



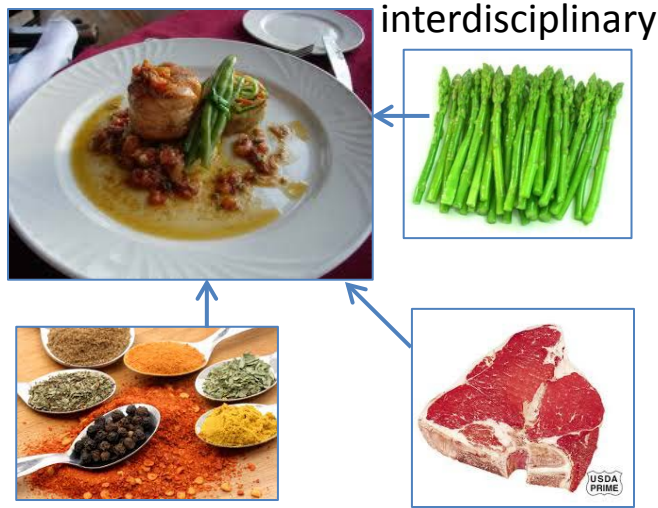
Interdisciplinary: The Evolution in Research and Public Policy Planning

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Scope of Presentation

- What is Interdisciplinary?
- Why do interdisciplinary research is important?
- How interdisciplinary research can help reshape policy making?

What do we mean as Interdisciplinary Research?



- **Interdisciplinary** is where the contributions of the various disciplines are **integrated** to provide holistic or system outcomes.



- **Multidisciplinary** is where each discipline works in a **self contained** manner with little cross fertilization among disciplines or synergy in the outcomes.

Why interdisciplinary research is important

- Help draw theoretical foundations, methodology, and knowledge of core fields to merge with different disciplines that is desirable for advancing knowledge.
- Complexity of today various research development that require expertise beyond own knowledge frontier.

Value of interdisciplinary

- Conceptual

- Allow to extend our own work

- » Example; fiscal decentralization

- Reframe our data and theories in new ways and gain new insights

- Raise new questions for research

Value of interdisciplinary

- Methodology

- Enable us to answer different questions
- Enable us to study new hypotheses with little knowledge to formulate hypotheses
- Ally us with people in traditional disciplines

Value of interdisciplinary

- Perspectives

- Enable us to make truly original and useful contributions to knowledge

- Enable us to critique in more wide range fields

Examples

- Extensions of theoretical knowledge required in international trade and regional development
 - How MNEs coordinate activities under complex geographic and technological environments.
 - What is the long term impact of FDI on regional development and how to maintain domestic companies' competitiveness or local labor from over exploitation.
- Investors are thus necessarily to reach out and understand economic, political, and social and cultural boundaries.

Integrating Disciplines is not so easy

- It is not occurred by bringing together several disciplines in a research project.
- Extra efforts and active strategy are needed to promote for cohesive works from researchers to combine expertise and knowledge.
- Working in different paradigm requires divert data and convincing methodology than traditional one
- Can easily make mistake in conceptual and methodology
- Knowledge is less likely to be cumulative

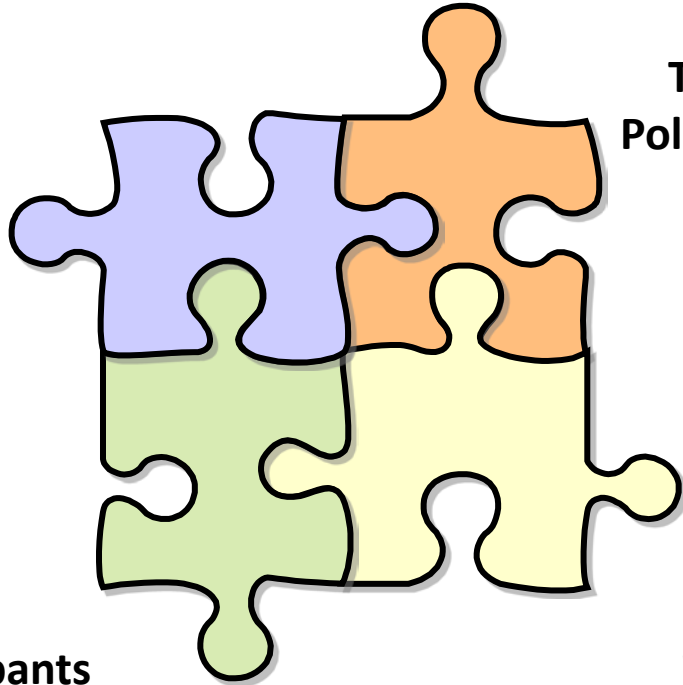
How to move forward

- Should start by stay side by side and seek to integrate theoretical and empirical development.
- Increase interaction with scholars from different disciplines by forming network scholars from different disciplines.
- Acceptance of researches

The evolution of interdisciplinary research may be best approached by understanding the interaction of four basic areas:

The Economic Benefit and Humanity

The Social and Political Conditions



The Participants (People and Agencies)

The Technological Dimension

The need for Tolerance in interdisciplinary research

- Interdisciplinary research finds threaten, because many believe
 - Research question is too trivial,
 - Methodology is uncongenial, or
 - its utility inappropriate, etc.

How to avoid the threat

- Adequate framing and analysis, so the importance of research question is clear
- A good fit between question(s) and methodology (ies)
- Methodological rigor
- Adequate translation for people from different disciplinary perspective
- Implication for teachings and practices as well as for further research.

Gap between Interdisciplinary research and public policy planning

- Researches and policy makers have different role and spheres of influences
 1. The gap arises mainly from the fact that researchers and policy makers operate in entirely different spheres. They have different structural roles they face different incentives, respond to different peers and constituents and they operate in different time frames.
 2. There is little interaction or exchange between the two professions. And barriers to the use of research originate from both sides.

Gap between Interdisciplinary research and public policy planning

- Increasing demand for across disciplines knowledge to public policy making.

Examples: research in science, technology development and intellectual property.

- Research can have direct or “Instrumental impact” on policy and practical decision.
- Academic research is usually long term and often have indirect impact.

Considerations for Policy and Practice Design

- Academic research may aim for knowledge understanding while policy makers want knowledge for action
- Interdisciplinary may take longer time to develop, and may not clearly understood at the outset.
- Policy makers work with multiple and shifting policy agenda environment with short time to react

Considerations for Policy and Practice Design

- Academic research is interested in causal processes e.g. causes of poverty. While policy makers require action to engage the problems.
- Policy research may not be methodological distinctive from academically focused, but it has different purposes and different mind set.

Example

- Risks of fiscal policy in Thailand in the next decades;
 - Narrow fiscal space of government expenditure policy;
 - Ageing population that require higher welfare subsidies transfer;
 - Higher household debt delinquency

Conclusion

- Encourage more Interdisciplinary research that provide answers from new challenge environments.
- Try to bridge the gap between the researches and policy makers to bring benefit of the interdisciplinary research become more fruitful.

Q & A