

**An Exploration of the Influence of Local Knowledge on Industry
Sustainability towards Regional Sustainable Development: A Case
Study of the Fishing Industry in the Eyre Peninsula Region**

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Table of Contents

Table of Contents	i
List of Figures	iv
List of Tables	v
Abstract	vi
Declaration of Originality	viii
Acknowledgements	ix
Definitions	x
Chapter 1. Introduction.....	1
1.1. Background	1
1.2. Significance of the Research Problem	4
1.2.1 Local Knowledge	4
1.2.2 Industry Sustainability	6
1.2.3 Regional Sustainable Development	8
1.3. Research Questions and Objectives	10
1.3.1 Research Question 1	10
1.3.2 Research Question 2	11
1.3.3 Research Question 3	11
1.3.4 Research Question 4	12
1.3.5 Research Question 5	13
1.4. Theoretical Background.....	13
1.4.1 Social Capital Theory	13
1.4.2 New Institutional Theory	16
1.5. Methodology	19
1.6. Expected Significant Contributions	21
1.7. Organisation of the Thesis	23
Chapter 2. Literature Review	25
2.1. Introduction.....	25
2.2. Knowledge	26
2.2.1 Perspectives on Knowledge	27
2.2.2 Classifications of Knowledge	30
2.2.3 Knowledge Acquisition	43
2.2.4 Knowledge Contribution.....	52
2.3. Industry Sustainability	58
2.3.1 Conceptualising Industry Sustainability	59
2.3.2 Importance of Industry Sustainability.....	62
2.3.3 Approaches to Industry Sustainability	63
2.4. Regional Sustainable Development	70
2.4.1 Defining Sustainable Development and Sustainability	70
2.4.2 Defining Regional Sustainable Development.....	72
2.4.3 Importance of Regional Sustainable Development	73
2.4.4 Dimensions of Regional Sustainable Development.....	74

2.5.	Theoretical Perspectives	78
2.5.1	Social Capital Theory	79
2.5.2	New Institutional Theory	82
2.6.	Theoretical Framework	86
2.7.	Conclusion	90
Chapter 3.	Research Methodology	92
3.1.	Introduction.....	92
3.2.	Research Context	92
3.2.1	Regional Context	93
3.2.2	Industry Context	95
3.3.	Philosophical Assumptions.....	100
3.3.1	Ontological Position	101
3.3.2	Epistemological Position	102
3.4.	Methodological Framework.....	104
3.5.	Multiple Embedded Case Study Approach.....	105
3.5.1	Subcase 1: South Australian Oyster Sector	107
3.5.2	Subcase 2: Southern Bluefin Tuna Sector	109
3.5.3	Subcase 3: South Australian Northern Zone Rock Lobster Sector.....	112
3.6.	Research Design	114
3.7.	Empirical Process	118
3.7.1	Ethical Consideration.....	119
3.7.2	Participant Selection	121
3.7.3	Interview Process	123
3.7.4	Interview Analysis	124
3.8.	Methodological Trustworthiness and Rigor	129
3.9.	Conclusion	131
Chapter 4.	Findings and Discussion	133
4.1.	Introduction.....	133
4.2.	Findings	133
4.2.1	Local Knowledge for Industry Sustainability.....	134
4.2.2	The Acquisition of Local Knowledge towards Industry Sustainability....	142
4.2.3	The Contribution of Local Knowledge towards Industry Sustainability ..	147
4.2.4	The Influence of Local Knowledge on Industry Sustainability	154
4.2.5	Industry Sustainability towards Regional Sustainable Development	168
4.3	Summary of the Major Findings	181
Chapter 5.	Summary and Conclusion	185
5.1	Introduction.....	185
5.2	Theoretical and Methodological Underpinnings	186
5.3	Key Findings.....	187
5.4	Theoretical Contribution.....	190
5.5	Practical Implications	194
5.6	Limitations and Recommendations for Future Research.....	197
5.7	Conclusion	200
Appendices.....	201

Appendix A: Interview Guide.....	201
Appendix B: Evidence of Ethics Approval.....	202
Appendix C: Consent Form	204
Appendix D: Complaints Procedure for Participants	205
Appendix E: Representation and Visualisation of some Evidence (Excerpts)	206
References.....	218

