The Occupational Mandate of an Innovation Intermediary: Influencing Innovation in the Digital Space

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Aims

To explore:

How and why does an innovation intermediary facilitate innovation in Wales?

What and why of innovation intermediaries

What: Innovation Intermediary brokers and transfers knowledge into the recipient organisation through the mechanism of a digital platform.

(Boudreau, 2010; Hossain and Islam, 2015; Kokshagina, Le Masson and Bories, 2017).

Why: Digital innovation intermediary market grows globally to be worth over 1.6 billion by 2025 (Markets and Markets, 2020)

Why? | Theoretical underpinning

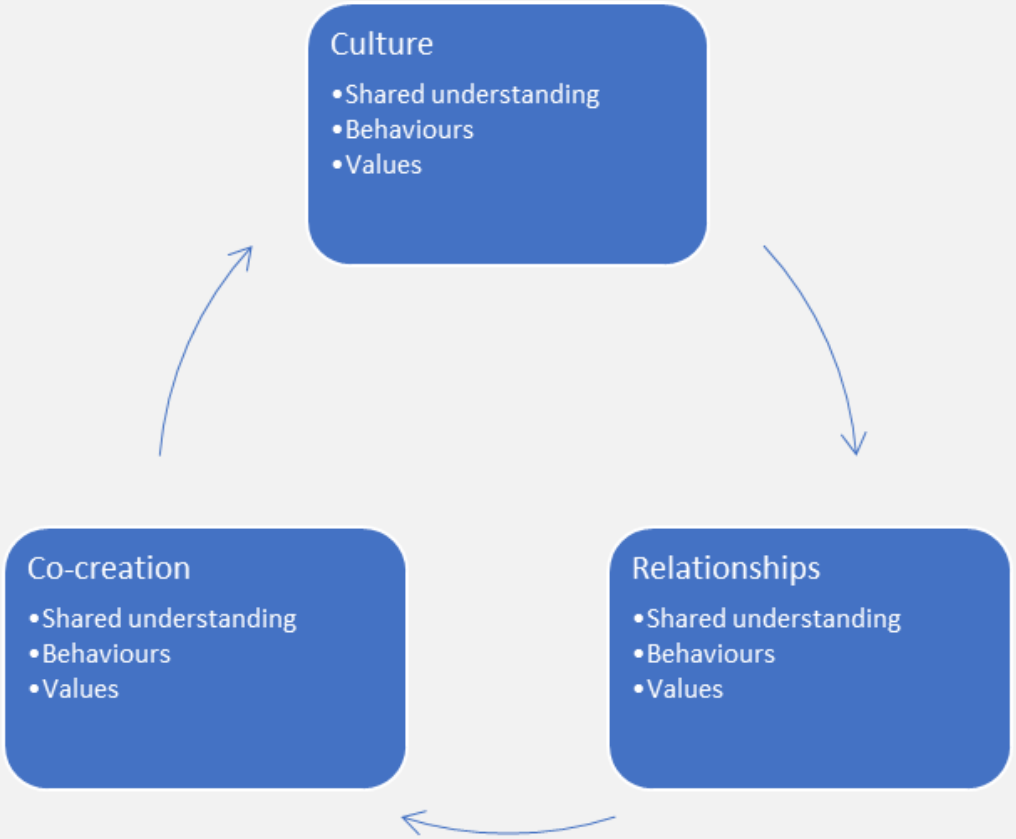
1) Innovation needs to be studied by”borrowing research techniques from other disciplines [including]… ethnography”. Hossain and Anees-ur-Rehman's (2016)

2) Opportunity to create an “occupational mandate” Fayard, Stigliani and Bechky (2017) to create further understanding of innovation intermediary.

3) Current literature focused on:

- Services provided by the intermediary (Aquilani, Abbate and Dominici, 2016)
- Benefits derived from the intermediary's services (Hossain and Islam, 2015);
- Challenges of working with intermediaries (Kokshagina, Le Masson and Bories, 2017)
- Perspectives of solution providers (Hossain, 2018).

Occupational Mandate: Conceptual Framework



Garud, Tuertscher, and Van De Ven (2013)

Research Context

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Ysgoloriaethau Sgiliau Economi Gwybodaeth
Knowledge Economy Skills Scholarships

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Methodology & Methods

1) Observational Case Study Methodology (Minzberg, 1973) - Physical and Virtual (Slack messaging system) Observations Captured

Martinko and Gardner's (1985, p. 676) widely used criteria for gathering ethnographic data:

- the method relies on observation by a person other than the subject;
- the method must rely on the use of category systems; and
- the method does not use randomized activity sampling procedures".

