapping
 - Systems focus

Social Innovation: Dimensions



- Mind-Set
 - Cognitive frames recognising complexity and multiple levels of action across a system
- Process
 - Systems 'mapping'
 - Diagnosis of issue/problem/strategic objectives
 - Collaboration
- Outcome
 - Systems change
 - Likely partial, incomplete, and temporally limited

BRICKS



- **B**uilding
- **R**esearch
- **I**nnovation for
- **C**ommunity
- **K**nowledge and
- **S**ustainability

BRICKS *for* social innovation

BRICKS *as* social innovation

BRICKS: SI Dimensions



- Mind-Set
 - Opportunity for leveraging innovative research/teaching/outreach collaborations as 'greater than the sum of the parts'
- Process
 - Mapping existing activity across universities
 - Community engagement
- Outcome
 - Proposals for enhanced research collaboration and community impact: this is Phase 1

BRICKS: Multi-Level Mapping



- Systemic Level
 - Cultural norms, traditions, and incentive structures that mediate/block collaboration
- Institutional Level
 - +/- Behaviours of internal stakeholders towards collaboration
- Practice Level
 - Contours of frontline capacity to collaborate to create impact

Levels are not distinct but interrelated

BRICKS: Categories of Analysis



- Endogenous
 - Action
 - Research
 - Teaching
 - Actors
 - Individuals and Ecosystems
- Exogenous
 - Networks
 - Knowledge Exchange/Community Engagement

Relationships between both categories?

Dialectics of Social Innovation



- Academic 'Home'?
 - Business and Management
 - Policy
 - Development Studies
 - Sociology
 - 'Hybrid'?

Institutional Legitimacy Is Key

- Methods
 - Qualitative/Quantitative/Mixed
- Pragmatic
 - Where to publish?
 - Student/stakeholder demand

BRICKS: Findings



- Systemic - Need For:
 - Better definitional clarity
 - Enhanced mechanisms of knowledge sharing
 - Increased research funding Impact-led tenure track
- Institutional - Need To:
 - Embed core curriculum/training programmes
 - Greater access to social/impact finance
- Practice - Need For:
 - Greater empowerment of individuals
 - More effective community engagement

BRICKS: Systems Analysis



- Mapped the social innovation education 'system' in HK
- Used a multi-level – hierarchical – model to organize evidence as a heuristic
- Identified key actors and relationships across the system
- Identified key road-blocks and institutional spaces/opportunities
- Suggested inflection points
- Proposed practical solutions

CRESSI Project



- **Creating Economic Space For Social Innovation**
- EU funded project, 4m Euros, ran 2014-18
- 8 universities in 7 countries
- Research objectives
 - To explore the *economic* underpinnings of social innovation in the EU
 - How do they restrict/enhance marginalised communities
 - Particular focus on policy and practice

<https://www.sbs.ox.ac.uk/research/centres-and-initiatives/skoll-centre-social-entrepreneurship/creating-economic-space>

CRESSI: Theoretical Model



- Multi-level 'systems' model
- Brought together three distinctive elements in a novel synthetic model
 - Beckert's Social Grid model (Macro-level)
 - Mann's analysis of institutional power structures and their enactments (Mezo-level)
 - Sen's Capabilities Approach (Micro-level)

<https://www.sbs.ox.ac.uk/research/centres-and-initiatives/skoll-centre-social-entrepreneurship/creating-economic-space>

CRESSI: Work Streams



- Build new economic theory for social innovation
- Link social innovation to technological innovation
- Analyse social innovation ecosystems and lifecycles
- Analyse the effects of social innovation projects at the grass-roots
- Propose new policy agendas
- Establish best practice metrics for capturing the impacts of social innovation

<https://www.sbs.ox.ac.uk/research/centres-and-initiatives/skoll-centre-social-entrepreneurship/creating-economic-space>



Social Innovation 'Aeroplane'



- Fuselage
 - Collaborative networks that work: effective dialogues
- Wings
 - Incentives and commitment mechanisms: planning/good governance/communication
- Passengers
 - Key stakeholders need to be 'on board'
- Navigation System
 - Build a clear and coherent research proposition
- Fuel
 - Capitals: Financial, Human, Intellectual, Social

Conclusions



- BRICKS project
 - Important first step in mapping the social innovation education landscape in HK
 - Identifies gaps and opportunities in the ecosystem
 - Builds social capital across communities of research and practice
 - Sets out next steps
- Phase 2 will be needed to take key recommendations forward and maintain momentum
- There is a significant opportunity here!