Building Networks Between Communities, Extension and Researchers

David O’Brien
&
Jana Porter

Division of Applied Social Sciences
University of Missouri-Columbia
Columbia, MO 65211
USA
obriendj@missouri.edu

Presentation Outline

• The New Institutional Inter-Disciplinary Approach

• The McQuinn Center as Facilitator

• Bethany Project
  – ExCEED Program
  – The Survey Research Training Program
A New Institutional Approach to Community-Extension-Researcher Networks

New Institutionalism and Building Networks

To understand the difficulties in establishing these networks we need to look at:

How…

• Institutions
• Organizational design/governance structure; and
• Incentives

Affect the relationships between different sets of actors?
New Institutionalism and Building Networks
• Institutions define the “rules of the game”
• Generating specific incentives or disincentives for individual behavior

• What happens when the environment changes but a strong incentive still exists for traditional behavior?
  – Organizational ineffectiveness

• How do we strengthen?
  – Focus on the relationship between:
    • Institutions
    • Organizational structure; and
    • Incentives

Institutional, Organizational and Incentive issues between Extension and Researchers
Traditional incentive structures that inhibit collaboration…

Extension:
• Valued within the organization:
  – Concrete practical programming & evidence that programming is effective
vs.

Researchers:
• Valued within the organization:
  – Publications in peer reviewed journals & contribution to body of knowledge in their field
Traditional Relationship

- American societal value in “pragmatism”
- Embedded into the organizational structure of Land Grant Universities

• Possibility for new relationship: long-term to address economic development issues

New Relationship: Benefits

- Access to “real world” populations
- Overcoming the “guinea pig” problem
- Programming based on a solid empirical foundation
- Scientifically-based system for providing feedback on various strategies
The Role of the McQuinn Center in Building Networks

- Created and Environment that was conducive to collaboration
  - Issues pertaining to organizational design/governance structure & incentives discussed *a priori*
  - Reduces transactions costs & maximizes complementary strengths
  - Much simpler language
  - Truly interdisciplinary approach to rural and agriculture entrepreneurial development
  - Increases opportunity for funding & makes collaboration appealing to all parties

Bethany Project

- Community Survey to determine development strategy and readiness of community

The Players:
- Bethany, MO
- ExCEED
- The Survey
- Research
- Training Program
The Bethany Project-The Process

1. Involvement of Bethany Chamber of Commerce by ExCEED-relationship building
2. Identification of community to be surveyed-Discussion with McQuinn participants
3. Identification of problem statement-how different segments feel about community development
4. Development of methodology and data collection methods
5. Resolved sampling and resource problems through networking with the community
6. Development of research questions & draft of questionnaire for review by the community

Some Practical Benefits of Network Building

Obtained three valuable assets that are essential to the success of scientific work:
(a) Access to research subjects – e.g., interviewing low income respondents at the Food Pantry
(b) Access to resources – i.e., the high school students who conducted surveys, as well as advertising about the survey in the local newspaper and radio station; and
(c) Refinement of sampling and indicators that produced a better empirical product
Findings from the Bethany Survey & Implications for Development

• Value living in rural community
  – “support from my friends and neighbors” and “being part of a rural community” received the highest ratings (4.29 and 4.28, respectively on a scale of 1-5).

• Strong motivation to invest in economic stability

Table 1
Satisfaction with Different Sectors of Community Life by Population Sub-Samples (N= 209)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sectors</th>
<th>Total Sample (N=209)</th>
<th>Business/Community Leaders (n=68)</th>
<th>Low Income (n=27)</th>
<th>General Population (n=114)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Job Re-Training a</td>
<td>3.16</td>
<td>2.84</td>
<td>3.48</td>
<td>3.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic Development b</td>
<td>2.63</td>
<td>1.97</td>
<td>2.95</td>
<td>2.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Services c</td>
<td>3.58</td>
<td>3.40</td>
<td>3.30</td>
<td>3.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future of the Community d</td>
<td>3.55</td>
<td>3.28</td>
<td>3.29</td>
<td>3.77</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Means of Responses on a scale of 1-5, with 5 being most satisfied.

a ANOVA F(2)=7.826, p < .001; Scheffe – Leaders < Low Income (p<.05) & General Population (p < .001).
b ANOVA F(2)=8.415, p<.001; Scheffe – Leaders < Low Income (p < .01) & General Population (p < .001).
c ANOVA F(2)=4.279, p<.05; Scheffe – Leaders < General Population (p < .05).
d ANOVA F(2)=6.622, p<.01; Scheffe – Leaders < General Population (p < .01)
Findings from the Bethany Survey & Implications for Entrepreneurial Development