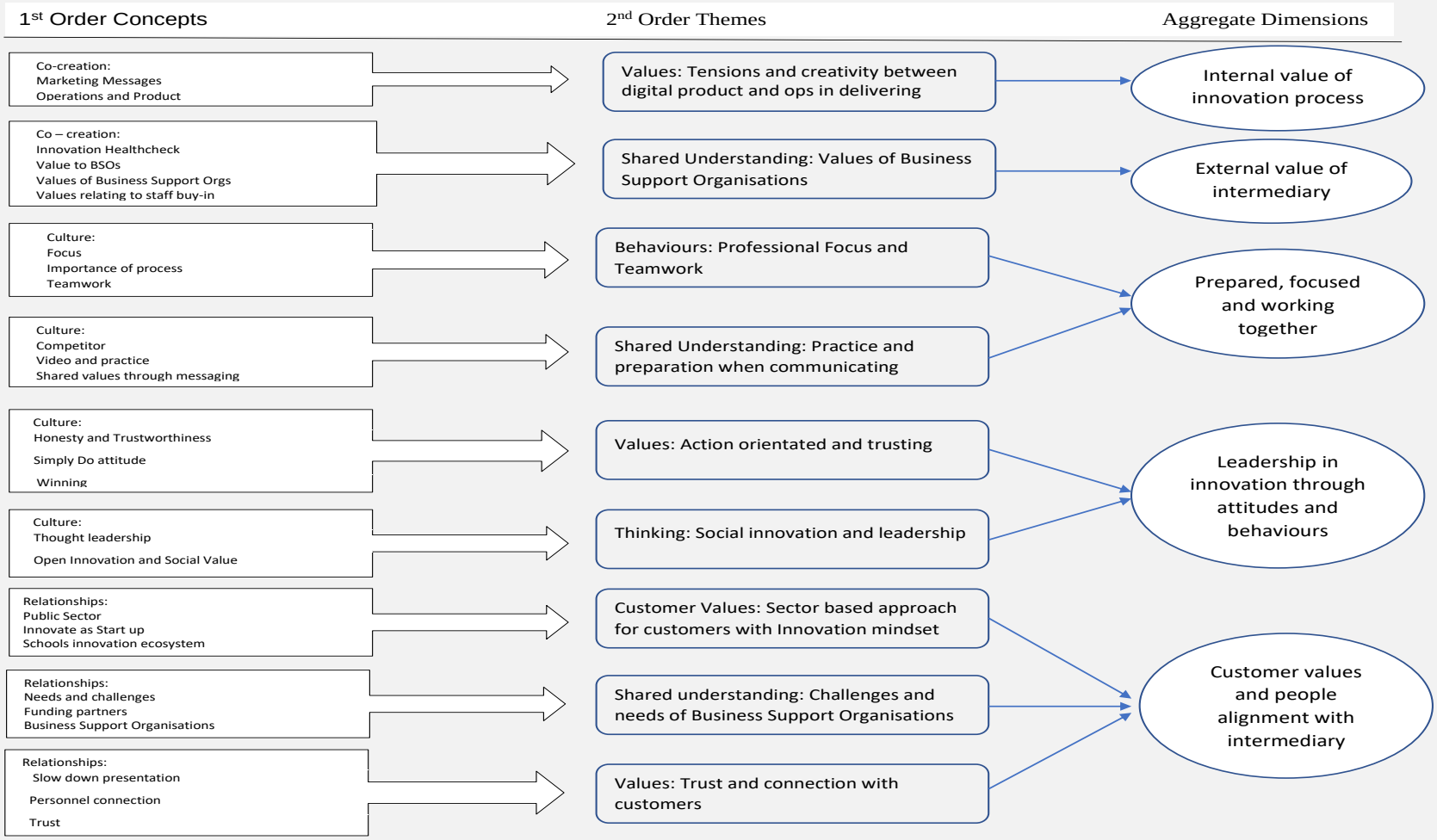
Spradley's (1980, p. 85) exemplar for recording data and uses categorisation of observations with factual data around the time, date, and participants involved, alongside the observed behaviours and motivations.

