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30th RESER International Congress: Value Co-creation and Innovation in the New Service Economy

A European state-of-the-art of Public Service Innovation Network for
Social innovation

Céline Merlin-Brogniart¹

Lars Fuglsang, Ada Scupola²

Rolf Rønning, Siv Magnussen³

Alberto Peralta⁴,

¹Clerse-University of Lille, ² Roskilde University ³ The Inland Norway University of Applied Sciences ⁴ University of Alcalá

In the field of collaborative governance, governments tend to increasingly involve various actors to innovate in meeting social needs in terms of public services. This paper analyzes the key dimensions related to this type of governance in the scientific and grey literature of several European countries. Five research streams have been identified. One key dimension appears common to all countries: social entrepreneurship. Differences between countries are explained by the existence of different forms of welfare state.

1. Introduction and Context

Facing new demands of services from citizens and new challenges, governments are looking for solutions to continue to deliver public services while reducing their costs. One of these solutions is that public service activities are no longer automatically carried out by public entities, but are entrusted to private actors. Another trend comes from the third sector that offer solutions in response to needs that are unmet or insufficiently met by the market or the government; this is described as social innovation in

the literature¹. These initiatives lead to the networking of actors in order to develop innovative solutions. The objective of this paper is to identify the key dimensions at stake in the creation of social innovation stemming from collaborative governance aimed at public service through a survey of the scientific and grey literature from different European countries.

Each European country has had, according to its traditions, and depending on the power relations, a different construction of the notion of “public service” and consequently, a different public monitoring. The influence of the public sector in society has consequences on the development of collaborative innovations. This article contributes to a better understanding of the dynamics of public innovation. It provides an overview of the streams of research on collaborative governance on social innovation aiming at public service.

The article is organised as follows: Firstly, the notion of collaborative governance and public administration are explained. Secondly the methodology is described. Finally, a mapping of the research streams on Collaborative governance dedicated to Social innovation with a service public aim is proposed.

2. Theoretical framework

The theoretical framework of this paper is twofold. It is based on the one hand, on the understanding of the use of collaborative governance in the dynamics of innovation in public administrations and, on the other hand, of the impact of the welfare-state type on the form of collaborative governance.

Collaborative governance contributes to the evolution of models of public administration. This term refers to extensive conceptual frameworks rooted in the paradigms of public administration and democracy as well as in management practices (Emerson et al., 2011). Collaborative governance is far from being the only way of organizing public administration but lately, this mode of governance is becoming more widely used by governments looking for innovative solutions in response to the growing complexity of social problems. An increasing number of studies have recently focused on the innovation dynamics in public services (Djellal et al., 2013; Miles, 2013). These dynamics can be explained by the way in which the understanding of service innovation has spread to public administration: Contrary to the *traditional administration paradigm* which views innovation from the perspective of industrial rationalization of production processes, and of the *New Public Management* which follows this non-interactive logic of innovation but introduces market management techniques into public services, the paradigm of the *New Public Governance* changes perspective by introducing the principles of co-creation with internal and external actors and service management into public management (Desmarchelier et al., 2020). This change is fundamental because the concept of innovation is far more open than the other paradigms with its focus on non-technological innovation. This paradigm has contributed to increasing the prominence of collaborative innovation in public management to address societal needs, which is now gradually being promoted by governments.

¹ “Social innovations are new approaches to meeting social needs. They are social in their means and in their ends. They engage and mobilise beneficiaries and help to transform social relations by improving beneficiaries’ access to power and resources” (TEPSIE 2015)

The degree of State intervention in collaborative innovation networks depends on the country's history. In some countries, such as Nordic welfare states, a dominant public sector may be unwilling to give more responsibility to private actors. It is very likely that the historical relationship between the state and the economy has an impact on the management of social innovation. This is the reason why we use the work of Esping-Andersen (1990) to analyze the differences in collaborative governance between countries. This author used the concept of “welfare-state regime” to explain the relationship between the state and the economy through a set of interwoven legal and organizational features. He clustered three types of welfare states (liberal-market-based, corporatist-family-based and social-democratic-state-based) by taking into account the construction of social welfare policies and their influence on the general social structure. We assume that there are potentially differences in the development and modes of organization of collaborative innovation depending on the relationship between the state, the market and the family, as well as in the divergent evolutions of the welfare states of the countries.

3. Methodology

Following Esping-Andersen's insight, and to map the key dimensions of collaborative governance on Social innovation with a public service aim, five European countries with different welfare states have been selected: two Northern European countries from the social-democratic regime (Norway, Denmark), a country referring to the corporatist regime (France), a Southern European country (Spain) commonly referred to the corporatist regime but with a more familialist approach, and a country of the former post-socialist Eastern Europe (Hungary), whose configuration is not included in Esping-Andersen's clusters. A synthesis of the academic and Grey literature review reports from the selected countries² has been undertaken. To provide an overview on collaborative social innovation, these literature reviews used national scientific databases, available in the original language or in English, as well as grey literature on the most significant webpages and reports. The authors have conducted a PRISMA-inspired search to identify the most significant articles on the subject.