- Entrepreneurial development might be perceived by the community as “Costly”
- Challenges in developing community support for entrepreneurship development

Table 2. Level of Support for Specific Community Development Goals by Total and Sub-Groups in the Local Community (N=209)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>C. D. Goals</th>
<th>Total Sample (N=209)</th>
<th>Business/Community Leaders (n=68)</th>
<th>Low Income (n=27)</th>
<th>General Population (n=114)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Animal Processing Facilities</td>
<td>2.83</td>
<td>2.50</td>
<td>3.44</td>
<td>2.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large Scale Farms</td>
<td>2.94</td>
<td>2.97</td>
<td>3.28</td>
<td>2.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increasing Population Diversity</td>
<td>3.31</td>
<td>3.56</td>
<td>3.83</td>
<td>3.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tourism</td>
<td>3.51</td>
<td>3.55</td>
<td>4.07</td>
<td>3.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organic Farm Assistance</td>
<td>3.37</td>
<td>3.58</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>3.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase Cultural Activities</td>
<td>3.63</td>
<td>3.90</td>
<td>4.19</td>
<td>3.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bio-Fuel Development</td>
<td>3.77</td>
<td>4.05</td>
<td>4.23</td>
<td>3.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attracting New Residents</td>
<td>3.93</td>
<td>4.21</td>
<td>4.35</td>
<td>3.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alcohol/Drug Treatment</td>
<td>3.98</td>
<td>4.02</td>
<td>4.48</td>
<td>3.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small Farm Assistance</td>
<td>4.26</td>
<td>4.16</td>
<td>4.34</td>
<td>4.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retaining Young People</td>
<td>4.04</td>
<td>4.16</td>
<td>4.48</td>
<td>3.73</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Means of Responses on a scale of 1-5, with 5 being highest level of support.

- ANOVA F(2,196) = 6.450, p < .05, Scheffe – Leaders & Low Income > General Population (p < .05).
- ANOVA F(2,196) = 6.540, p < .05, Scheffe – Leaders > Low Income + General Population (p < .05).
- ANOVA F(2,196) = 5.734, p < .01, Scheffe – Leaders > Low Income + General Population (p < .01).
- ANOVA F(2,196) = 6.594, p < .05, Scheffe – Leaders & Low Income > General Population (p < .05).
- ANOVA F(2,196) = 4.404, p < .05, Scheffe – Leaders & Low Income > General Population (p < .05).
- ANOVA F(2,196) = 6.680, p < .01, Scheffe – Leaders & Low Income > General Population (p < .01).
- ANOVA F(2,196) = 4.561, p < .05, Scheffe – Leaders & Low Income > General Population (p < .05).
- ANOVA F(2,196) = 7.527, p < .001, Scheffe – Leaders & Low Income > General Population (p < .01).
- ANOVA F(2,196) = 7.527, p < .001, Scheffe – Leaders & Low Income > General Population (p < .01).
- ANOVA F(2,196) = 4.561, p < .05, Scheffe – Leaders & Low Income > General Population (p < .05).
General Observations

• The sectors of the community whose interests (or preferences) are most closely aligned are the most and least economically and educationally advantaged groups.
• Low-income rank tourism quite high—may seem as providing them opportunities in the service sector
• Development may need to include informational campaigns on:
  − Entrepreneurial development (Show benefits & build support for strategy)
  − Make Connection between diversity, openness, creativity and entrepreneurship
  − Raise awareness of seriousness of local problems. (Get people on the same page)

Conclusion & Future Collaborations

• Need to Create a win-win-win institutional and organizational environment for communities, extension and researchers
• Deal with values, incentives and network relationship issues up-front
• The next phase in the McQuinn Center Project:
  − Employing the McQuinn and ExCEED team to build empirically based models of successful regionally-based entrepreneurial networks
data

David J. O’Brien, Ph. D.
Professor Rural Sociology
obriendj@missouri.edu
http://web.missouri.edu/~obriendj/

Jana L. Porter
Department of Rural Sociology
Graduate Student & ExCEED Intern
jlt4yd@mizzou.edu

ExCEED Program
http://extension.missouri.edu/CEED

Bethany Project Data
http://web.missouri.edu/~obriendj/BethaneyMO_master_June