2) The Human-centred Design methods (IDEO.org, 2015)

3) Semi-structured interviews with innovation intermediary staff

Results & Data Analysis

Corley and Giola (2004)



1) Evidence: Observations

Culture: Leadership

"Great opportunity to be projected as thought leader by an influencer "

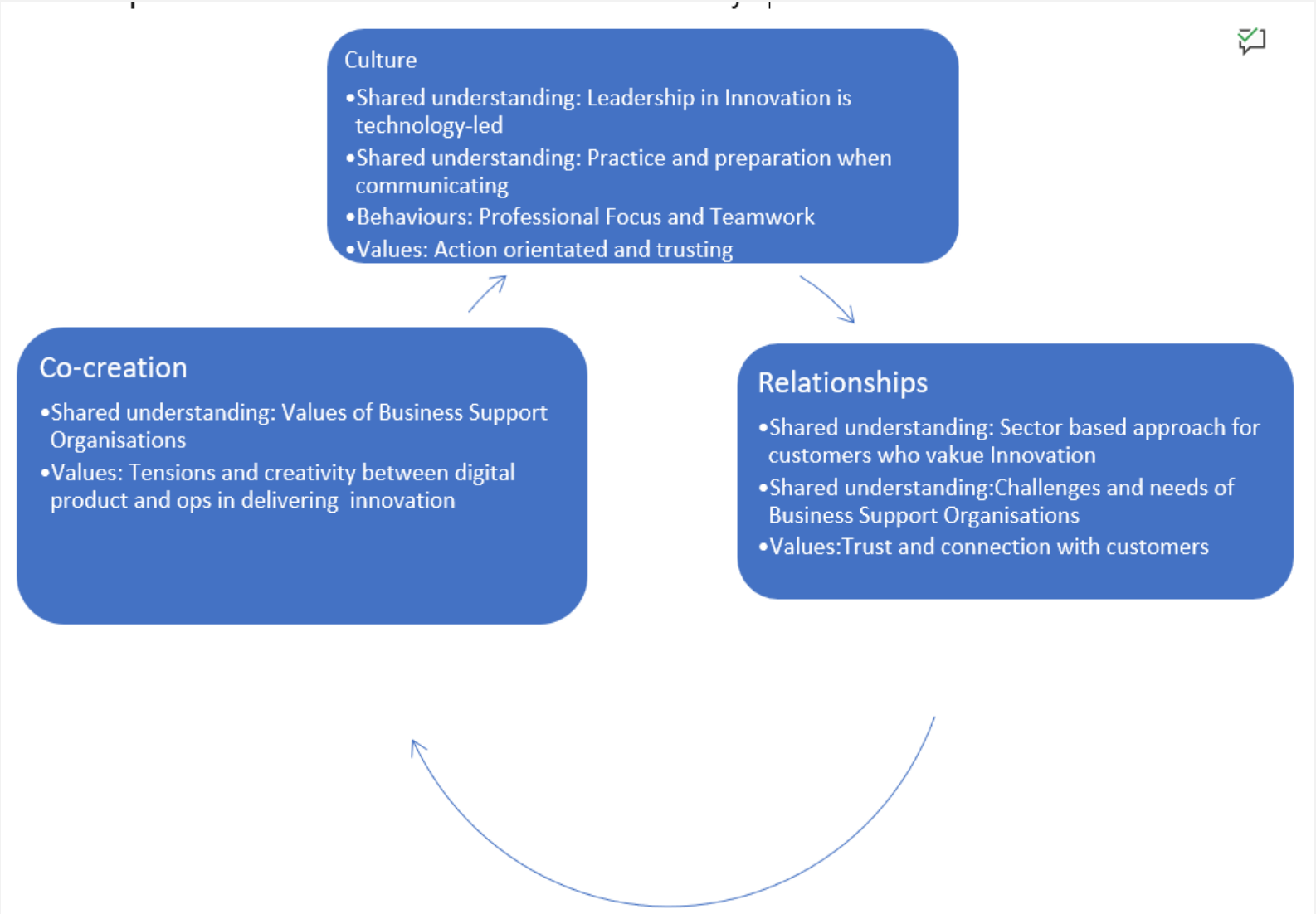
Relationships: Values influences innovators