4. Mapping the research streams on Collaborative governance dedicated to Social innovation with a service public aim

By reviewing the cross-countries literature, common Research themes highlighting the different dimensions at play in collaborative governance related to social innovation with a public service aim have been identified. One research theme is common to all the countries (Social entrepreneurship). Other themes are predominant in most of the

² Fuglsang, L., Scupola, A., (2019), Merlin-Brogniart, C. (2019), Révész, E (2019), Magnussen S., Rønning, R. (2019), Peralta A. (2019).

countries (“Co-creation, co-production processes”; “collaboration with the civil society” or “modernization of the state”). Another theme “Public-Private innovation partnerships” is common to two countries. Finally, some topics are specific to one country but sufficiently analyzed to be reported (“territorial innovation”, “rural development”, innovative-commons”, “digital technologies”, “sustainable development”).

Social entrepreneurship is the main theme of research. The authors seek to identify the boundaries of this phenomenon and focus on the personalities of the actors forming this phenomenon. The literature highlights the novelty of this phenomenon and the growing interest that governments place in embedding this phenomenon, giving them a legal statutes (Richez-Battesti et al., 2012; Damvad Danmark A/S, 2012). The second dimension is **co-creation, co-production processes** (Denmark, Norway, France). Co-creation refers to the contribution of non-public actors or private actors to the welfare production in cooperation with various public sector actors to produce new ideas (cf. Enjolras, 2010 Hartley, Sørensen, & Torfing, 2013). Several terms are used to designate collaboration between actors, with specific expressions in some countries (collaboration “Samskabelse” – Danish literature, “Samskaping” – Norwegian literature). The cooperation of a plurality of actors to the development of social innovation allow convergence between the market, the State and civil society as well as changes in existing roles among policymakers, professionals and citizens (Harrisson, Vincent, Rollin, 2008). The theme of **collaboration with civil society**, associated with the topic of modernization of the state, is complementary to the previous one and reflects the government's willingness to embrace innovative processes. The main objective of co-operation with citizens or users is to overcome the difficulties encountered by the State in providing public services (Enjolras 2010). The literature of **Public-Private innovation partnerships** studies networks related to social innovation where collaboration focuses on knowledge sharing, development of ideas, common innovation. In these countries, public private networks include the full range of formal and informal collaboration agreements. Thus, they are closer to partnerships than to supplier-buyer relationship. The extra added value is obtained by combining the resources and complementary capabilities of public and private partners (Rankin, et al., 2017). It should be noted that this category can be seen as a sub-category of the category "modernization of the state" which exists in a majority of countries. Some **specific research streams** related to social innovation are at play in several countries: the notion of social innovation in territories encompasses different geographical areas such as territorial innovation (Moulaert et al., 2005), rural innovation (Szörényiné Kukorelli, 2015) or innovation commons (Higdem et. al. 2018); the notion of digital technologies, considered as a new way of delivering social innovation where an emphasis is placed on the role of technology (Kenesei et al., 2019); the notion of “sustainable development goals” which involved multi-actor networks that are "not limited to a single sector or field" (Mumford, 2002 in Cotec, 2016).

5. Discussions and Conclusion

The synthesis of the literature review of the five European countries revealed five streams of research that highlight the key dimensions of collaborative governance related to social innovation aimed at improving public service. The first result is the importance given in all the countries analyzed to embedding social entrepreneurship in these collaborative networks. This reflects the importance that the government places on these actors in the capacity to innovate and improve public services. Depending on the country's culture, social entrepreneurs may have strong incentives from the government to collaborate with public actors, or on the opposite, are the initiators and drivers of innovation. The Nordic welfare-state countries cover the largest number of dimensions of collaborative innovation. This can be explained by a culture for open innovation, but also a strong public sector that wish to provide leadership in collaborative governance. However there are also examples of the public sector being unwilling to invite private actors in, particularly in Norway. Other countries (the corporatist welfare-state such as Spain or France) have a stronger tradition of state governance. As a result, multi-actor social innovation arrangements or networks are primarily described as a solution for modernizing the state, reducing costs by sharing the financial and human resources and expertise of actors. In Hungary, the State is willing to control such multi-actor initiatives delivering public services. Successful innovation networks are reintegrated into government organizations.

There may be different ways of defining the dimensions of collaborative innovation in each country and we still need to share the vocabulary of social innovation focusing on public service because this vocabulary is specific to the history of each country, in which the forms of collaborative arrangements, the boundaries of social innovation, and the actors of social entrepreneurship are likely to differ.

Our synthesis of the literature review reveals the emergence of a new organizational modality, or even a new phenomenon based on social innovation networks and called by some authors public service innovation networks for social innovation. These networks are likely to become more important in the future in a context of growing social or societal issues.

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Authors

Céline Merlin-Brogniart
 Clersé
 Faculté des sciences économiques, sociales et des territoires
 Université de Lille, bâtiment SH2, 59655 Villeneuve d'Ascq Cedex
celine.merlin@univ-lille.fr

Lars Fuglsang,
 Roskilde University
 Building 25.3 P.O. Box 260
 DK-4000 Roskilde, Denmark
fuglsang@ruc.dk

Ada Scupola
Roskilde University
Research Group on Innovation, Service and Experience
Bldg. 25.3 Universitetsvej 1 DK-4000 Roskilde
ada@ruc.dk

Rolf Rønning,
The Inland Norway University of Applied Sciences
rolf.ronning@inn.no

Siv Magnussen
The Inland Norway University of Applied Sciences
siv.magnussen@inn.no

Alberto Peralta
University of Alcala
alberto.peralta@edu.uah.es