Transitioning from an economic to a broader social impact: a case study of a Swedish university

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Case study aim

- Contribute to the literature on the roles of universities in regional development
  - Issue of transition from one model to another

- Questions leading this study:
  - (i) How does the literature define the roles of universities?
  - (ii) Which of these definitions is applicable to LiU?
  - (iii) What disparities exist between the case and the theoretical models in the literature?
Method

Data

- Literature on the case (1996-2012)
- 3 additional interviews (2017)
- Secondary data from the web (municipalities’ websites, etc.)

Analysis

- Using the theoretical framework of Uyarra (2010)
- Finding similarities and disparities

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Linköping University’s region

Linköping
- 153,000 inhabitants
- 5th largest city in Sweden
- Biggest employers:
  - Municipality
  - Region
  - Saab
  - University
  - Ericsson
  - Science Park Mjärdevi

Norrköping
- 135,000 inhabitants
- 9th largest city in Sweden
- Paper industry
- Campus of LiU since 1990s
- Science Park Norrköping

Östergötland County
- 4.5% of the population
- Economic activity mainly agricultural

Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Counties_of_Sweden
The University

1960s: branch of Stockholm University
1975: 6th public University in Sweden

Today:
4,000 employees
27,000 students (2,000 from abroad)
4 campuses
4 faculties:
  • Faculty of Arts and Sciences
  • Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences
  • Faculty of Science and Engineering (Institute of Technology)
  • Faculty of Educational Sciences

Source: https://liu.se
How does the literature define the roles of universities?

### Table 1. Summary: roles, determinants and engagement modes of universities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Knowledge “factory”</th>
<th>Relational university</th>
<th>Entrepreneurial university</th>
<th>Systemic university</th>
<th>Engaged university</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Main role of universities</td>
<td>Production of scientific knowledge</td>
<td>Exchange of knowledge</td>
<td>Active commercialization role</td>
<td>Boundary-spanning role</td>
<td>Developmental role</td>
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<tr>
<td>Main unit of analysis</td>
<td>Innovation outputs</td>
<td>Linkages</td>
<td>Intermediaries (e.g. TTOs)</td>
<td>Systems/networks</td>
<td>Spaces of governance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Main partners/beneficiaries</td>
<td>High-tech firms located in proximity to universities</td>
<td>Large manufacturing firms</td>
<td>Large manufacturing firms Spin-off firms</td>
<td>Regional clusters Regional SMEs</td>
<td>Regional stakeholders</td>
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<td>Unidirectional (implicit)</td>
<td>Bi-directional (implicit)</td>
<td>Bi-directional (explicit)</td>
<td>Triple-helix (universities, industry and government)</td>
<td>Responsive</td>
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<td>Industrial surveys</td>
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<td>Surveys of university TT managers</td>
<td>National and regional innovation surveys Case studies</td>
<td>Case studies</td>
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<tr>
<td>Key factors influencing impact</td>
<td>Research intensity/inputs</td>
<td>Structural factors (size of firm, age, sector, R&amp;D intensity)</td>
<td>Organizational structures/forms</td>
<td>Regional system configuration</td>
<td>Number and synergies between universities</td>
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<td>Geographical proximity</td>
<td>Innovation strategy</td>
<td>Managerial practices Faculty behaviour/incentives</td>
<td>Regional policy Institutional capacity of universities Institutional arrangements are important to ensure linkages</td>
<td>University leadership Joined up policies/ incentives</td>
<td>Joining up of universities missions and other policies at different levels</td>
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<td>Policy implications</td>
<td>Co-location of firms and universities. Increased funding for research</td>
<td>Some links should be promoted vis-à-vis others Intermediaries and organizational arrangements/incentives are needed to ensure links</td>
<td>Institutional arrangements are important to ensure linkages</td>
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Which of the definitions is applicable to LiU?

The Systemic University

Examples of Triple Helix Collaboration

- Science Park Mjärdevi
- Creation of Campus Norrköping and Norrköping Science Park


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The Engaged University

Examples of Penta Helix Collaboration

- HELIX Competence Centre
- East Sweden Business Region


What disparities exist between the case and the theoretical models in the literature?

Some elements seem uncovered by the models:

• An innovative mind-set (e.g. interdisciplinary approach)
• A historic strategic alignment with regional stakeholders

But seem to tend toward the Engaged model

Some elements of the Engaged model seem difficult to verify:

• LiU’s strategic partners remain the public and private sectors (Triple Helix)
• “workforce development” (Breznitz & Feldman, 2012)

> LiU seems in transition from the Systemic to the Engaged model
Discussion

Transition seems to be undertaken in response to external expectations:

- What is the real added value for the university when they implement such a change?
- Is it relevant for the university to meet the expectations of so many stakeholders?
- Does this detract from its core missions of education and research?

- Suggestions for future research:
  - Additional interviews from regional stakeholders, in particular the civil society, to complement the picture
  - Comparative studies with other European universities
Thanks for your attention

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