

Abstracts

MEYER, S.P. and A. HECHT: "University Growth Poles in Canada: An Empirical Assessment".

Typically, growth poles have been viewed synonymously with influential manufacturing industry. Yet, with the increasing importance of research-related activities to many aspects of modern society, it is reasonable to assume that the university (through connections with high-technology industry) is, as well, a growth pole capable of inciting community/regional prosperity.

By comparing census divisions in Canada it was found that communities with universities, collectively, exhibit a higher level of well-being relative to the rest of Canada (as indicated by various income and employment measures). The trickle-down effects of these university growth poles are, however, quite isolated (not extending beyond the immediate census division). While it was also determined that the university growth pole argument is regionally robust (admissible for Eastern Canada, Quebec, Ontario and, to some degree, Western Canada), the results were less consistent from a temporal perspective.

POLÈSE, M.: «Regional Impact of the Internationalization of the Canadian Economy: Questions and Elements of Analysis» [Impact régional de la mondialisation de l'économie canadienne: questions et éléments d'analyses.]

In this paper, we examine the regional incidences of the Canadian economy opening by using historical data on the foreign trade of Canada and the evolution of its areas. We do not propose a "verifiable" model of analysis. The problems of internationalization and its regional impacts hardly lend themselves to rigorous tests of causality. It is rather a question of drawing some conclusions from the data we have. Emphasis is placed on the transformation over a long period (one decade, at least) where historical data can be used. As we will see, the opening of the Canadian economy did not happen yesterday. We pay particular attention to the regional economies of East Canada, more precisely, the Maritimes provinces, Quebec and Ontario.

SHEARMUR, R.G. and W.J. COFFEY: "Establishment Size and Employment Growth in the Canadian Urban System 1991-1994: An Exploratory Analysis".

Since the late 1970's there has been a growing body of evidence suggesting that small establishments create proportionally more new jobs than large ones. For reasons which are perhaps as political as they are objective, these results have had a major influence on the

development and implementation of regional development policy initiatives. A review of the literature reveals that not only is the evidence linking small establishments with employment growth being called into question upon its own terms, there has also been no attempt to study the spatial dispersion of this purported relationship. The empirical analysis presented in this paper introduces the spatial dimension by asking whether a link can be established between the presence of small establishments in Canadian CMA/ CAs and employment growth in these cities. The analysis provides no evidence to suggest that there is a simple link between the size of establishments and employment growth. Furthermore, the results suggest that, if a relationship exists, it differs according to the size of the CMA/CAs considered.

JOYAL, A. and L. DESHAIES: «Local Development and Innovating SMEs in Quebec: An Exploration» [Développement local et PME québécoises innovantes: un lieu à explorer].

In the past few years, information networks have gained in importance, both in management sciences and in studies related to economic development. We are referring here to the so-called influence of local stakeholders on the strategies put forward by small and medium enterprises. This article takes its inspiration from several publications by the GREMI (European Research Group on Innovative millieus) in order to determine to what extent the «milieu» has an influence on the enterprises' decisions in a Québec non-metropolitan environment. Thanks to a survey involving 45 SMEs located in three different settings, rural, semi-rural and urban, we show, contrary to what the GREMI has demonstrated, that local resources are weakly used by the enterprises. Such results, at least, as far as Québec is concerned, call into question the opinion of those who strongly believe in local development strategies as currently envisioned.

ALAVALAPATI, J.R.R., W. WHITE, P. JAGGER, and A. WELLSTEAD: "Effect of Land Use Restrictions on the Economy of Alberta: A Computable General Equilibrium Analysis".

This paper investigates the socio-economic impacts of hypothetical reductions in the use of land in the agriculture, forestry, and energy sectors in the province of Alberta. A five sector computable general equilibrium is developed to simulate the impacts of land use reductions. Simulations are conducted under two scenarios. First, wages are assumed to be rigid in the economy. Second, wages are assumed to be responsive to changes in the demand for labour. Results indicate that the negative impacts of land use reduction are higher when wages are rigid than those of wage flexible scenario. If wages are flexible, a contraction in a trading sector is shown to cause an expansion in other trading sectors. However, adjustment in the non-trading sector depends on relative magnitudes of contraction and expansion of trading sectors.

GODIN, B., R. LANDRY and M.-P. IPPERSIEL: «What if the Center Was Peripheral? Montreal and Its Regions in the Quebec National Research System?» [Si le centre était périphérique? La place de Montréal et des régions dans le système national de recherche québécois].

Although on the agenda of most national government, regional development and especially scientific and technological development, is still based on all too few indicators. From a center/periphery perspective, the authors attempt to map various Québec regions in relationship to Montréal on the basis of their scientific development. Using bibliometric data, they show that presently these regions develop much faster than the center (Montréal). Regional characteristics do not explain this situation which should rather be viewed from the standpoint of the internationalization of science.

BRADFIELD, M. and K. DUNN: "Technical Change and Regional Wage Rates".

This paper analyzes the relationship between the regional diffusion of technical innovation and wage rates by questioning the neoclassical assumption that a change in production technique increases wages, *ceteris paribus*. Using a competitive model, it is shown that the adoption of a new production technique does not necessarily increase wages since there are contradictory effects on wages -- the change in the production function parameter alters the equilibrium capital/labour ratio but changes the marginal product of labour for a given capital/labour ratio in the opposite direction. The model suggests that technical change, by itself, may actually lower wages! It is clarified that technological change, not technical change, increases wages. Policies designed to reduce regional wage differentials must therefore concentrate on technological change and underlying conditions.

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