"Public sector and corporate sector that behaves like the public sector"

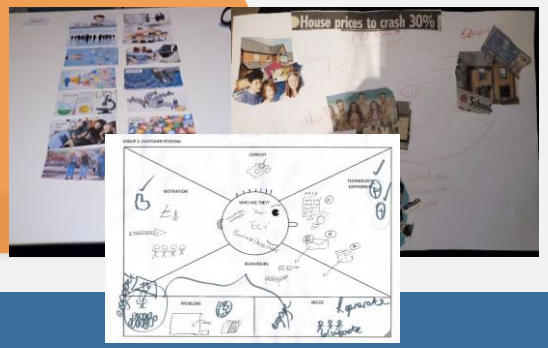
Co-creation: Technology influencing the process

"Our structured innovation process will reduce the time, cost and risk of innovation."

1) Observational Findings | Baseline



2) Evidence: HCD



Culture: Leadership through communication

> Communicating your ideas and speaking to people…listening to other people's ideas in order to build your own

Relationships: Importance of diversity

> Diversity in the collaboration is where it adds value, but also I think that the technology is the enabler of that diversity

Co-creation: Financial returns motivates collaboration

> "Everyone gets something from that particular collaboration as well"

2) Human-centred Design Findings | Evolution

Culture
- **Shared understanding: Leadership in innovation is people-led**
- Shared understanding: Practice and preparation when communicating
- Behaviours: Professional Focus and Teamwork

Relationships
- Shared understanding: Sector based approach for customers with an innovation mindset
- **Shared understanding: Knowledge diversity is important within the relationship**
- Values: Trust and connection with customers

Co-creation
- Shared understanding: Values of Business Support Organisations
- Values: Tensions and creativity between digital product and operations team in delivering innovation
- **Values: Intrinsic financial value should be present to enable collaboration**
- **Thinking: Strategic value to innovation is recognised**

3) Evidence: Semi-structured Interviewing

Culture: Leadership in innovation is people and technology-led

> "Technology can be an enabler and it can also be a disabler, so for someone who's not particularly savvy with technology"

Relationships: Values influences innovators

> "We're becoming rather product-driven rather than sector-driven; so we're solving a problem rather solving a particular, specific industry challenge."

Co-creation: Importance of digital product and people in delivering innovation

> "Collaboration between technology and humans, so not just looking at how I would work with someone else, but also how I would work with a piece of software"

3) Semi-structured Interviews Findings | Finalisation

Culture

- **(1)Shared understanding: Leadership in innovation is people and technology-led**
- Shared understanding: Practice and preparation when communicating
- Behaviours: Professional Focus and Teamwork
- Action orientated and trusting
- Values: Action orientated and trusting

Relationships

- Shared understanding: Sector based approach for customers with innovation mindset
- Shared understanding: Knowledge diversity is important within the innovation crowd
- Values: Trust and connection with customers

Co-creation

- Shared understanding: Values of Business Support Organisations
- **(2) Values: Importance of digital product and people in delivering innovation**
- Values: Intrinsic financial value should be present to enable collaboration
- Thinking: Strategic value to innovation is recognised

Conclusions

Culture: Current literature focused on:

- Technology outputs of innovation (Hossain and Islam, 2015)
- Matchmaking nature of the technology (Colombo, Dell'Era and Frattini, 2015; Kokshagina, Le Masson and Bories, 2017; Randhawa *et al.*, 2017),

New knowledge: technology leadership and facilitation as an essential part of the innovation process.

Co-creation: Current literature focused:

- Open innovation start-ups (Michelino *et al.*, 2017; Usman and Vanhaverbeke, 2017)
- SMEs (Spithoven, Vanhaverbeke and Roijakkers, 2013; Santoro *et al.*, 2018)

New knowledge: Importance of Business Support Organisations in the innovation process.

Conclusions

Limitations: Focused on one intermediary therefore the study is:

- Non-generalisable
- Proximity of the researcher to members of the intermediary
- Enhanced by comparative and quantitative study

Relationships: Current literature focused:

- Private sector economic values in innovation expressed by Bloch and Bugge, (2013);
- Public sector social values in innovation De Vries, Bekkers and Tummers, (2016)

New knowledge: Innovation intermediary's values are contradictory and can influence the relationship with the other partners in the innovation process and challenges

Feedback, Discussion, and Questions

Thank you