

Meso Level as an Indicator of Knowledge Society Development

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ABSTRACT

This paper studies the nature and the importance of the link between macro and micro levels of innovation management in the knowledge society of Denmark, Sweden, USA, India, Russia, and Moldova, suggesting that countries with different levels of knowledge society development have different link types between the macro and micro levels of innovation management. In particular, findings show that countries with a higher level of knowledge society development have a two-way mediation process between the micro and macro levels of innovation management while countries with lower level of knowledge society development tend towards a "one-direction" link. This paper argues that innovation management can only be fully effective through paying attention to this intersection, which is free of biases inherent in each individually. The authors conclude by introducing a "meso-level" indicator for knowledge society development and underline areas of further research in the field.

Keywords: *Innovation Management, Knowledge Society, Macro and Micro, Strategic Programs, Sustainable Development*

INTRODUCTION

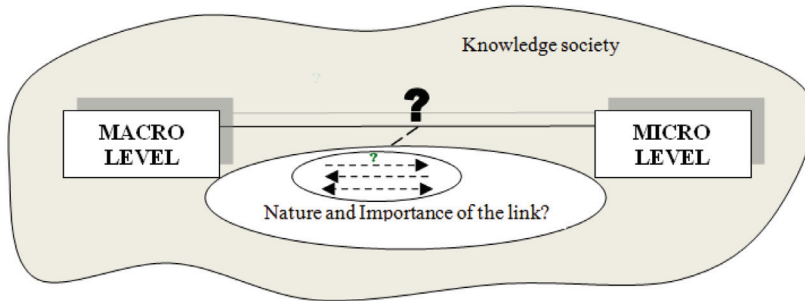
In this paper we address a number of questions related to the problems of innovation management in knowledge society development. What makes innovation management so important for sustainable development of the knowledge society? Does the macro level of innovation management presented at government initiatives and programs for research and development solve the problem? Alternatively, should the problem of sustainable knowledge society development be left at the micro level of organizational innovations and organizational

capacity for new knowledge creation? Although both the micro and macro levels are clearly important, we suggest that the answer comes most of all from the intersection of these levels which serves the profitability of both.

The macro and micro levels of innovation management have been studied by many authors including Porter, Nonaka and Takeuchi, Dovila, Senge, Bell, and Toffler (we will refer to some of their contributions later). However, the intersection of these two levels, the mechanism of their connection and its influence, has scarcely been studied. We argue that this is often the reason why even the best innovation strategies of private sector and the most ambitious government projects underachieve.

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Figure 1. Innovation management in the knowledge society



This paper studies the link between the macro and micro levels of innovation management and underlines its particular importance for successful knowledge society development. According to the research framework of the paper presented above, we formulated our main research questions as following:

- *What are the nature and the importance of the link between the macro and micro levels of innovation management in the knowledge society?*
- *How do these levels communicate in countries having different degrees of knowledge society development?*

The conceptual scheme of the research is presented in Figure 1.

The paper is organized as follows. The first section describes the macro and micro levels of innovation management in the framework of its two main domains: theoretical and practical. The second section reflects on the nature and the main types of the meso level of innovation management. A research model is constructed which compares the degree of knowledge society creation in Denmark, Sweden, the USA, India, Russia, and Moldova. This model shows the type of link between the macro and micro levels of innovation management in these countries. After this analysis, a discussion of the results is provided. This is supported by some examples illustrating the nature of the intersection link in these countries. The paper

concludes with the arguments elucidating on the importance of the meso level of innovation management and suggests avenues for future research in the field.

THE MACRO AND MICRO LEVELS OF INNOVATION MANAGEMENT

Innovation Management in the Knowledge Society

The process of *innovation* is defined as the development and implementation of new ideas by people who over time engage in transactions with others within an institutional context (Van de Ven, 1986). The definition of *innovation management* implies managing the factors that facilitate and inhibit the development of innovations (Van de Ven, 1986). However the above definitions describe the process of innovation creation in a very general way and, consequently, are dependent on the level and context to which they are applied.

In this paper we define several levels of innovation management applied in the context of new knowledge and innovation creation. We refer to innovation management at the *macro level* as a macro economic framework realized in various national and international programs and initiatives of innovation and new knowledge creation assisting in the successful development of a knowledge society. Such programs as “Electronic Europe” and the “Lisbon Strategy” of the

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