



Political Science
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO



Geography and Program in Planning
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

Global Innovation & Regional Development Speaker Series

Presents

Peng-Fei Li

(University of Toronto)

“Family Ties for Knowledge Creation in Developing Economies”

Thursday, November 13, 2014

12:00-2:00 p.m.

Sidney Smith Hall 3130



Abstract: It has been widely recognized that innovation is embedded in social relations and norms of communities and societies. Related conceptions of knowledge generation have mainly drawn from practices of successful regions in developed economies. However, in many developing countries, especially in Asia, patterns of personal relations are quite different from those in Western individualistic societies. Particularly, family ties are an important feature of many traditional communities. This paper will explore the structure of family networks and argue that, although being strong ties, family ties can establish important bridges to connect industrial communities and are thus able to channel local technology diffusion. As a pre-existing social structure, family relations are likely to promote, rather than restrict, economic development. However, since the role of family networks for localized learning becomes restricted over time, another type of social networks, friends, are more capable of supporting regional innovations.

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