List of Figures

Figure 2. 1 Theoretical Framework	89
Figure 3. 1 Map of Eyre Peninsula Region.....	99
Figure 3. 2 Research Design	117

List of Tables

Table 3. 1 Participants Characteristics.....	122
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Abstract

This thesis explores how local knowledge influences industry sustainability towards regional sustainable development. The rationale behind this research begins with the observation that despite the plethora of studies on knowledge management, our understanding of how it influences the longevity of an industry in a way that supports sustainable development of regions is inadequate in the management literature. This research explores these issues by investigating the fishing industry in the Eyre Peninsula region. This investigation is worthy because there is currently no documentation of how knowledge affects sustainability of this industry in a way that supports social, economic and environmental wellbeing of the region. The purpose of this research is to provide in-depth understanding of how knowledge embedded and situated within industry influences its sustainability and supports regional sustainable development. This was achieved by using interpretive qualitative case study design, and embedded analysis of 54 interviews with main actors across the fishing industry.

The findings revealed that the kinds of local knowledge that influence industry sustainability are generational, institutional, collective, professional, scientific, technological and industrial. This knowledge is acquired through multiple learning processes such as on-the-job learning, experience, experiments, formal education, social networks and observations. Knowledge was largely contributed through social processes such as industry associations, meetings and discussions, conferences, seminars and workshops, networks and cross-fertilisation, social interaction and relationships, cooperation and collaboration and informal conversations. The findings demonstrated that local knowledge affects industry sustainability by influencing strategic priorities, organisational actions and commercial activities. The findings

showed that the sustainability of the industry can contribute to environmental integrity, social equity and economic prosperity of the Eyre Peninsula region.

This study makes a theoretical contribution to existing literature by developing a local knowledge-based view of industry sustainability. In doing so this has linked knowledge management and industry sustainability literature. This study has advanced a social perspective on industry sustainability by showing that pathways to industry sustainability are a socio-dynamic process of knowledge acquisition, contribution and application. The study has provided an institutional perspective on industry sustainability by illustrating that different institutions affect industry sustainability. The study has developed an industry-based view of regional sustainability by demonstrating that a sustainable industry can sustain a region.

The findings of this study have practical implications for industry managers and policymakers. They suggest that industry managers could advance knowledge management activities by improving the quality of social processes. Policymakers could assess how normative, regulative and cognitive aspects of their institutional arrangements influence sustainability of the fishing industry. Though these institutions and their arrangements constitute an important source of knowledge and exert pressure, their impacts on sustaining the long-term future of the region and its fishing industry must be properly gauged.

Declaration of Originality

I certify that this work contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in my name, in any university or other tertiary institution and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference has been made in the text. In addition, I certify that no part of this work will, in the future, be used in a submission in my name, for any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution without the prior approval of the University of Adelaide and where applicable, any partner institution responsible for the joint award of this degree.

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Definitions

<i>Knowledge</i>	Defined as a resource with inherent capabilities, which has tacit and explicit influence on firms and industries and their related regions and communities.
<i>Knowledge Acquisition</i>	Defined as the different learning processes and activities that generate new knowledge and information.
<i>Knowledge Contribution</i>	Involves the process of sharing and combining knowledge towards individual and collective benefit.
<i>Local Knowledge</i>	Defined as a mix of historic and modern skills, ideas, experience, expertise, and information, which are deeply rooted in a specific local industry that is situated within a region or a community.
<i>Industry Sustainability</i>	Defined as the ability of an industry as an organisation of firms to sustain its long-term future by integrating environmental integrity, economic prosperity and social equity in a way that supports its operating environment.
<i>Regional Sustainable Development</i>	Defined as the ability of a region to attain an acceptable level of social, economic and environmental wellbeing for present and future generations.
<i>Sustainability</i>	Defined as the continuous existence of an ongoing system, with a desirable long-term future state for other related systems, that is socially, economically and environmentally sustainable.
<i>Sustainable Development</i>	Defined as a form of development that provides an acceptable level of social, economic and environmental wellbeing for present and future generations.