

SESSION 6.3 (GRASSROOT INNOVATION)

Below The Radar Innovations' Within 'Health Regions': Innovations And Property Rights In Sowa Rigpa Medicine In India

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Abstract: This paper analyses the innovation system within the Sowa Rigpa medicine in India focusing on both the institutional as well as non-institutional interactions among the agents contextualized in its unique historical trajectories of development. Sowa Rigpa or Tibetan medicine is the latest entrant to Indian Health system. Beyond the usual complex medical science and technology led definitions of innovation, the paper traces the 'pathways' of creative innovations and the informality in interactive learning platforms in indigenous medicines, where the transfers of knowledge becomes a part of livelihood and cultural protection. The data is compiled from the fieldwork of Ladakh, dharamshala and Darjeeling. While the world of innovation is very much research oriented and patent dependent, we connect these *below the radar innovations* to the international scene where, a larger attempt for property right creation and industrial production is imminent. This analysis brings forth the possibility of placing the contemporary health innovation system within the regional innovation analysis (we call it 'health regions') but largely to be alerted against the transnationalization of knowledge and the hijacked rights of the owners.

Patents and grassroots innovations: rethinking intellectual property rights in the informal sector

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Abstract: This paper aims to explore the role of intellectual property rights (IPR) for informal sector innovations with special reference to grassroots innovations in India. Drawing on the literature on patents and innovations in the formal sector, we examine whether the theories and rationales which promote IPR can stimulate innovations in the informal sector too. In India, grassroots innovations represent informal sector innovations and the management of their intellectual property is one of the main activities of National Innovation Foundation (NIF). IPRs as an institution have supported innovations by firms and industries which have a large market and resources to commercialise their products. Grassroots innovations on the other hand represent a

culture of individual innovators who innovate out of adversity and needs, most of whom are unaware of IPR. By conducting interviews with grassroots innovators and collecting patent related data of grassroots innovations from secondary literature we seek to explore whether the current institution of IPR could provide same set of incentives and motivations to the informal sector innovators as it has to certain industries in the formal sector. The study finds that most of the grassroots innovators are unaware of these rights or the process of filing patents and also consider the entire patenting process very complex to understand.

Grassroots Innovations and road ahead

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Abstract: The grassroots innovators and some of who will become entrepreneurs may be themselves or through supporting organisations create space in the international market for their products and services. Globalisation and its significances so far have not been very accommodating to the people from disadvantaged regions. But there is no inevitability of such consequences. The informal economy employs the majority and largest proportion of people who suffer from various socio-economic disadvantages. The problems become more severe in economically depressed regions or where despite richness of natural resources, enough opportunities for value addition or reduction of drudgery or improvement of livelihoods opportunity have not emerged. By building the bridge between informal and formal sciences, several opportunities can be created that may have remained unexplored for the socio-economic development of poor people. In order to understand innovation at grassroots, one needs to address the question that, how do local innovators alone or in groups, explore the potential of using either available knowledge and/or resources to generate new solutions for wider use has been a question? This paper tries to bridge important gaps in the way we conceptualise the evolution of innovations in informal sector by formally untrained minds.