Reviewers Comments Control Form

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| **Reviewer B** | | | | |
| **Reviewer’s Comment** | **Author’s Comment** | | **Action Taken** | |
| The paper is interesting and well written.  The historical perspective as well as the discussion of terms and terminology provide a useful overview for practitioners, policymakers and researchers is this field. It is suggested that a number of corrections be made: | Noted | | N/A | |
| In Motivation/problem statement, line 16:  The term NSI phenomenon could be replaced by another more descriptive term. | Noted | | The word “phenomenon” was removed | |
| In Conclusion/implications, lines 35, 37:  The term philosophical (framework) could be replaced by a more descriptive term. | Noted | | Line 35: “philosophical framework” was replaced with “description of key innovation activities”  Line 37: “philosophical framework” was deleted | |
| In Technological learning, lines 235-237:  Correct the sentence construction (The “…although …but …” combination is not in order). | Noted | | The “but” was removed to correct the grammar | |
| General |  | |  | |
| In NSI concepts the term value chain should be defined as well; a short description of the innovation process, from fundamental research to commercialisation, is missing.  The author(s) could also consider a brief description of the term triple-helix innovation. | Noted  The term “triple-helix innovation” is problematic. A discussion of this concept, and my arguments against its suitability, would fall outside the purpose of this paper | | A whole paragraph under the subtopic “innovation” was added to describe the innovation chain.  No discussion of “triple-helix innovation” added. See author’s comments. | |
| There is a growing awareness among policy makers and innovation managers of the importance of the involvement of the ultimate benefactors of innovation, especially in developing economies.  The author(s) could hence also consider a brief description of this aspect of the innovation chain. | This comment opens up a separate (yet important) issue. Again, this discussion falls outside the remit of this paper. | | No action taken. | |
| **Reviewer C** | | | | |
| **Reviewer’s Comment** | | **Author’s Comment** | | **Action Taken** |
| Content:  This paper constitutes an important and very worthwhile contribution to our understanding of the national system of innovation concept. The approach to this question is scientifically sound and the South African case is usefully elucidated by providing some international background and context. The title is appropriate but an alternative for consideration might be: “The concept of a national system of innovation: an ontological review and critique”. The abstract is good and provides a succinct and accurate summary of the content. | | Noted  The suggestion serves to elongate the title without bringing any serious benefit. | | Original title is retained. |
| Unfortunately, the style is rather laborious which makes some sections unnecessarily difficult to read. This is exacerbated by sometimes opaque language, which detracts from the overall value of the article. Examples of sentences that need rephrasing in order to be understandable include (see italics) | | This is a subjective view that is not shared by the other reviewer. Nevertheless, the problematic sentences are addressed on a case by case basis below. | |  |
| 1.    1.      Ontology is a term that is generally applied to the examination of the nature of being and the relations involved (lines 66 – 67). | | Noted. | | Inverted commas placed around “being” in order to highlight the subject. |
| 2.    ‘A contribution to the discussion about the applicability and usefulness of the NSI concept in developing world contexts is made under a topic covering the subject below’ (lines 99 – 101). | | Noted. | | The sentence has been re-written. |
| 3.    3.      The synergy between the interacting elements of the NSI brings about technological learning which, in this context, describes an aggregate improvement of the capacity of institutions with a country to innovate (lines 562 – 563). | | Noted. | | The sentence has been broken into two and re-written to improve clarity. |
| There are a few typographical errors that must be corrected, such as: 1.    ‘..interact is such a way…’ (line 235) 2.    ‘…in the developing world, the concept …’ (line 515) | | Noted. | | Both corrections made and further editing done. |