13 Entrepreneurship: New Means of Support for Community Colleges

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13.1 Introduction
The modern community college is finding a number of new challenges and opportunities in achieving an ever-broader mission and curriculum. As suggested in much of the literature, the national commitment towards life long learning and the education of at risk students is at the core of the 21st Century community college mission ( Vaughan 2000).

Technology as well will likely play a major role in modifying the modern community college. Distance education and on-line instruction are likely to expand as a result of the practicality and convenience of this curriculum to community college students. Outside competition into community college districts is likely to occur as for profit and corporate organizations attempt to capture this growing market ( Vaughan 2000). These competitions will likely lead public community colleges to be more flexible in their ability to offer curriculum to students and their dynamic schedules.

It’s suggested that technology and on-line instruction will likely make college districts and service areas less relevant in the information technology era currently developing within the higher education community. In a striking quote from Kershaw (1999), he suggest that in a “world of anyone with access to a computer, modem, and telephone line can take a course from anywhere else, the geographic basis of our community colleges is history”. Community colleges will likely have to modify their strategies and goals if they want to maintain and expand their student base within and beyond their existing college districts.

13.2 Local Dependence
The historic roots of the local dependence literature can be traced to the Marxian theorizing of David Harvey and Neil Smith. In Harvey (1982) and Smith’s (1984) work they detail the core themes that capitalist forces shape and drive the physical and social landscapes. One of the key linkages between the work of Harvey and the evolution of the local dependence literature is based upon uneven development and capital accumulation. The geography of capital tends to promote over accumulation in certain areas and thus produces unique patterns of uneven development (Harvey 1982). These processes as suggested by Harvey produce class struggle and the inevitable oppression of the working classes to access both physical and social spaces.

J. Gatrell and N. Reid (eds.), Enterprising Worlds, 165–176.
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Local dependence, as defined by Cox and Mair (1989), summarize that some elements of economic development is immobile and unable relocate and spread to other locations. This theory in itself often provides direct counter evidence to the process of globalization. This spatially fixed capital is often linked to social structures that drive the development at “places”, which cannot be produced at other locations. Demonstrating, to a large extent the linkage local dependence and certain socio-spatial structures, which limit the duplication of economic activities (capital) at different locations and scales. Local dependence often evolves from three attributes of sociospatiality which spatially constrain firms, people, and institutions.

These structures are listed below:

- A tendency for certain activities to be constrained to local territories, political boundaries, and commuting patterns.
- A tendency to immobility Local history, (family ties), fixed capital
- Wider geographical instability, uneven development, politics of scale, and devaluation (Cox and Mair, 1991).

A theme within the local dependence literature provides evidence suggesting that “places” and “localities” with their unique cultures and politics, still matter in the era of globalization (Markusen 1996). These observations help redefine a new politics of economic development as a competition between localities rather than conflict within them (Cox and Mair 1988, 1991). Communities try to promote cooperation and develop a sense of identity in attempting to position the community to compete for local investment, which benefits all in the “locality”. New politics are often linked by the following themes associated with the local dependence literature: (1) local cooperation and (2) competition regionally, nationally, and globally (Swyngedouw 1997, Cox 1997, 1995; Cox and Mair 1988).

13.2.1 Locality as Social Structure and Agent

Local dependence is often tied to set of actors; like firms, politicians, and people which are tied and dependent to place (Cox and Mair 1988). Cox and Mair (1991) suggest that in examining localities two different meanings need to be addressed relative to the terms of “agent” and “social structures”. Localities as social structures link a set of social relations to a particular scale like a city where concrete interest is defined. At this level a complex set of interactions between the actor(s) (person or institution) develops with the locality in developing the main theme of the study. As suggested in the literature, these processes and social relations can be highly influenced by forces from outside the locality. These scalar issues blur the social relations between local actors and state, federal, and global sources of capital. Consequently, the examination of “locality” as social structure focuses on the dynamic relationship between local and wider scale social processes.