

## Title

Addressing the failure of one-size-fits-all theoretical recipes for developing countries: new directions for studies of National Innovation Systems

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## Abstract

In this paper, we engage with the widespread and influential approach of National Innovation Systems (NIS). We discuss its adequacy to non-OECD countries, especially in Latin America where it tends to be reified. Although the NIS approach is meant to address the most pressing needs of the economies it applies to, we argue that it would benefit from developing a more encompassing scope, which allow for integrating greater diversity and complexity. By retracing the history of regimes of science, technology and innovation in Latin America, we explore the following paradox: whereas numerous Southern scholars urge the pressing need to develop an innovation agenda for Southern countries with a “Southern mindset”, they continue to heavily rely on a reductionist version of the NIS-approach that prevents such a “Southern perspective” to fully emerge. This has some impact on the actors willing to use NIS more reflexively, while it also affects the efficiency of science, technology and innovation (STI) policies in non-OECD countries. There are many ways to avoid such a pitfall. We formulate a research agenda that includes three suggestions for further engaging NIS both conceptually and practically, each of them enabling distinctive contributions to the field. Using analytical perspectives such as world-system analysis, postcolonial STS and postdevelopmentality, we argue, might benefit both to scholarly work about NIS, but could also allow for a better articulation with STI regimes in Southern countries.

## Keywords

National Innovation Systems — Latin America — World-system analysis — Postcolonial STS — Post-developmentality